

Recommendations of the Depository Library Council to the Public Printer 1995 - 1999



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RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE DEPOSITORY LIBRARY COUNCIL
TO THE PUBLIC PRINTER 1995-1999
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INTRODUCTION

This document presents the recommendations of the Depository Library Council from the Spring and Fall Meetings 1995–1999. The recommendations are presented in sections sorted by year, then further divided by spring and fall sessions. This document replaces the minutes previously found on the Web pages listed below.

Please Note: This document serves only as an archival record of what was previously published. Links referenced in this document may not exist, may be superseded, or changed.

1995

Spring Meeting: http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/council/rsp95.html

Fall Meeting: http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/council/rfa95.html

1996

Spring Meeting: http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/council/rsp96.html

Fall Meeting: http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/council/rfa96.html

1997

Spring Meeting: http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/council/rsp97.html

Fall Meeting: http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/council/rfa97.html

1998

Spring Meeting: http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/council/rsp98.html

Fall Meeting: http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/council/rfa98.html

1999

Spring Meeting: http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/council/rsp99.html

Fall Meeting: http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/council/rfa99.html

1995

DEPOSITORY LIBRARY COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESPONSES

SPRING MEETING, APRIL 10-12, 1995 • ARLINGTON, VA

Recommendation 1: Disappearing Depository Publications

Council is concerned with agency conversion of depository titles to electronic editions without prior provision for depository notification and archiving guarantees. An example of this is the Census Bureau's recent conversions of the *Government Finance* (GF) and *Government Employment* (GE) series.

Council recommends that the Public Printer contact the Census Bureau, and other agencies as necessary, to suggest that prior notification of title conversion be given to the depository program, and that a copy of the electronic file be transferred to GPO Access. Such a transfer will maintain depository compliance and insure eventual archiving to the GPO storage facility. Given the Census Bureau's commitment to distributing its electronic information through the Federal Depository Library Program, these discussions and the resulting procedures could serve as a model for other agencies.

Response

Representatives of the Library Programs Service (LPS) contacted the Census Bureau concerning the conversion of the *Government Finance* (GF) and *Government Employment* (GE) series to electronic format. We were advised that the information formerly contained in those titles is now available only online at the Bureau of the Census World Wide Web site <<http://www.census.gov>>. Use of the Census Web site is free.

These discussions with Census provided a springboard for the broader issues associated with the transition from print to electronic formats. LPS is participating in focus groups and other discussion with the Census Data Access and Dissemination System (DADS) Interest Group. This Group has solicited our input to help plan new systems and approaches which will improve public access to Census Bureau information.

LPS frequently reaches out to information originating agencies to confirm the status of publications which may have become available only in an electronic format. Often we are advised of such changes by depository librarians rather than by the agencies. However, under the terms of the recently-revised Paperwork Reduction Act (P.L. 104-13), agencies are required to "provide adequate notice when initiating, substantially modifying, or terminating significant information dissemination products."

In light of the distributed Federal electronic information environment, we believe that, in most cases, the originating agency will maintain control of their data until such time as it is transferred to the National Archives. In discussions with other agencies, GPO's focus is to obtain sufficient information about their electronic resources to direct depository librarians and public users to the data through our Pathway services.

Recommendation 2: Monthly Catalog

Council, based on the work of the *Monthly Catalog* Working Group, recommends that GPO continue to perform full AACR2 cataloging on OCLC and that this cataloging continue to be made available via MARC tapes to the library community. Full cataloging records that can be loaded into the public catalogs are essential to basic bibliographic access to U.S. Government publications. Full cataloging records should also be used as the basis of a *Monthly Catalog* CD-ROM product.

Further, having reviewed the report "Data Elements to be Included in Future Issues of the Printed MoCat" and having received input from the depository library community, the Council recommends the following modifications to the printed edition of

the *Monthly Catalog*:

- Utilize the AACR2 Minimal-Level Model as defined in the Data Elements Report.
- Maintain the title/keyword, series/report number, and author indexes.
- Eliminate the semi-annual index.

Council further suggests that, should financial constraints dictate, the title/keyword, series/report number, and author indexes be maintained: remaining indexes (e.g., stock number) could be eliminated.

It is further recommended that the Periodicals Supplement to the *Monthly Catalog* continue as it is presently configured and as a separate issue with title/keyword indexing only.

Response

We will continue to produce full cataloging records that conform to AACR2 to assure continued suitability for loading in to online public access catalogs. These full AACR2 records will be the source data for all *Monthly Catalog* (MoCat) products.

LPS is also involved in the transition from publishing in print formats to using electronic media. We intend to publish a reduced size paper MoCat edition with a brief record format and a keyword index. The first issue of a reduced content paper MoCat will be the January 1996 edition. Although Council has recommended retention of other indices, their retention negates much of the cost advantage which we will derive from the new paper edition.

We must reduce the overall cost of publishing MoCat. The CD-ROM edition and the “Daily MoCat” accessible via the SuDocs Web site will provide electronic search capabilities for complete records and eliminate the need for the current paper and microfiche editions. Our cost estimates indicate that a reduced size paper MoCat, a CD-ROM MoCat, and the GPO Locator “Daily Mocat” will be published at less cost than the current paper and microfiche editions.

Each edition will complement the others. The paper edition will offer basic access to minimal data via a single index. The CD-ROM edition will contain complete and fully edited data.

The Web site “Daily MoCat” will contain complete data in records cataloged in OCLC as recently as the previous day of production. Most of these records will have been edited. Recently produced records will be unedited, but available within hours of production. We are confident that, taken together, these initiatives will increase dissemination of records, improve access, and reduce costs.

Recommendation 3: Pagination of Congressional Record

Council supports GPO’s ongoing development of electronic editions of the *Congressional Record Index*. Council recommends that any product development effort must include a mechanism which correlates pagination of the daily edition with pagination of the final edition. The depository library community relies on both editions of the *Congressional Record*. Since the pagination differs between the daily and the final editions, it is important that the electronic index be usable with either edition.

Response

The historical *Congressional Record Index* (CRI) databases for the daily edition and the final (bound) edition of the *Congressional Record* are separate databases. It would require considerable editorial effort, and therefore considerable expense, to include the pagination for both editions in a single database.

The only feasible time to economically capture both sets of page numbers into a single database is during the revision of the daily index to create an index for a new final volume of the *Congressional Record*. That is why the prototype CD-ROM for the 1985 final *Congressional Record* included dual page numbers. This is a possibility for future volumes of the final *Congressional Record* and the corresponding indexes.

The databases for the historical indexes to the daily Congressional Record are being developed at the request of the Congress and are funded by the Congressional Printing and Binding Appropriation with a very modest authorized expenditure. At this time, GPO has not been asked to prepare databases for the corresponding final editions.

If requested by the Congress, GPO could develop separate databases for the daily and final editions, and users could search the databases simultaneously or separately. If they were searched simultaneously, the WAIS server would automatically merge and rank the results, thus giving the users access to data from both editions.

The recommendation of the Depository Library Council has been provided to the appropriate organizations in GPO, including the Congressional Record Index Office.

Recommendation 4: Regional Structure

In an electronic environment the ability of regional libraries to operate in isolation to provide all services to all selective libraries is not necessarily efficient or cost effective. The flexibility to enter into cooperative agreements in support of the spirit of the depository system is essential. Informal arrangements already in existence need to be documented.

Council endorses the principle that regional and selective depository libraries have a shared responsibility to guarantee public access to Government information. Council charges the Ad Hoc Committee on Regional Structure, in conjunction with Council's Depository Guidelines Work Group, with developing a statement of service responsibilities. These responsibilities may be met individually; shared through written cooperative agreements between regional and selective depositories; or through multi-state cooperative agreements.

Council recommends that GPO, in cooperation with appropriate depository libraries, develop a suitable strategy to provide backup for GPO electronic databases and systems (e.g., mirror sites).

Response

We agree that the regional structure may no longer be efficient or cost effective and look forward to the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee on Regional Structure and to the completion of the work of the Depository Guidelines Work Group.

However, to make significant changes in the basic legal requirements of access, custody, maintenance, and service for materials received, changes in the law will be required. Evaluation of the current law and recommending changes is a key task under the ongoing Study to Identify Measures Necessary for a Successful Transition to a More Electronic Federal Depository Library Program <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/dpos/studyhtm.html>, directed by the Congress. The study should also address the issue of providing backup for GPO electronic databases and systems.

Recommendation 5: Cooperation with NTIS

Council recommends that GPO continue to pursue cooperative agreements with the National Technical Information Service in the identification and delivery of fugitive documents. Council supports inclusion of technical reports in the Federal Depository Library Program in accordance with U.S.C. Title 44. A cooperative agreement between GPO and NTIS should include the following:

- An identification system of fugitive titles which should be included in the Federal Depository Library Program
- A delivery system which provides complete and timely access to fugitive documents available from NTIS
- A delivery system may be a “just in time” program in which Depository Libraries identify NTIS documents as needed and the selected titles are distributed in a timely manner. The documents may be stored at GPO (e.g., GPO Federal Bulletin Board, electronic storage facility, or WWW) or at NTIS.

Council understands the statutory constraints placed upon NTIS and GPO and is supportive of innovative strategies which provide access for Depository Libraries. Council will continue to work with GPO in formulating solutions to provide access to fugitive documents available from NTIS. Existing cooperative agreements with the Department of Energy and the General Accounting Office should serve as models for future cooperative agreements with other Federal agencies.

Response

We continue to be interested in cooperating with NTIS to make information products collected by NTIS available to depositories in electronic formats. NTIS is a member of CENDI which is represented on the advisory group for the study now in process. Also, Study Tasks 9, “Evaluation of issues surrounding inclusion in electronic formats of materials not traditionally included in the FDLP in either paper or microfiche,” and 10, “Review of Federal programs permitting or requiring the sale of information to recover costs, and the effects on efforts to assure free public access through the FDLP,” relate directly to this issue.

Recommendation 6: Depository Inspections

As the pre-inspection self-study is implemented, Council recommends that GPO continue to review the inspection process.

GPO, in consultation with regional librarians, should develop criteria/guidelines that define the role of regional librarians within the inspection process.

Response

Criteria which define the role of regional librarians already exist. Chapter 9 entitled “Regional Services” in the Instructions to Depository Libraries <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/dpos/instruct.html#9>, Section E, Regional Consultation, delineates the role of a Regional within the inspection process.

“Regional librarians should also take an active part in the inspection process. The presence of the regional librarian benefits the entire inspection process. At a minimum, they should contact the libraries before and after an inspection to offer assistance. Regional librarians should make every effort to accompany the GPO inspectors on their visits. Regional librarians also benefit from this unique opportunity to observe the entire depository operation in their area.”

As standard practice, GPO inspectors inform regional librarians by letter of the inspection schedule in their state or region and invite them to join the inspectors. However, Federal funding is not available for this purpose. If regional library funding or administrative leave is forthcoming, some regional libraries do accompany the inspectors for some or all of the inspections. Some regional librarians have never accompanied the inspectors. All regional librarians receive photocopies of every inspection report for information and future reference. GPO encourages the regional librarians to review the inspection findings and offer counsel and assistance where needed.

Flexibility already exists for regionals. Upon their own initiative, some regionals have scheduled “pre-inspection” workshops; e.g., Arizona, Michigan, etc. Other regionals make it a practice to follow-up the inspection visit in person or by telephone; e.g., Minnesota, North Carolina, etc.

Recommendation 7: Communication with Other Organizations

Council commends GPO for the prompt and positive steps taken to communicate its vision of the electronic capabilities and requirements of the Federal Depository Library Program to key groups of library administrators. The January 4, 1995, letter to depository library directors and the GPO presentations at ALA and COSLA established important communication channels with these groups. Council encourages GPO to continue to pursue similar opportunities for outreach to library and institution administrators (e.g., Association of Research Libraries, Public Library Association, Library Trustees, EDUCOM, Governors' Conference, National Conference of State Legislators, etc.). Further, Council encourages GPO to continue outreach and education efforts aimed at a broader audience that demonstrate the comprehensive services included in the FDLP (i.e., identifying, acquiring, cataloging, distributing, servicing, and preserving Federal Government information). Additionally, Council commends GPO for its increased use of press releases and other publicity announcements to highlight developments and achievements of GPO, the FDLP, and depository libraries.

Response

We appreciate Council's encouragement and intend to continue outreach and communication with the depository community and other audiences.

The GPO home page has heightened awareness of the FDLP by providing general information about the program and by serving as an expert research tool.

Recommendation 8: Improve Understanding of FDLP

Council recommends that the Public Printer continue his efforts to increase understanding of the FDLP among all parties by inviting contractors to attend Depository Library Council meetings and the annual Federal Depository Conference.

Response

Contractors providing services for the FDLP will be invited to attend specific Council meetings and Conference sessions. An example of this occurred at the spring 1994 Conference when representatives from Roadway Package Services (RPS) attended to speak with librarians about their concerns over deliveries. This provided an opportunity for the contractor and librarians to meet and exchange views and needs. Depository Services Staff will coordinate invitations in conjunction with the Federal Depository Conference and Council meetings.

Recommendation 9: GPO Electronic Initiative

Council commends the GPO for expanding free on-line public access to Federal Government information by adding the General Accounting Office's database of reports to the GPO Access service. Council urges GPO to work with other Government agencies in offering a wide range of Government information through GPO Access at no cost to the public through Depository Libraries and Gateways.

Response

GPO appreciates the Council's commendation of its efforts to expand free public access to online Government information through the GPO Access service. Staff in the Library Programs Service (LPS) and the Office of Electronic Information Dissemination Services (EIDS) continue to reach out to agencies. In particular, our goal is to encourage their use of GPO's full range of production and dissemination services.

EIDS staff is working with agencies on the development of their Government Information Locator Service (GILS) records, and, as a result, GPO was recently endorsed by the Small Agency Council as the source of assistance in the development and dissemination of agency GILS records. EIDS is working with the National Archives and the Office of the Federal Register to disseminate a database of Privacy Act notices. This would eliminate the need for individual agencies to prepare GILS records for their Privacy Act materials and provide a single, central place for the public to obtain this important information. LPS is continuing its efforts to identify and describe agency Web and Gopher sites for the Pathway services and to explore options for on-demand delivery services.

GPO has established extremely attractive rates for agencies that wish to offer free public access to Web pages or WAIS databases through GPO Access, as the General Accounting Office (GAO) has done. Several databases are under development or under consideration at this time. The alternative of fee-based access, with free public access assured by Federal Depository Library Gateways, is attractive to agencies that are unable to underwrite the costs of dissemination.

The study now in process, mandated by the FY 1996 Legislative Branch Appropriations Act, is involving Federal agencies through CENDI, the Federal Publishers Committee, and the Interagency Council on Printing and Publication Services. This is a good opportunity to learn more about agency publishing plans and to inform agencies about opportunities for cost-effective electronic information dissemination through the Federal Depository Library Program.

Recommendation 10: Improvement of Electronic Databases

Council commends GPO on their innovative and continued improvement of electronic databases and services such as the GPO World Wide Web, GPO Access, GPO Federal Bulletin Board, and the proposed GPO Pathfinder. Council supports GPO's efforts in making the transition from traditional print formats to the dynamic electronic environment and encouraging flexible delivery options among depository libraries.

Response

We appreciate the commendation of Council and we are continuing efforts leading to a more electronic based program.

Recommendation 11: GPO Pathway

With the development of GPO Pathway, non-GPO produced electronic information will be identified and accessible to depository libraries. This raises a number of issues regarding identifying, acquiring, cataloging, distributing, servicing, and preserving of this information and its designation as depository. Council recommends that as GPO develops Pathfinder, discussions with Council include the ramifications of declaring such information as depository.

Response

It is clear that Federal activities in all three Branches of the Government will be originating and publishing their information electronically and providing free access via Internet at sites under their control. Free access readily available to all is a totally new condition not recognized by the current law, which assumes a physical distribution and requires an act of volition; i.e., selection, on the part of a depository library. To require a selection process for a resource that is readily available to all would seem to be defeating the benefits of electronic access. So, it appears that changes in the law will be necessary to deal with this issue of what is "depository." This will be addressed in Task 6, "Evaluation of current laws governing the Federal Depository Library Program <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/dpos/studyhtm.html> and recommendation of legislative changes, if any, necessary for a successful transition to a more electronic program," in the study now in process.

In the meantime, we are proceeding with development of our "Pathway" services and expect that depository libraries will

provide public access to Federal information available free via Internet when identified in Pathway.

Recommendation 12: Training for New Documents Librarians

Council commends GPO for scheduling the New Documents Librarians Meeting at the Spring 1995 Federal Depository Conference. The significant number of participants and the nature of the questions asked at this meeting demonstrate a need for additional training opportunities for new and less experienced documents staff.

Council recommends that GPO sponsor an annual program during the Federal Depository Conference for new documents librarians designed to accommodate a wide range of training needs.

Response

The 1996 Federal Depository Conference will include a “track” for new documents librarians. A variety of sessions will be identified as appropriate including tours of the Library Programs Service, small group sessions with GPO staff, basic techniques, etc.

Recommendation 13: Disposition Policy

Council endorses the revised disposition policy (Memorandum re: Implementation of Disposition Policies, 4/7/95) and commends GPO for taking affirmative steps to accommodate the needs of regional and selective libraries regarding the disposition process.

Response

GPO appreciates Council’s endorsement and encourages all Regional librarians to review the liberalized weeding proposals, meet with the selectives in their state or region, and, in conjunction with review by the Superintendent of Documents, adopt revised disposition guidelines.

Recommendation 14: James Madison and Government Leadership Awards

Council congratulates GPO on receiving the 1995 James Madison Award from the Coalition on Government Information and the 1994 Federal Technology Leadership Award from the General Services Administration, Office of Management and Budget, Department of Defense, and Government Executive magazine. These awards recognize GPO’s innovative leadership in improving public access to electronic Government information through GPO Access.

Response

GPO appreciates Council’s support and recognition of these achievements.

Recommendation 15: Bernadine Abbott Hoduski

Council congratulates Bernadine Abbott Hoduski on receiving the Public Printer’s Distinguished Service Award. We share the Public Printer’s deep appreciation for Ms. Hoduski’s many years of work on behalf of the Federal Depository Library Program.

Response

We also congratulate Bernadine and miss her presence at the Joint Committee on Printing.

DEPOSITORY LIBRARY COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESPONSES

FALL MEETING, OCTOBER 16-18, 1995 • MEMPHIS, TN

Recommendation 1: Transitions To Electronic Formats

Council recommends that the transition plan prepared by the Government Printing Office for the transition from a paper/fiche based environment to an electronic environment balance the needs of users with the potential economic benefit of such conversion. Council is willing to work with GPO in the preparation of a plan.

Response

In developing The Electronic Federal Depository Library Program: Transition Plan, FY 1996 - FY 1998 <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/dpos/transit.html>, the Government Printing Office (GPO) considered the needs and capabilities of users and depository libraries to effectively access electronic Government information, and we appreciate the advice of Council with regard to these issues. However, the plan was developed as a budget document, with clear direction from Congress to submit “a proposal for the depository library program that will result in the conversion of this program to electronic format.” The more balanced approach that Council has recommended is more fully articulated in the “Strategic Plan” which accompanies the report of the Study to Identify Measures Necessary for a Successful Transition to a More Electronic Federal Depository Library Program <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/dpos/studyhtm.html>.

Recommendation 2: Appropriate Media

Council believes that it is implicit in the public’s right of access to government information that dissemination must be in media appropriate to the information’s content, use, and audience. Council recommends that the Public Printer clearly state in the congressionally mandated Study to Identify Measures Necessary For a Successful Transition to a More Electronic Federal Depository Library Program <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/dpos/studyhtm.html>, that certain information must be made available to the public in paper at federal government expense for the foreseeable future.

Rationale

While Council recognizes the current climate in which the conversion of government information to electronic format is seen as highly desirable, Council also believes that some information is more efficient, useful, and cost effective in paper format. Council is very concerned that the rush to reduce the cost of government information is overshadowing the need for thoughtful determination of information formats, formats which are appropriate to the user and the information type and content. Council believes it is important that the GPO Study Executive Working Group be made aware of the depository library community’s commitment to paper as a lasting and important medium for the congressional constituents within their districts.

Having expressed our commitment to paper as an important continuing medium for information, Council is also supportive of the efficiencies and cost effectiveness of electronic information. We appreciate the opportunity to influence the recent Superintendent of Documents draft policy statement on “Electronic Information Access and Dissemination in the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP)” and support the concepts expressed therein. But Council is deeply concerned that the user perspective, the intended audience of the publication, and other equally important factors may not be adequately considered if the draft statement is the sole articulation of policy. Thus Council recommends that a transition plan be developed, and Council stands ready to assist the Superintendent of Documents in developing such a plan. Council’s Ad hoc Committee on Format Transition has volunteered to assist with this planning.

Response

This issue is addressed in the “Strategic Plan” which accompanies the Study to Identify Measures Necessary for a Successful Transition to a More Electronic Federal Depository Library Program <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/dpos/studyhtm.html>.

Recommendation 3: Technology Assessment Study

Council recommends that the Public Printer continue to explore with the Joint Committee on Printing the possibility of conducting a technology assessment study by a federally funded research group within the context of the congressional study and strategic planning process currently underway.

Rationale

Council shares the disappointment of the depository library community with the denial by the Joint Committee on Printing of GPO’s request for a study by a federally funded research group to examine the technology necessary to implement an electronic dissemination program. Council believes that the data gained in such a study is essential to a thorough and independent evaluation of the technological capabilities of all partners in the program as well as the costs involved in the transition to and implementation of an electronic dissemination program.

Response

The need for additional study and technical implementation assistance for the transition to an electronic FDLP has been addressed in the “Study to Identify Measures Necessary for a Successful Transition to a More Electronic Federal Depository Library Program.” GPO shares Council’s belief that such an effort is essential to accomplishing the transition and will pursue the matter.

Recommendation 4: Support Services

Council recommends an expanded role for the Government Printing Office in the provision of support services for libraries and end users. These services include but are not limited to: technical support, user support, training, documentation preparation and resource sharing. This expanded role should be reflected in the transition plan.

Rationale

Council recognizes that the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) is operating in an increasingly electronic environment. However, Council is very concerned that there is minimum user support available within depository libraries for the electronic products being distributed through the FDLP. Council believes that the electronic environment requires a new model for the relationship between GPO, depository libraries, producing agencies and the end user. The new model should be one where GPO is pro-active in providing comprehensive support for products sent through the depository system or coordinating such support through the producing agency.

Response

GPO has incorporated the concept of enhanced support services for depository librarians in its planning for a more electronic FDLP. The Superintendent of Documents intends to provide expanded support services, but our ability to do so depends, in part, on Congressional action on our FY 1997 appropriations request. GPO also believes that acting as an intermediary to assist and, if necessary, to train end users remains a critical role for depository librarians in a more electronic FDLP. In addition, publishing agencies have a responsibility to support their own information products, including the provision of training for librarians and end users.

Recommendation 5: Equipment Grants

Council recommends that the Public Printer, as part of the Government Printing Office's FY 1997 proposed budget, request funds to assist willing but needy depository libraries in the initial acquisition of computer equipment and in establishing an Internet connection in order to provide public access to government information.

Rationale

Council recognizes that some depository libraries cannot offer their library users access to the full range of electronic information resources produced by the federal government at the present time because of a lack of hardware or Internet access. Many of these libraries are willing to offer electronic access but need financial help in order to make electronic access for patrons and staff a reality in the near future. Depository libraries should be asked to submit a grant application for such funds.

Response

Congress has not yet finalized action on GPO's FY 1997 funding requests, including the \$500,000 we requested for FY 1997 "technology grants" to depository libraries. The technology grants are intended to ensure reasonable public access and proximity to at least one electronically-capable depository in every Congressional district. These grants, at up to \$25,000 each, are to be used for public access work stations and Internet connections in depository libraries. This one-time financial assistance will enable libraries to achieve a minimum level of capability to serve the public with on-line electronic Government information. Based on responses to the 1995 Biennial Survey, some 12% of the depository libraries have no current plans to provide Internet access to the public. Public Internet access in depository libraries is critical to accomplishing the goal of equitable public access to Government electronic information.

Recommendation 6: Preservation Issues

Council recommends that the Public Printer in cooperation with other federal agencies seek federal legislation that will ensure the preservation of all electronic public information products from the time of their initial release to the public.

Rationale

The federal government, including executive, legislative, and judicial branch agencies, the National Archives and Records Administration, and the Government Printing Office, must recognize their cooperative responsibility to preserve and provide long term access to electronic information, and work to enact legislation that ensures the integrity and ongoing public access to electronic government information.

Information printed on permanent paper and distributed to libraries will be available indefinitely with little attention from library staff. The same cannot be said of information delivered in electronic formats. If public information in electronic formats is to be saved for future users, preservation should begin at the time the data is released. And unless a magnetic tape, for instance, is copied or refreshed regularly, the information on the tape may be lost. Furthermore, unless the information is migrated to new forms of media that can be accessed by new forms of software and hardware, the information will be effectively lost.

Currently, few libraries of any type can refresh digital data and migrate it to new forms of software and hardware. Fortunately, the mission of the Center for Electronic Records at the National Archives and Records Administration is to do just this for U.S. government records. However, unless the information is sent to them before it disappears from its electronic formats, or if it is never sent, the information will not be available to the users of tomorrow.

Response

Preservation issues have been addressed in the “Strategic Plan” which accompanies the Study to Identify Measures Necessary for a Successful Transition to a More Electronic Federal Depository Library Program <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/dpos/studyhtm.html>. We agree with Council that an enhanced system is needed to ensure permanent public access and preservation of electronic Government information. Developing such a system must include all of the institutional program stakeholders: information producing agencies, GPO, depository libraries and the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

Recommendation 7: Model Agreements

Council recommends that the Government Printing Office develop model agreements that depository libraries can use when negotiating information dissemination partnerships between federal agencies and depository libraries. Among the provisions of the agreement should be arrangements for long term access to the government information included in the agreement. GPO should be notified when a depository library enters into an electronic partnership with a federal agency.

Rationale

Partnerships between federal agencies and depository libraries constitute one by-product of the increasing tendency of agencies to distribute public information in electronic form. One such arrangement is that between the Department of State and the University of Illinois at Chicago Library, whereby the Library is facilitating access to the agency’s electronic information. By developing model agreements, GPO will help ensure that libraries and agencies follow minimum standards. Notification will enable GPO to participate in the negotiations where appropriate, and will allow GPO to serve as a central source of information about these electronic partnerships.

Response

LPS views depository libraries entering into arrangements with Federal publishing agencies as a promising development for expanding the amount of electronic Government information available through the FDLP. However, LPS encourages depository libraries to work through us in establishing agreements with agencies for the provision of agency electronic information to the FDLP, so that issues such as no-fee public access, permanent preservation and access, and any proposed restrictions on the use of the information may be addressed early in the process. We would be pleased to assist any depository involved in negotiating or considering such an arrangement with a Federal publishing agency.

Recommendation 8: Centralized Access

Council recommends that the Government Printing Office investigate the feasibility of establishing centralized access to CD-ROM products which have been distributed through the Federal Depository Library Program.

Rationale

Some of the CD-ROMs distributed through the Federal Depository Library Program are data storage disks; others require large amounts of working space for use while being low use information. Some of the depository libraries do not at this time have trained staff or technological capability to provide onsite access to these electronic publications. Council is interested in having GPO explore a new role of providing “near line access” to certain distributed CD-ROMs possibly via a jukebox storage facility. Such access could solve some libraries’ problems.

Response

GPO has been conducting preliminary assessments of the feasibility and costs associated with CD-ROM jukebox technology. We feel that a CD-ROM jukebox, with the appropriate software and enhancements, will allow LPS to provide a central access point for some of the CD-ROMs that are currently distributed to selecting libraries in physical formats.

After recently evaluating a specific jukebox system, LPS was concerned about the number of simultaneous users that would be able to access CD-ROM discs. Additionally, since FDLP CD-ROMS are available in a multitude of electronic formats, additional work is needed to gain insights about necessary requirements for search engines in relation to jukebox technology. We feel that further exploration of this concept is necessary, and plan to conduct additional tests in the future.

Recommendation 9: Software Standards

Council recommends that the Government Printing Office take an active role in advocating and promoting open standards related to information processing and access, such as SGML and ANSI Z39.50.

Rationale

Council recognizes that information technology is evolving rapidly and that GPO has a significant challenge in anticipating and adapting to these changes to serve the Federal Depository Library Program. Council recommends that GPO focus on the underlying standards, rather than on specific technical approaches. For example, WAIS was a strategic choice for the Federal Depository Library Program because of its use of the open, de jure standard ANSI Z39.50. However, it is not a good strategy to build into the Program a dependence on technical characteristics specific to the products of WAIS Incorporated. Similar cautions hold with respect to Adobe Acrobat and other “published” standards. This strategy will not only help GPO avoid dead-end technology, it will strengthen the use of open standards to the extent that GPO maintains a perceived leadership position.

Response

GPO will continue to take an active role in advocating and promoting open standards related to information processing and access. In September 1995 a multi-agency pilot project was initiated for the purpose of standardizing electronic submissions for publishing documents in the *Federal Register* and *Code of Federal Regulations*. The pilot project utilizes SGML as the standard for data structure, and provides for the capability of electronically signing the file through use of a Digital Signature Algorithm. Employment of these standardized technologies for data creation, secure transmission, and automated publishing via a broad range of media, offers potential economies and warrants widespread Government use. To provide added incentives for adoption of these standards, GPO is offering the necessary training and page rate discounts for conforming electronic documents submitted during the pilot project.

However, GPO will also use certain “published” or de facto standards when they permit enhanced electronic product features desired by a significant portion of the user community.

Recommendation 10: Revised Guidelines

Council recommends that the Library Programs Service implement the revised “Guidelines for the Federal Depository Library Program” as adopted by Council (10/17/95). Council further recommends that the Guidelines be reviewed every two years.

Response

The Guidelines for the Federal Depository Library Program <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/dpos/guidelin.html> were printed as Federal Depository Library Manual Supplement 2 and distributed to all depository libraries on February 28, 1996.

The Instructions to Depository Libraries <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/dpos/instruct.html> and the inspection self-study <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/dpos/selfstud.html> will be modified to incorporate the revised Guidelines. The Library Programs Service (LPS) will continue the ongoing process of reviewing the Guidelines to reflect the more rapid pace of change affecting the FDLP.

Recommendation 11: Minimum Technical Requirements

Council recommends that the Government Printing Office implement the technical requirements outlined in the “Guidelines for the Federal Depository Library Program”, Guideline 7-8, (as revised October 1995). These requirements should be effective October 1, 1996.

Rationale

Council believes that a basic requirement for every depository library must be the ability to access local and remote electronic information sources (e.g., CD-ROMs, online systems, world wide web sites, etc.). This capability is already essential in order to adequately service the government information needs of the public and will become increasingly important as the Federal Depository Library Program migrates to a more electronic program. Appropriate hardware and software must be provided to enable public users to access electronic information available through the Federal Depository Library Program. This hardware and software should include computer work stations capable of providing Internet access, reading CD-ROMs, downloading or copying files, and printing. See “Recommended Minimum Technical Guidelines for Federal Depository Libraries.”

Response

Paragraph 7-8 of the “Guidelines for the Federal Depository Library Program” contains computer hardware and software guidelines which, in accordance with the Depository Library Council’s recommendation, will become Program requirements effective October 1, 1996. Each depository should provide public users access to electronic information available through the FDLP, including computer work stations capable of providing Internet access, using CD-ROMs, and printing or downloading information selected by the user. The Library Programs Service (LPS) expects that this type of functional statement will form the basis of any review of library equipment conducted as part of a depository inspection.

To assist depository libraries in evaluating hardware and software for new purchases or upgrades LPS periodically issues the “Recommended Minimum Technical Guidelines for Federal Depository Libraries.” The technical guidelines which were published in the January 15, 1995 issue of *Administrative Notes* are being updated, and a draft version is available for discussion at the Spring 1996 Council meeting.

Recommendation 12: No-Fee Access To GPO Access

Council recommends that the Government Printing Office make GPO Access available at no charge to the public.

Rationale

Council recognizes that under P.L. 103-40, “Government Printing Office Electronic Information Access Enhancement Act of 1993,” GPO “may charge reasonable fees for use of the directory and the system of access [i.e., GPO Access]... except that use of the directory and the system of access shall be made available to depository libraries without charge.”

Council, however, is concerned that the present registration process is inhibiting libraries and the public from utilizing the federal government information sources available on the GPO Access system. While Council applauds the effort of GPO and depository libraries and gateway libraries to provide this service at no cost to the public, the disproportionate burden this places

on the relatively few existing gateways and registered libraries is troublesome, and overall access to the service is inequitably distributed throughout the depository system. Further, a number of other government-based entities are already providing identical or similar information sources to the public free of charge. Thus GPO Access is perceived less favorably by the public, and the potential for the service to provide government information to the public is limited. Finally, agencies looking for electronic means to disseminate their information to the public may regard the fee structure as a barrier to public access.

Council believes that GPO should investigate this issue to determine whether alternative options exist which would facilitate public access to the GPO Access service.

Response

We are pleased to report that use of the GPO Access services became free to all users in December 1995. All costs associated with the public use of GPO Access services are now borne by the Superintendent of Documents' Salaries and Expenses (S&E) Appropriation, which funds the FDLP.

Recommendation 13: Advance Notice of GPO Access Changes

Council recommends that the Public Printer provide advance notice to subscribers of GPO Access when new databases are added and when user interfaces are changed.

Rationale

Advance notice of new databases and changes in the user interface is desirable for all subscribers to GPO Access. For GPO gateway libraries in particular, advance notice allows the gateway partner to prepare the appropriate access documentation for each new database, and to revise the existing user interface documentation at the time that interface changes are implemented. Through enhanced documentation and user aids, GPO Access gateway libraries provide a useful value-added service. It is in GPO's best interest to promote the effectiveness of gateway libraries by providing adequate notice of changes, as well as other information and support.

Response

GPO concurs with the spirit of this recommendation. When new products are initiated by the Superintendent of Documents, we will do everything possible to provide advance notice. However, when Congress or an agency requests that its information be made available through GPO Access, it is GPO's responsibility to meet the publisher's schedule. Extremely tight production schedules may not permit enough time for preparation of user documentation or revision of existing user interfaces to be accomplished in advance.

Recommendation 14: User Input Into Software Development

Council recommends that the Government Printing Office involve the depository library community in the development of the user interface for the GPO Access Phase II software. Council recommends substantive involvement of the user community throughout the development of GPO electronic products, including further development of the *Monthly Catalog* CD-ROM.

Rationale

Council recognizes the challenges faced by the Government Printing Office in the development of new access software. However, Council is very concerned that the GPO Access Phase II software and the *Monthly Catalog* CD-ROM software be useful to both the general public and the library community. To that end, we ask for involvement by members of Council and the depository community throughout the development process. Council recommends that GPO solicit input from the users of these databases through focus groups, at Council meetings, and at conferences.

Response

GPO will continue to involve the depository library community in development of GPO Access services using the Phase II software. Depository librarians were a valuable source of input during development of software specifications used in the Phase II solicitation. As specific applications are developed using the new software, GPO will be happy to work with Council members and other depository librarians to ensure that the product is useful to both librarians and the general public.

LPS has previously demonstrated prototype versions of the *Monthly Catalog* CD-ROM to the Council and to the ALA GODORT Cataloging Committee. We have factored the resulting comments into the software design; for example, by adding a choice of the Windows or DOS interface to the original design. We have recently sent beta test copies of the latest prototype *Monthly Catalog* CD-ROM to all Council members and members of the GODORT Cataloging Committee for in-depth testing and evaluation. Feedback from this beta test will be the basis for future product decisions.

Recommendation 15: FAQ's

Council recommends that the Government Printing Office establish an information resource on GPO Access consisting of a compilation of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's).

Response

GPO recently established a new link on the GPO home page, Navigation Aids and FAQ's, which provides shortcuts for users to access menus, and also attempts to answer some of the most frequently asked questions about GPO Access. We look forward to expanding upon this list of FAQ's in order to provide improved service and ease of use for our customers.

Recommendation 16: Monthly Catalog

Council recommends that the Government Printing Office investigate the inclusion of cataloging records beginning with July 1976 on the *Monthly Catalog* CD-ROM, and add OCLC record numbers to the new paper edition.

Rationale

Because cataloging records for government documents are available in machine-readable format from July of 1976, and because it is intended that only one year of cataloging records be available through the federal locator, the GPO-produced *Monthly Catalog* on CD-ROM should include records from July of 1976. This would provide one product for all electronic cataloging records for government documents and would be of greater value to depository libraries.

The new paper edition of the *Monthly Catalog* should contain the OCLC record number as this is the only link to the specific electronic version of the full cataloging record.

Response

We have determined that significant effort and expense would be required to bring records that represent approximately 20 years of varying cataloging practices into conformity with current practice. In addition to this task, additional effort would be required to convert data into current formats, and to update the application of the MARC format to current specifications. Given these circumstances, such a project does not appear feasible at this time.

It is our goal to include the most current five years of *Monthly Catalog* records on the locator application on the Superintendent of Documents web site, beginning with data from the January 1994 *Monthly Catalog* issue. This five year window will correspond to the five-year minimum retention period for selective depositories, thus providing users with the greatest number of valid responses to their queries.

We thank Council for its recommendation to include OCLC record numbers in *Monthly Catalog* records in the paper edition and report that this has been accomplished beginning with the January 1996 issue.

Recommendation 17: Identifying World Wide Web Sites Through Cataloging

Council recommends that the Government Printing Office, in cooperation with the other cataloging agencies, consistently utilize existing mechanisms for including in cataloging records information identifying government publications available at Internet/World Wide Web sites.

Rationale

Increasingly, government publications are discontinued in paper and microfiche format and replaced with electronic versions available via the Internet or dial-up bulletin boards and, increasingly, library patrons are asking for electronic versions of government documents. For depository libraries to be able to continue to provide access to these publications, it is imperative that existing mechanisms of site identification (USMARC 856 tag, "Electronic Location and Access") be included in cataloging records so that locations may be readily known.

Response

We share Council's interest in cataloging the content accessible at Federal Internet sites. Given that such sites are constantly changing we believe that our own developing suite of Pathway locator services will provide useful ways to search Federal Internet sites and identify specific content. We will continue to catalog Government information products which come under our custody, whether in a physical product or an electronic file on GPO Access.

GPO has begun to include URL data in our serials records and also in records representing monographs that are "held" at the Federal Bulletin Board and GPO Web site. In the future, we plan to update existing cataloging records for titles on the Federal Bulletin Board.

We do not at present catalog monographs and maps available at Federal Internet sites. Review of these sites indicates that many titles are "unstable" and may be removed from sites without prior notice. Because of the instability of such documents we do not plan to create full level records representing titles that may be pulled from sites shortly after cataloging. In addition, we do not have resources to routinely verify the accuracy of URL data for non-serial records.

We are working to develop brief Pathway Bibliographic records that identify, point to, and link with discrete works published as documents at Federal Internet sites. As of March 1996, we are engaged with a pilot project to create low cost Pathway bibliographic records for selected titles at selected Federal Internet sites. We anticipate these records will include seven elements, including a "hot linked" URL to the title at the agency site. These records should be much less expensive to create and maintain than full MARC *Monthly Catalog* records. We expect to create a Pathway bibliographic record application at the SOD home page and intend to add, change, and delete records from this site as necessary.

Recommendation 18: Linkages Within The MARC Record To Electronic Versions

Council recommends that the Government Printing Office work with other CONSER libraries to implement a consistent methodology to provide the necessary linking information for titles converted from paper/fiche to electronic format.

Rationale

Council is concerned that MARC records for publications formerly issued in paper or microfiche which have been converted to electronic format do not provide adequate linkages between the various formats. Titles discontinued in a print format may be continued in an electronic format on a world wide web site, or on a CD-ROM. Without linking notes in the old record to

alert users to the continued dissemination of the information in another format, users may fail to locate it. Since the MARC record is the basis for describing and locating government information in most libraries, GPO cataloging should clearly supply the information needed to locate titles continued in another format. Linkages should direct users forward to the new electronic edition and backwards to the paper/fiche.

The cataloging of electronic journals is a major topic of discussion among national cataloging standards organizations. Government information is moving more rapidly to electronic formats than are other areas of publishing. The Government Printing Office is already involved in the development of standards through its participation in CONSER. The CONSER editing and cataloging manuals already provide some guidance in providing for links between paper and alternative formats. We urge the GPO to make use of the existing documentation and to continue to take a leadership role in further development of cataloging standards for electronic formats.

Response

LPS has drafted a comprehensive cataloging policy that should be applicable to all potential contingencies for linking records of titles published in various physical forms and editions with one another. We expect to share our links policy with CONSER personnel of the Library of Congress, members of the ALA GODORT Cataloging Committee, and interested members of Council. After some review, we intend to implement this policy as soon as possible.

We are also working to assure that the OCLC 856 access field is included in *Monthly Catalog* records. When used effectively, the 856 field should permit a “hot linked” URL from the record to the text of an electronic publication at an Internet site. This field is not yet displayed in our records, due to limitations in the *Monthly Catalog* publishing software. When necessary programming has been accomplished such data will appear in *Monthly Catalog* records, as appropriate. For the present, URL information is available elsewhere in *Monthly Catalog* records. URL information appears most frequently in records of electronic publications that we hold and in serials records.

Selected non-serials published at Federal Internet sites will be represented by Pathway bibliographic records rather than *Monthly Catalog* records. For the present, we expect that Pathway bibliographic records will be created as a low cost resource to provide critical information relating to selected monographs and maps at Internet sites.

Recommendation 19: Training For Other Agencies

Council recommends that the Government Printing Office arrange workshops which will assist agencies to publish government information products and provide services suitable for use by the general public.

Rationale

Council recognizes that federal agencies have an increasing role in the publication of government information. This changing role derives not only from the technology of desktop publishing and the changing economics of print and electronic publishing, but from the sociopolitical trend toward decentralization. However, few federal agencies are skilled in the publishing trade and Council is mindful of a strong public need for the rapid development of such skills. As agencies reinvent their relationships to public constituencies, there should be a strong demand for training in the publishing of government information for the general public. GPO should take a leadership role in arranging for such training.

Response

For many years, GPO’s Institute for Federal Printing and Publishing (IFPP) has sponsored a wide variety of fee-based courses designed to provide Federal employees with information they need in printing and publishing technology, systems, and processes. Currently, “CD-ROM Publication” and “Introduction to Full-Text Coding for Electronic Manuscript Using SGML

and HTML” are two very popular courses. Two new ones under development are “Resources for Publishing” and “Publishing Media.”

Library Programs Service (LPS) and IFPP staff have developed an outline for a free 1.5 hour briefing session directed to public affairs, printing, and information resource management staff in Federal agencies. Speakers will discuss such topics as current publishing choices, needs of constituents and Federal agencies, and benefits to agencies from the Federal Depository Library Program. The first orientation session is anticipated for June 1996.

Recommendation 20: STAT-USA Access Commendation And Logon Procedure

Council requests that the Public Printer express our appreciation to the Department of Commerce and STAT-USA for making free accounts to STAT-USA available to federal depository libraries. Council also requests that the Public Printer communicate our concern about limiting each depository library to a single free password. The number of passwords available to a library should more properly reflect the high use and diversity of the electronic product once issued to depositories but now only “bundled” through STAT-USA.

Rationale

Government information is provided without fee to the public in depository libraries. The Department of Commerce’s provision of passwords to STAT-USA is consistent with the no-fee depository library access provided to depository libraries to GPO Access and should serve as an important precedent to be emulated by other agencies. This is particularly important as more agencies search for ways of meeting their public dissemination obligations while reducing the agency’s own budget. However, Council is concerned about the single-password access to STAT-USA. This is based on the fact that there is a wide variety and more importantly a large number of information resources available on STAT-USA. Many of these resources were once individually part of the Federal Depository Library Program and a number of them were heavily used in their paper formats. As paper editions of government information resources are discontinued in favor of electronic editions, located at a single site, i.e. STAT-USA, use of STAT-USA may be limited to one single no-fee passworded user work station. This has the effect of limiting access in that once users could access each title at the same time (i.e., multiple users of multiple titles). Access is now limited to one user for all products. This model does not fit the depository environment. If agencies are going to use STAT-USA to fulfill their Federal Depository Library Program requirements, then STAT-USA needs to develop mechanisms which will maintain the intent of the depository distribution- ready and no-fee access to government information.

We encourage the development of mechanisms to provide for broader access to STAT-USA. Broader access should include such options as access through local area networks, multiple passwords for depository libraries and simpler log-on procedures. Librarians in a number of institutions would be willing to work with the STAT- USA staff to improve access at the local level.

Response

The Public Printer has sent a letter of commendation to Mr. Ken Rogers, Director of STAT-USA, expressing Council’s commendation for providing access to this valuable resource. The letter also conveyed to STAT-USA Council’s concerns regarding the limitation on depository libraries to a single subscription. Response to this letter and any subsequent action taken by the Library Programs Service or STAT-USA with regard to these issues will be promptly relayed to the Council.

Recommendation 21: Depository Library Council On The World Wide Web

Council recommends that the Government Printing Office include the records of the Depository Library Council on the GPO World Wide Web home page.

Response

Library Programs Service recognizes that the Depository Library Council's web pages, located at <<http://www.library.okstate.edu/govdocs/dlc/toppages/dlcindex.htm>> contain information valuable both to depository librarians and other interested members of the public. Therefore, LPS is happy to establish a link to Council's pages. As an intermediate measure, such a link has been established from a set of developmental pages. However, a more comprehensive set of Web pages containing information targeted toward depository librarians is under development. When those pages are available, they will contain a link to the Council web pages from a suitably prominent location.

Recommendation 22: Congressional Priority Boxes

To ensure the timely delivery of high demand items, Council recommends that the practice by the Government Printing Office of providing Congressional priority shipments and "hot item" priority shipments continue.

Response

Library Programs Service continues to use the Congressional Priority Boxes to expedite shipment of Congressional and significant new titles to the depository libraries. Upon advice from Council, this procedure will not be changed or eliminated.

Recommendation 23: DLC Fall Meeting Site

Council recommends that one of the following be the site of the Fall 1996 Depository Library Council meeting: Cincinnati, Denver/Boulder, Ft. Lauderdale, Milwaukee, or Salt Lake City.

Response

The Fall 1996 meeting of the Depository Library Council will be in Salt Lake City, Utah, on October 21-24, 1996.

Commendation: J.R. Baumgardner

Council congratulates J.R. Baumgardner, Deputy Director of Library Program Service and a GPO employee since 1978, on the occasion of his retirement, and commends Mr. Baumgardner for his many years of service to the Government Printing Office and the Federal Depository Library Program.

Commendation: Mark Scully

Council congratulates Mark Scully, former Director of the Library Program Service and GPO employee since 1981, on the occasion of his retirement, and commends Mr. Scully for his many years of service to the Government Printing Office and the Federal Depository Library Program.

Commendation: John Phillips and OSU Library Staff

Council commends John Phillips and the staff of the Oklahoma State University Library for their work on compiling the archival files of the Depository Library Council and creating an Internet site for electronic access to these files.

Commendation: Shirley Woodrow

Council commends Shirley Woodrow, Minority Staff member of the Joint Committee on Printing, for her many years of support for the Federal Depository Library Program and access to government information.

Council Action Items

- As a participant of the GPO Study Advisory Group, Council will prepare a report as soon as possible on the smooth transition to a more electronic Federal Depository Library Program, based on the input gathered at the Fall Council meeting.
- Council will establish a FDLP Statistics Work Group. This work group will (1) develop output measures for the Federal Depository Library Program, and (2) examine the results of the 1995 Biennial survey to gather information on depository libraries that may fall below the technical requirements recommended for libraries.
- Council will establish an Ad hoc Committee on Format Transition [Steve Hayes, Chair]. This committee will continue and build upon the efforts of the SOD 13 Work Group of Council's GPO Operations Committee. The charge of the Ad hoc Committee on Format Transition will be to work with GPO and the depository library community to assist in identifying issues and planning for the smooth transition from a primarily paper/fiche based environment to a more electronically based program. This includes working with GPO to develop a "core list" of titles which should remain in paper. The SOD 13 Work Group in its present configuration is discontinued.
- Council will work with GPO and others to plan and present a "new librarian" track at the Spring Conference and Council meeting.

1996

DEPOSITORY LIBRARY COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESPONSES

SPRING MEETING, APRIL 14-18, 1996 • ARLINGTON, VA

GPO Study Issues [Recommendations 1-3]

1. Council commends the Government Printing Office for completing the Congressionally-directed Study to Identify Measures for a Successful Transition to a More Electronic Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP), for including representatives from the library community on the Study Executive Working Group and Advisory Group, and for carefully considering the input of depository libraries throughout the study process.
2. Council supports the “Principles for Federal Government Information” and the “Mission and Goals for the FDLP,” as stated in the draft Report to Congress, and Council recommends the adoption of these statements for the FDLP.
3. Council commends GPO for adopting a five-year time frame for the initial transition to a more electronic FDLP, and recommends that GPO continue to work with the library community, Federal agencies, and other appropriate parties, to assess the capabilities of program partners, and their progress towards implementing and expanding access to electronic Government information.

Response [to 1, 2, and 3]

The Government Printing Office (GPO) appreciates the participation, advice, and support of the Council throughout the process which culminated in the Study to Identify Measures for a Successful Transition to a More Electronic Federal Depository Library Program: Report to the Congress (Study). The future direction and timetable for incorporating electronic information into the FDLP has been developed and generally accepted by the Congress and the depository library community. As a result of articulating the principles and goals, and the short- and long-term planning efforts, the Library Programs Service (LPS) is better able to balance the complex issues attending the transition to electronic information dissemination and our ongoing traditional services.

Recommendation 4

Council recommends that the Public Printer seek common ground with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) on Federal policy that would achieve an appropriate degree of government-wide coherence in public information as has traditionally been accomplished through centralized cataloging.

Rationale

Given the huge volume and diversity of information produced and/or disseminated by the Federal Government, descriptive cataloging which continues to allow libraries and other information providers to incorporate electronic resources into existing location mechanisms is of fundamental importance for public access. This is an even greater imperative as more information moves toward intangible electronic products. Yet it does not seem that the OMB legislative proposal specifically addresses how the cataloging function would be achieved without GPO in the publishing loop. Council is hopeful that a constructive discussion with OMB on this specific topic of cataloging would provide important insights on all sides of the issue.

Response

GPO is committed to working with the library community, Congress and Federal agencies, public access groups, and others to implement a program of public access to Government information for the 21st century that will be both workable and

cost-effective. GPO has, on many occasions, provided input to OMB on the development and implementation of information policies for the executive branch, such as the revision of OMB Circular A-130. Recently, OMB participated on the working group of the Study, and assisted GPO in gathering information regarding the inclusion of executive agency CD-ROM products in the FDLP. GPO reviewed and commented upon the OMB draft “Electronic Depository Library Act of 1996.” More recently, OMB supported the strategic alliance between GPO and the Department of Commerce to produce the **Commerce Business Daily** electronically. This alliance places GPO in a centralized role for electronically collecting and disseminating Government procurement notices.

GPO will continue to seek common ground with OMB on Federal policy that would achieve an appropriate degree of Government-wide coherence in public information as has traditionally been accomplished through cooperative cataloging. However, to date OMB fundamentally refuses to concede the utility of a centralized mechanism in the Superintendent of Documents to facilitate public access to Government information through depository libraries, despite the conclusion of the recent Study. To OMB, such a mechanism “inappropriately clings to the past.” OMB wants a completely decentralized depository dissemination program regardless of cost and regardless of problems such a program would cause for public access, and it is determined to achieve this program, even going to the lengths of soliciting congressional support for a legislative proposal to decentralize the FDLP without consulting GPO, the library community, or the membership of the study group of which it was at that time a part.

Recommendation 5

Council commends GPO for its aggressive and creative proposals for expanding access to Government information and providing access to previously fugitive Government information.

Response

We will continue to pursue creative, cost-effective solutions which employ electronic technologies in order to increase the information available through the FDLP.

Recommendation 6

Council supports the Technical Implementation Analysis outlined in the draft Report to Congress and urges GPO to continue to pursue the means for conducting this analysis.

Rationale

Council remains concerned that the transition to a more electronic Federal Depository Library Program continues to proceed without fundamental data necessary to determine the most cost-effective and feasible alternatives for providing access to electronic Government information to the public through the FDLP.

Data is needed for analysis: from publishers in all three branches of Government to determine their expected current and long-term electronic publishing plans; and from depository libraries to determine their present and near-term technological capabilities, including equipment, skills of staff, and electronic technologies best suited to meet user needs. Data is also needed to address issues raised in the Technical Implementation Assistance (Appendix A) section of the draft Report to Congress.

Response

The Study concluded that additional research and analysis in the area of electronic information product standards would facilitate the transition to a more electronic FDLP. The effective use of electronic Government information products could be

enhanced by the greater utilization of standards in the creation and dissemination of information. A central implementation issue is the identification and utilization of standards for creation and dissemination of electronic Government information products. These standards would enhance access to and use of Government information by both the Government and the public.

Therefore, GPO is proposing an Assessment of Standards for Creation and Dissemination of Electronic Government Information through a joint effort with the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS). The proposed assessment replaces the Technical Implementation Assistance statement of work in the March 1996 draft Report.

The assessment will determine the range of formats Federal agencies currently use in the creation and dissemination of information and to assess the de facto or actual standards that are in use for each major type of data. It will also identify areas where there is no standardization, or such limited standardization that the effect is virtually the same, and it will evaluate standards utilized by private sector and other non-governmental publishers. This information will provide the basis for an assessment, in consultation with the depository library community, of the usefulness and cost-effectiveness of various electronic formats for depository library dissemination or access. It will also be the basis for a dialog with the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), NCLIS, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), and others with an interest in establishing and promulgating Government-wide standards for information creation and dissemination.

Revision Of Title 44 U.S.C. [Recommendations 1 and 2]

1. Council supports in concept the definitions of Government information, Government information product, and Government electronic information services as articulated in the draft Report to Congress. Council recommends that GPO continue to work with Congress and the library community to identify and recommend legislative changes necessary for a successful transition to a more electronic FDLP.

Rationale

The definitions make useful distinctions which should be incorporated in revisions to Title 44. They are not technology-specific and will permit the statutory definitions to continue to provide direction even as technological changes occur in information formats. GPO has the experience, broad perspective, and involvement with the user community that are essential for productive revision of Title 44 to ensure effective access to Government information.

2. Council affirms the role of the Superintendent of Documents in the Government-wide coordination of public access to Government information, including the preservation, retention, and long-term access of Government information, as articulated in the draft Report to the Congress.

Rationale

Historically, GPO has provided the central coordinating authority for distribution of print products and has recently moved into a new role as a provider of online information services. The Superintendent of Documents (SOD) has a proven history of strong and effective involvement with its user community. The SOD has provided bibliographic access and a mechanism for long-term access to Federal Government information for more than one hundred years. No other Federal agency has the experience and commitment to broad public access that the SOD can provide. Throughout this period of rapid transition and changing technologies, the guidance and assistance of the Superintendent of Documents is critical in order to meet the challenge of maintaining public access to Government information.

Response [to 1 and 2]

Substantial changes in the FDLP already are underway within the structure of the existing statute. GPO is acting upon its existing statutory authority to incorporate electronic Government information products into the FDLP. In addition, we are

pleased with the strong support which emerged in the working group discussions concerning the value of having the authority for a broad-based public information program rest in the Legislative Branch. Nearly all of the participants felt that this model has served the public well. High value was placed on the presence of the FDLP in every Congressional district, to directly serve the public in local library settings.

However, certain amendments to Chapter 19 of Title 44 would facilitate the transition. For example, it should be established without question that electronic Government information must be included in the FDLP, to establish authority and responsibility for the FDLP to ensure that both tangible and electronic Government information products are maintained permanently for depository library and public access, and to authorize the Superintendent of Documents to request that the originating agencies provide electronic source data files of their information products. Some suggestions for legislative changes, which incorporate the advice of various program stakeholders, are included in the Study Report. At the request of the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration, a detailed proposal for revising Chapter 19 was prepared and forwarded to the Committee for consideration. This proposal was published in its entirety in a special issue of Administrative Notes dated August 30, 1996, and is also available at the GPO World Wide Web (WWW; Web) site.

Appropriate Formats

1. Council commends GPO for a timely test of the accuracy, feasibility, and cost implications of scanning paper publications for electronic dissemination to depositories. The depository library community is concerned about GPO's conclusion that graphic-intensive publications of less than thirty pages in length are candidates for electronic conversion. Council notes that these publications are often intended for public dissemination for informational purposes by the agency. These titles may not be suitable for their intended audience in electronic format and may present printing problems for depository libraries and users.

Response

GPO has concluded that scanning documents is not a cost-effective mechanism for disseminating Government information products. Scanning was being explored as a mechanism for implementing an aggressive approach to changing the FDLP to a predominantly electronic program in 2.5 years, as discussed in "The Electronic Federal Depository Library Program: Transition Plan, FY 1996 - FY 1998." Comments from depository libraries and agency publishers suggested that a 5 to 7 year time frame was more realistic, and this time frame was subsequently accepted by the Congress. Consequently, we plan to focus our efforts on following the lead of agency publishers as they make the transition from paper and microfiche to electronic products, rather than forcing the migration through expensive or inappropriate technologies. GPO will convert to electronic information at the same pace as publishing agencies can produce it and depository libraries can absorb it. It would be substantially more costly for GPO to convert agency print publications to electronic formats than it will be to work in partnership with the agencies, assisting them in accelerating their own electronic publishing initiatives.

However, cases will occur when we are unable to obtain adequate copies of graphic-intensive products for distribution to depository libraries. Such products are often ill-suited for conversion to microfiche. In order to bring these fugitive products into the FDLP, LPS and GPO's Production Services have been investigating alternative formats for making these products accessible via the World Wide Web. In order to evaluate the usability and acceptance of these alternatives, seven titles have been converted to ASCII text files and JPEG and PDF image files. These test files are accessible from the Browse Electronic Titles page on the Web. We urge depository librarians to evaluate these alternatives and forward their comments and reactions to LPS.

2. Council reaffirms the principle that paper is a viable format for disseminating Government information. When choosing publications for scanning, Council reminds GPO that a basic assumption stated in the Strategic Plan <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/dpos/rep_cong/images/exhibit.pdf> is that paper and microfiche will continue to be distributed when appropriate for user needs.

Rationale

Council remains concerned that, while GPO and the other participants of the Study process have formally recognized the importance of paper as an appropriate format, the short term economic benefit of electronic conversion will overshadow this principle. Council, as an advisory body to the Public Printer, wishes to keep the issue of appropriate information media squarely before GPO, and recommends that this principle be reinforced during any deliberations and plans regarding dissemination formats.

Response

According to the Strategic Plan included in the Study Report, the FDLP will continue to offer information products in a variety of formats and media, including paper, microfiche, CD-ROM, video, slides, floppy diskettes, or solely electronic products. GPO has included in the Strategic Plan a group of core titles that must remain in the FDLP in paper, even if they also are published as either tangible or remotely accessible products. These titles support the public's right to know about the essential activities of their Government. GPO has requested funding to continue providing these titles in paper format as long as they are published in paper.

Plans to move products from paper and microfiche to a largely electronic format have been made in relation to a five to seven year transition period, which allows time for term contracts to be modified as agencies move to electronic dissemination of content. Current conversion of products to electronic formats generally occurs in conjunction with agency publishing decisions, such as when an agency discontinues a paper or microfiche product and LPS is offered only an electronic format. We are also reviewing the List of Classes to identify inactive item numbers and classification numbers. At the present, newsletters and current awareness products are subject to being discontinued when the content is located on an electronic site, and telephone books and directories are being discontinued when a CD-ROM is distributed through the FDLP or when we point to an electronic site. Council and the depository community will be advised before any large categories of material are identified for conversion to an electronic format.

Bibliographic Access Issues

1. Council applauds the efforts of the Electronic Transition Staff and the Cataloging Branch to develop diverse and creative approaches toward providing bibliographic access to Government information in electronic formats. However, Council recommends that GPO provide a mechanism that will search these multiple directories simultaneously. Alternatively, Council suggests merging the files of the Pathway List of Titles and the Bibliographic Records Project so that those items residing at GPO sites will be searched along with those items residing at other Federal Government agency sites.

Rationale

Council sees significant advantages in providing for such simultaneous searching capabilities. As the amount of Government information on the Internet increases, it will be increasingly difficult to track or separate, for searching purposes, information residing at GPO sites and Government information residing elsewhere. There are potential advantages for GPO in this approach as well. Since the Pathway List of Titles and the Bibliographic Records Project both provide title-level access to electronic Government information products, the efforts directed toward the two projects could be consolidated to create one unified title index.

Response

We appreciate Council's recommendation to provide a single search option for various locator related services. Our decision to catalog remotely accessible electronic titles at non-GPO Internet sites establishes the Monthly Catalog as a single source of this information and meets the need for a coordinated search platform for Internet titles.

The suite of Pathway Services includes the Browse Electronic Titles Page that includes documents located at GPO and at other agency web sites. Materials identified for inclusion on the Browse Electronic Titles page are also cataloged into the Monthly Catalog, thus meeting Council's recommendation to provide direction to resources located at other Federal Government agency sites. LPS staff are also working with staff in Production to develop a program to take the user from the Browse Electronic Titles page individual title entry directly to the Monthly Catalog record without re-keying on the MoCat search page. This will allow the Browse Electronic Titles page to fulfill the announcement of electronic access to depository libraries for individual products, while relying on the flagship application of the online Monthly Catalog to meet bibliographic information needs as it has done for print products.

2. Council recommends that GPO develop and incorporate, within its suite of Pathway Government Electronic Products, records that communicate "continues" and "continued by" notes, as well as previous format statements. Council further recommends that depository libraries be notified when print/microfiche titles are replaced by electronic, Internet-accessible titles.

Rationale

In this very dynamic environment of electronic Government information, it is essential that records contain sufficient information for depository librarians to provide accurate and efficient service. This includes, but is not limited to, being able to tell a patron that prior to this date this title was distributed to depository libraries in paper/fiche or after this date this title was made available via the Internet at this URL (universal resource locator). Communication of this information is also necessary so that similar notations may be made in local shelflists and/or OPAC (online public access catalog) entries.

Response

We appreciate Council's interest in policies that link and describe the relationship between records for physical forms and electronic equivalents. Our policy is to link records for the most recently published physical forms to records for their remotely accessible electronic versions. Serials records have been produced in accordance with this practice for several years. Because of Council's concerns, this practice is being expanded to provide links between monograph records for tangible products and monograph records for their electronic equivalents.

3. Council supports the Library Programs Service (LPS) proposal that a Superintendent of Documents classification stem and an accession number be assigned to each Government information product accessible via GPO Access to partially serve as a unique locator.

Rationale

Provision of a classification number with a stem represents a transitional middle ground which will assist depository librarians to relate Internet sources to previously printed information and help to identify the provenance of electronic publications. It is anticipated that in the future this program may be superseded by other programs, such as the Persistent Uniform Resource Locator (PURL) that is under development internationally.

Response

LPS appreciates Council support of this proposal, and notes the value of the discussions which took place at the Spring 1996 Council meeting in refining this concept. When a new product is classified, an appropriate classification number stem is utilized and an accession number from ACSIS (LPS' Acquisition, Classification and Shipment Information System) is assigned to the product. LPS continues to discuss with other agencies the need for a persistent name to be attached to electronic information products from the beginning of the life cycle of the product to the end, but a specific project has not yet been established. This is one of the issues that will be considered in the assessment of standards to be done by NCLIS, in coordination with NARA and NIST.

Retention, Preservation, And Long-Term Access Issues

1. Council affirms that the Federal Government has the responsibility to ensure that Government information is preserved. All Government information made available to the public through GPO Access, as well as information at Federal agency sites to which the public is directed by GPO Pathway services, should be considered Federal depository information and should be preserved in perpetuity unless determined otherwise by the Superintendent of Documents.

Rationale

In the increasingly decentralized electronic environment within the Federal Government, it has become increasingly difficult to ensure that all Government information is identified and becomes a candidate for retention, access, and preservation. Consequently, a centralized coordinating authority such as the Superintendent of Documents is more necessary than ever. In the absence of a central authority that identifies Government information worthy of retention, much valuable information may be lost forever.

Response

GPO agrees with the underlying principle of this recommendation. In the Study Report we stated:

Government information is part of our national heritage... Therefore, it is a Government obligation to guarantee the preservation of Government information for future generations of Americans... Despite changing times and technologies, public access to these types of information in a meaningful format must be maintained in perpetuity to ensure the continued accountability of the Government to its present and future citizens.

As the agency responsible for administration of the FDLP, GPO assumes responsibility for coordinating a distributed system for the provision of permanent access to Government information products made available through the FDLP, including – when appropriate – information products that Federal agencies post to agency Internet sites. The word appropriate is used because it is recognized that not all Federal information posted to the Internet is within the definition of Federal Government information products for which the GPO assumes responsibility.

Furthermore, given our commitment to providing permanent, meaningful access to FDLP information resources, GPO fully intends to provide access in perpetuity to GPO Access databases and all Federal Government information products within the custody of the GPO or GPO partner institutions.

2. Council recommends that the Public Printer coordinate with the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) to develop plans for preserving material and to determine the categories of material that NARA will maintain.

Rationale

NARA's current practices and policies probably would not ensure that all important public information in electronic formats would be preserved for posterity. For instance, NARA does not currently retain electronic information for which there is no source documentation. Further, NARA converts information to the lowest common source format, such as ASCII, and does not retain distinct software interfaces for databases. Council recommends that GPO, in discussion with NARA, adopt the principle that information retired to NARA will, insofar as possible, be as accessible as before it was retired; in other words, the information should be complete, searchable, and available when it is needed by the user. For electronic information that NARA will not be maintaining, or for information to which NARA cannot ensure adequate access, GPO and the depository library community should look for other partners willing to maintain access to the information.

Response

The need for coordination with NARA on a variety of topics is a significant concern to the GPO. The GPO believes that to

ensure permanent public access to official electronic Government information products, NARA, NIST, and other appropriate stakeholders must be consulted to establish authenticity, provide persistent identification and description of Government information products, and establish appropriate arrangements for continuing accessibility. The Electronic Transition Staff (ETS) has been given the responsibility for coordinating a dialog with NARA to identify common issues and to discuss measures which might be taken to address these issues jointly.

GPO shares Council's concern that electronic Federal Government information products be preserved, and that preserved products be readily available in a useful format. GPO perceives the specific function of preservation to be within the mission of NARA. However, much as regional libraries provide permanent access to FDLP information products issued in tangible formats, the GPO plans to provide ready and useful permanent access to electronic Government information products either through GPO or through FDLP partner institutions, particularly for products that would be less available or useful through preservation programs. We have met with NARA concerning these issues, and have come to a general agreement that GPO and NARA will cooperate in planning for permanent access to and preservation of electronic Government information products.

3. In providing guidance on partnerships between libraries and other non-governmental entities (as recommended by Council in Fall 1995), GPO should stress the importance of providing for long-term access and identifying responsibilities for archiving data.

Rationale

Council recognizes the number of partnerships being formed between depository libraries and Federal agencies for accessing electronic information. Council views these arrangements as a positive trend in the transition to an electronic depository library system. Increasing the number of sites housing electronic Government information can help ensure long-term access. However, Council believes LPS should develop model agreements which libraries can use in negotiating with Federal agencies. The model agreements will help ensure that libraries and agencies consider minimum standards for technical and service issues including archiving data for long-term access.

In addition, model agreements will allow LPS to serve as a central source for information on electronic partnerships for Federal Government information.

Response

GPO has recognized the need for partnering to ensure permanent access to FDLP information products and has assigned the task of further developing the concept of FDLP partnerships to the ETS. Immediate objectives of the ETS include the creation of model agreements that identify major criteria and responsibilities for FDLP partners, the establishment of several prototype partnerships with FDLP libraries, and the exploration of partnering agreements with Federal agencies. ETS plans to hold a focus-group session at the Fall 1996 Depository Library Council Meeting in Salt Lake City to discuss major issues and criteria pertaining to the permanent access and partnership concepts.

Training And Communications Issues

1. Council recommends that GPO offer a training component at the Fall Depository Library Council Meeting in Salt Lake City. Council offers its assistance with planning and, as appropriate, providing some of the training.

Rationale

Training continues to be eagerly sought by Government information specialists. The success of the 1996 spring Conference is ample testimony to this fact. In its Strategic Plan FY 1996 - FY 2001, GPO identified training as one of several support services it should provide to libraries and librarians (p. 11). Council recognizes that the training sessions at the fall meeting

probably cannot be as elaborate as those provided at the spring Conference. However, with the addition of an extra half day to the schedule to accommodate Council's need for daytime work sessions, extra time could also be devoted to training. Council believes that with creative planning the costs of providing training sessions could be minimized. Providing such opportunities for professional growth would also enhance GPO's image within the depository library community.

Response

A 3-hour demonstration of GPO Access will be conducted during the fall 1996 Council meeting in Salt Lake City. Computer facilities were not available to conduct "hands on" training classes as contractual obligations were in place before this recommendation was received and computer labs at area depositories were not available. In planning for future fall Council meetings, the need for a "hands on" training site will be considered.

2. Council encourages the GPO staff involved in writing documentation for electronic products to work with gateway libraries and other interested librarians (i.e. technical support personnel) to create user-friendly documentation. Council is pleased to offer its assistance in the organization of such a group which would develop a mechanism for facilitating coordination and communication between those individuals involved with writing user-friendly documentation and others who would advise them.

Rationale

Council is mindful of the dedication and effort that the GPO staff exert in the writing of documentation for electronic information products. We believe that with greater involvement from the user community, the task would be less burdensome for GPO and provide an increased amount of user-friendly documentation.

Response

GPO's Office of Electronic Information Dissemination Services (EIDS) provides GPO Access training, documentation and user support for depository librarians and other users. We welcome user input and comments regarding our training products, and make every attempt to address such feedback when these products are revised. Documents librarians and other GPO Access users are encouraged to send any comments or suggestions for improving the GPO Access service or training products by using the e-mail address fdlphelp@gpo.gov located at the bottom of our Web pages.

3. Council recommends that GPO establish an official mechanism that enables them to communicate electronically with depository libraries.

Rationale

This "official" communications channel should have the capability to enable GPO to disseminate official, system-wide communications as well as receive information from the depository libraries. Types of communication activity should include (but not be limited to) conducting surveys in a timely manner, posting *Administrative Notes* and other information tools, initiating claims, disseminating news releases and announcements, etc. This mechanism is not intended to be used as a discussion forum.

Response

LPS inaugurated an FDLP Program Administration page on GPO's Web site in August. The direct link is http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/dpos/fdlppro.html. LPS publications, such as the "Guidelines for the Federal Depository Library Program", *Administrative Notes* and *Administrative Notes Technical Supplement*, and the "Superseded List" are available for viewing or download. Meeting announcements and key LPS staff lists, linked with e-mail addresses, are also available.

Beginning January 1, 1997, LPS will upload only the Tables of Contents from *Administrative Notes* and *Administrative Notes Technical Supplement* to the GOVDOC-L listserv. Those interested in the complete electronic text must use our Web site. A

printed copy of these publications will continue to be distributed to all depository libraries in the shipment boxes.

We are currently in the early stages of planning and developing applications which will allow the receipt of FDLP-related information via Web forms transactions. Applications under consideration include selection surveys, conference registrations, claims, etc., from depository librarians, and electronic information product notifications from agency publishers.

GPO Operational And Technical Issues

1. Council recommends that GPO set as a high priority supplying GPO cataloging personnel with adequate computer equipment, Internet accessibility, and appropriate software so that they can carry out their responsibilities.

Rationale

As the central coordinating authority for bibliographic access to electronic Federal Government information, it is imperative that GPO staff have the necessary technical infrastructure, equipment, and support in place in order to identify, catalog, and monitor Government Internet sources and provide necessary bibliographic access to these sources for libraries and users.

Response

Staff in LPS have access to computer equipment with Internet capability. While the number of computers actually connected to the Internet does not yet equal the number of staff, this number has increased greatly from last spring and we are awaiting placement of wiring and equipment for connection to a LAN to provide the rest of the requisite Internet connections.

2. Council recommends that GPO take full advantage of its World Wide Web site to provide the broadest access to information about the Federal Depository Library Program and databases and resources such as the Publications Reference File (PRF).

Response

Programming has been done to bring the PRF online via GPO's Web site. As stated above, LPS has developed and mounted the FDLP Program Administration page, through which we intend to provide depository libraries future online access to their item selection profiles.

3. Council recommends that GPO invest in Universal Resource Locator (URL) verification software.

Rationale

The present World Wide Web URL technology is not designed to have any reliable amount of persistence. Consequently, a significant portion of the information referenced with URLs becomes lost on a weekly basis. The URL verification software cannot fix broken URLs, but it can at least demonstrate which URLs seem to have become obsolete at the time the URL verification is attempted. These URLs might then be considered for elimination or re-location to the new URL.

Response

LPS staff have acquired a URL checker that is run on the Browse Electronic Titles list on a regular basis. As the URLs in the online MoCat are CGI (Common Gateway Interface) script, the regular URL checkers will not work for this resource. Cataloging Branch staff are working with programmers to develop a program to check the URLs in the online Monthly Catalog.

DLC Action Items

1. Council will submit a written response with comments to GPO regarding the draft Report to Congress within the 60 day comment period. Copies of these comments will be forwarded to the appropriate Congressional committees.
2. Council will conduct an orientation session at the Fall 1996 DLC meeting in Salt Lake City to introduce new documents librarians and first-time attendees to the mission, organization, meetings, and work of the DLC.
3. Prior to the Fall 1996 Council meeting, Council should examine the issue of service expectations for depository information in online electronic formats. The lack of selectivity for online formats and its relationship to collection development should also be considered, as well as the relative responsibilities of regional and selective depositories for depository information in online electronic formats.
4. Statistical Measurement Committee

Members:

- Anne Watts, Chair
- Cindy Etkin
- Lynn Walshak

Charge: Support the efforts of GPO in gathering, analyzing, and disseminating statistical information in support of the Federal Depository Library Program. A progress report of actions of the Committee will be provided at the Fall 1996 meeting of the Depository Library Council.

Tasks:

- a. To develop a statistical survey that can be used annually.
 - b. To create a glossary of terms to ensure consistent data collection among all depository libraries.
 - c. To explore or identify existing statistical studies that would be useful for these efforts (i.e. cost benefit, input-output measures).
 - d. To provide guidance in identifying a valid random sampling from among depository libraries and other measures of data collection.
5. Council will develop guidelines for the new DLC web site and will develop mechanisms for adding/updating information on the web site.

Commendations

1. The Depository Library Council commends Wayne Kelley, Chair of the Study; Judy Russell, Chair of the Working Group; Jay Young, and Gil Baldwin for their leadership and hard work in the production of the "Report to the Congress: Study to Identify Measures Necessary for a Successful Transition to a More Electronic Depository Library Program."
2. The Depository Library Council commends Julia Wallace, of the University of Minnesota, for representing the depository library community on the GPO Study Work Group.

3. The Depository Library Council commends Maggie Parhamovich Farrell and Raeann Dossett for assisting in the development of GPO Pathway services.
4. The Depository Library Council commends Kathryn McConnell of GPO Creative Services for her graphic design and assistance on Council's project, "Fulfilling Madison's Vision."
5. The Depository Library Council commends Sheila McGarr and GPO staff for their extraordinary planning and organization of a very, very successful 1996 Depository Library Conference.
6. The Depository Library Council commends GPO for providing and distributing diskettes of the American Library Association Government Documents Round Table Handout Exchange at the 1996 Federal Depository Library Conference.
7. The Depository Library Council wishes to thank the Public Printer, Michael F. DiMario, for extending Council sessions by an extra day to allow time for Council input, deliberations, and development of recommendations.

DEPOSITORY LIBRARY COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESPONSES

FALL MEETING, OCTOBER 20-24, 1996 • SALT LAKE CITY, UT

Revision of Title 44 & H.R. 4280

Council commends the Public Printer and his staff for involving both the Council and the library community in developing its legislative proposals revising Title 44 Chapter 19. We support the changes proposed by the Public Printer that were transmitted to the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration on August 22, 1996.

Council urges the Public Printer to continue to monitor developments regarding Title 44 and to continue to keep Council and the community informed and involved.

Rationale

Council appreciates the continuing proactive role the Public Printer and the GPO are playing in support of public access to government information. Regarding revision of Title 44, Council has reviewed HR 4280 and finds little benefit within the bill and its proposed revision. Council could not recommend support for this or similar legislation since it runs counter to the principle of enhancing public access to government information. Council offers its assistance in incorporating the previously presented definitions, principles, etc., and any new initiatives into proposed legislation. Members of Council will be monitoring developments through their participation in professional organizations.

Response

The Government Printing Office (GPO) appreciates Council's deep interest in Congressional actions concerning the possible amendments to Chapter 19 of Title 44 USC. We are closely monitoring all developments which may affect our enabling legislation, and we will keep Council and the depository library community informed of significant actions.

Service Policy Statements

Council recommends that GPO require the depository libraries to develop policy statements for service issues. In order to facilitate the development of such policies, Council recommends GPO issue guidelines for the development of the policy statements.

Rationale

Council recognizes the need for depositories to develop policies on such service issues as printing and downloading from electronic products, basic Windows/DOS software instruction, Internet access, microfiche duplication, photocopying fees, and other areas. Council also recognizes the historical precedent for such policy statements (i.e., collection development policies). Given the diverse local environment within depository libraries, GPO should issue general guidelines which will offer a framework for local policy development. A completion date of one year after issuance of guidelines is recommended. Once articulated, these local policy statements should become part of any inspection process. Council will assist in the development of such general guidelines.

Response

GPO supports the development of a policy statement covering such electronic public service issues as providing basic instruction for patrons in using the Internet, loading CD-ROM discs, charges for printing, circulation of tangible electronic products, ready reference, etc. General guidelines, similar to the "Collection Development Guidelines for Selective Depository

Libraries,” could be issued as a Federal Depository Library Manual Supplement.

GPO asks that the Depository Library Council appoint a working group similar to the “Guidelines” revision committee to include representatives from Council, regional and selective depository libraries, and GPO. The group’s composition should also reflect academic, public, law, and other types of depository library concerns.

A draft policy statement could be presented at the Fall 1997 Council meeting

Graphic Intensive Publications

Council recommends that GPO further investigate the best presentation of Graphic Intensive Publications and, if unable to resolve the problems identified by Council, that GPO amend the policy so that these publications remain in paper.

Rationale

Council remains concerned with the conversion of graphic intensive publications by GPO. These publications are often intended for general dissemination. Due to the nature of the topics of some of them, patrons may be uncomfortable reading them on public work stations. Some of those publications that have already been converted to PDF or JPG formats, especially the charts and graphics within them, are unreadable. The ability and time necessary to download the information and the poor quality of the resulting print product also inhibit access. While a different level of scanning or other technological options may improve the quality and usability of them, Council is not convinced that this is the best treatment. Since most of these publications will remain widely available in paper from the issuing agency or the Consumer Information Center, Council believes that these materials should remain in paper format in depository libraries.

Response

At Council’s request, the Library Programs Service (LPS) undertook a special project to scan seven graphically intensive publications and mounted them on GPO Access in JPEG, PDF, and ASCII formats. The online versions were experimental and in addition to the normal distribution in either paper or microfiche.

This project demonstrated the expense and difficulty of converting documents from a paper format to an effective electronic format. Of the responses received evaluating the two image formats, user preference was evenly divided between JPEG and PDF. But all libraries preferred the text-only ASCII format over either of the image formats, because of ease of use and the shorter time required to download the material.

Current LPS policy does not include routine scanning of graphically intensive documents. As this special project demonstrated, scanning is an expensive alternative and the resulting products may have limited appeal for librarians in the depository community.

The degree to which some patrons may be uncomfortable using certain information products at a public access workstation is offset, in part, by the increased ability to use such materials from privacy of one’s home. In many ways popular topic information such as *Marijuana Facts: Parents Need to Know* is more useful in an online electronic format. It is then available for the many students that need to have the information when the single depository paper copy cannot be located. High interest topics in pamphlet format may be the first resources to disappear from library collections. If such products are available in an online format, users will be able to access the resources when they are needed.

Established policies identify the format for these products when they are produced through GPO. For products not produced through GPO, it is the agency’s responsibility to provide sufficient copies for distribution to the FDLP. If the agency is unable to provide the required copies, the information is generally sent to libraries in the microfiche format. Scanning for online presentation gives us another option to include this information in the FDLP.

Bureau of the Census

Council recommends that its members work with GPO and the Bureau of the Census to formulate a model of depository access to Census information.

Rationale

Since FDLP libraries are the largest partners in disseminating Census information after the Census Bureau's own Data Centers, Council is concerned with the direction of certain proposals emanating from Census. Council appreciates the Bureau's willingness to discuss various configurations and arrangements for the provision of Census information to the FDLs. The proposed tiered system of access to the Census Direct Access Data Service presents a unique opportunity to establish a model for providing public access to statistical information. FDLs have historically received all published Census products and no-fee Internet services and provided excellent access to them. This historical precedent should continue in any newly created model. Census needs to continue to disseminate the informational content of its products and services regardless of the packaging of that information. Further, such dissemination must continue in the current no-fee model to the cooperating depository libraries and the users they serve. Any proposal that would limit access to a particular geographic site (i.e., the main library) and restrict remote (i.e., branch) access would greatly impede use of essential Census information. Council believes that any proposal must include provisions for multiple access by concurrent users.

Response

The Bureau of the Census intends to offer Federal depository libraries access to the fee-based portion of the Census subscription Web service at no charge to the library. The specifics of the system have not yet been completed, but testing of the system was expected to begin in March. LPS has assisted Census by identifying four depository libraries for system testing.

A copy of Council's recommendation concerning the new Census subscription service was sent to the Bureau of the Census to assist in developing its policy requiring access to the database. Census has advised LPS that multiple users will be allowed to access the database, but the users must access the system from the main library or the facility in which the Government documents department is located. Depository access to the paid database will be limited to a single geographic site.

Council Web Page

Council recommends that the official Council Web pages be hosted by GPO and linked from the GPO Web site. Council further recommends that GPO accept updates from Council.

Rationale

As an advisory body to the Public Printer of the United States, Council believes it is appropriate that its Web pages be located at the Government Printing Office's home page, thus lending authenticity to the information.

Response

GPO will host Council Web pages and accept Web page updates from Council. When Council submits its completed Web pages to LPS, these Web pages will be linked from the FDLP Administration Web page located at <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/dpos/fdlppro.html>.

Partnerships

Council supports GPO's efforts in assigning personnel to address the issues raised in the recommendations from the Spring 1996 meeting of the Depository Library Council to the Public Printer relative to partnerships.

Nevertheless, Council recommends that GPO accept the principle that such partnerships must supplement and not supplant the Federal Government's responsibility to ensure permanent access to and preservation of government information. Council recommends that GPO and the Public Printer facilitate such initiatives.

Council suggests the following issues be considered in the draft Memorandum of Understanding: ownership of electronic source files remains with the Federal Government; all modifications or enhancements to resource files should not permanently alter accessibility and must be fully documented, should reside in an industry standard format and that a backup be maintained; if the partner becomes unable to continue its obligation, it must provide GPO documentation and/or a copy of such modified resources and all enhancements thereto; ADA Compliant formats; and the role of GPO as the coordinating agency.

Rationale

Council also appreciates the opportunity for input and discussion of the issues that are appropriate for a **Memorandum of Understanding Between the U.S. Government Printing Office and (FDLP Partner Institution)**. In addition to the above issues, Council is sensitive to the issue that many supplying agencies are not currently providing GPO with electronic resources that are ADA Compliant and this is an obstacle to providing equitable electronic access. Council, aware of the complexity of partnerships, believes it is essential that GPO and the Public Printer function as the primary coordinating agency. GPO has historically performed this function with tangible products and Council believes it is critical that it continue in this role in the electronic environment.

Response

GPO has undertaken the coordinating role recommended by Council, as exemplified by the memorandum of understanding (MOU) between GPO, the University of Illinois at Chicago, and the Department of State regarding the DOSFAN Electronic Research Collection. Following the discussions at the Fall 1996 Council meeting, GPO expressed its recommendation regarding partnerships. Provisions in the MOU clarify that:

The United States Government Printing Office, as coordinator of the FDLP, has final responsibility for and custody over all Federal Government information products held or made accessible by FDLP libraries or partner institutions.

...All software developed to provide access to the DOSFAN Electronic Research Collection is considered to be an integral part of the Collection.

...Assure that a mechanism is in place which provides a backup for software and data files constituting the DOSFAN Electronic Research Collection....

Consult with the Superintendent of Documents staff on any plans to migrate, reconstitute, or otherwise significantly modify the structure of the information content of or access to the DOSFAN Electronic Research Collection...

Any modifications to or migration of the DOSFAN Electronic Research Collection should take into consideration industry format standards and must not undermine or limit access to the product.

..Upon the request of GPO, provide GPO a functioning copy of the current and historical software and data files that constitute the DOSFAN Electronic Research Collection, to include documentation regarding the product, particularly if UIC is no longer able to support access to the product...

Fall 1997 Meeting Site

The Depository Library Council recommends the following sites for consideration for its Fall 1997 meeting:

- Cincinnati, OH
- Cleveland, OH
- Pittsburgh, PA
- Raleigh-Durham, NC
- Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, FL (on the beach only)

Response

The Fall 1997 meeting of the Depository Library Council to the Public Printer will be held on October 20-23, 1997, at the Adam's Mark Caribbean Gulf Hotel in Clearwater, Florida.

Persistent Uniform Resource Locator (PURL)

Council recommends that the Government Printing Office continue to monitor closely the work on Document Object Identifiers as it relates to persistence in naming.

Rationale

Council is encouraged by the Government Printing Office's interest in PURL as a persistent information location mechanism. However, persistent naming is currently an area of active development with alternatives such as "handles" and URLs (Uniform Resource Names) being advanced on both the technology and policy levels. While experimentation on managing GPO URLs is entirely appropriate, it may be premature to commit to the PURL technology outside of GPO.

Response

We appreciate Council's advice and will continue to consider various technologies for maintaining effective URLs related to *Monthly Catalog* records. As the second largest producer of records with URLs within the OCLC databases, we remain open to other options even as we work with OCLC to adapt its PURL software to maintain viable hot links for GPO applications. We recognize that PURL may be an interim solution, but we are convinced of the necessity to provide a consistent naming mechanism for our GPO locator services as well as the *Monthly Catalog*.

GPO and the Chief Information Officers (CIO) Council

Council recommends that GPO pursue a role in the Chief Information Officers (CIO) Council.

Rationale

It is expected that the CIO Council may have a significant influence on government information dissemination. The CIO Council was established under an Executive Order issued on July 17, 1996, titled: "Federal Information Technology." Section 3 of the Executive Order establishes the Chief Information Officers Council "as the principal interagency forum to improve agency practices on such matters as the design, modernization, use, sharing, and performance of agency information resources. The Council shall: (1) develop recommendations for overall Federal information technology management, policy, procedures, and standards..."

Response

GPO continues to monitor the functions and activities of the Chief Information Officers (CIOs). Although, in general, agency CIOs are responsible for information dissemination and public access activities, it appears that priority attention is being devoted to such issues as the Year 2000 Problem and the technical and procurement aspects of agency systems modernization. GPO will take every opportunity to inform CIOs or their staffs about issues concerning the FDLR, public access to Government information, and permanent public access.

Training Issues

Council recommends that GPO continue to take advantage of every opportunity, including both fall and spring Depository Library Council meetings, professional library association meetings, and workshops or other library-related meetings in the Washington area, to provide training for users of its electronic products and services.

Council recommends that the Superintendent of Documents establish a training center within Library Programs Services for providing training for members of the depository community who will be training others in the use of GPO's products and services.

Council recommends that GPO explore the formation of partnerships with other organizations to provide training in the use of new electronic products and services. It might be useful for GPO to undertake this effort, on a trial basis, with one of the four OCLC networks in or near the Washington, D.C. area (e.g., SOLINET, CAPCON, FEDLINK, PALINET).

Rationale

Depository librarians have identified training in the use of electronic resources and services as a very high priority. Train the trainer sessions, which provide depository librarians with the skills necessary to train others, are in especially high demand. In order to meet this demand for training, Council suggests a variety of approaches.

First, Council believes that one of the most effective ways for GPO to train large numbers of library staff is to provide demonstrations of new products and services at meetings of professional associations, both fall and spring Depository Library Council meetings, and workshops or other library-related meetings in the Washington area.

At the same time, we realize that currently, opportunities for hands-on training in the Washington, D.C. area are limited. We believe that a computer lab/training facility located at the Government Printing Office would make a major contribution towards achieving the goal of providing more widespread training opportunities. Library staff trained in this facility can return to their own communities and train others in the use of GPO products and services.

We further believe that all avenues for potential training partnerships should be explored in order to meet the high demand for training. Council would be pleased to work with GPO to identify potential training partners.

Response

GPO plans to continue to provide training and demonstration of GPO Access products and services at conferences, workshops and through a number of onsite programs at libraries throughout the country.

Additionally, in order to better meet the high demand that has been demonstrated for these training sessions, GPO is pursuing two complementary approaches designed to create "train the trainer" opportunities.

First, GPO is investigating the creation of an onsite training facility to provide a state-of-the-art location for GPO staff to train a number of librarians from different parts of the country who visit us in Washington, D.C.

Secondly, GPO is actively exploring the formation of partnerships with other organizations to provide training on GPO Access products and services.

In February, GPO made a presentation to the Regional OCLC Network Directors Advisory Committee (RONDAC) in Dublin, Ohio. GPO discussed a number of areas of potential collaboration with RONDAC to expand GPO Access training opportunities for the library community. We were very encouraged by the positive reaction of those in attendance, and look forward to working with RONDAC representatives on this joint effort.

Commendations

1. The Depository Library Council commends Thomas A. Downing and the GPO Cataloging Branch for their proactive efforts in cataloging Internet resources and providing hot links to a significant number of records. Council is aware of the great effort required to do so at a time when there are no clear national standards. Council also appreciates the decrease in the cataloging backlog of physical formats and commends all members of the cataloging staff for their continued success.
2. The Depository Library Council commends the Government Printing Office for adding the *Code of Federal Regulations* to GPO Access and asks that our appreciation be transmitted to the Office of the Federal Register for their cooperation in this project. We also thank GPO for providing a toll free GPO Access Customer Support telephone number.
3. The Depository Library Council commends Robin Haun-Mohamed and the staff of the Depository Administration Branch for its hard work and success in bringing fugitive government information into the Federal Depository Library Program.
4. The Depository Library Council commends Judith C. Russell, formerly Director, Office of Electronic Information Dissemination Service, for her leadership and hard work on behalf of the depository community. Her tireless efforts in assisting with the development of GPO Access as well as her collaboration in the completion of the Report to Congress: Study to Identify the Measures Necessary for a Successful Transition to a More Electronic Depository Library Program <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/dpos/studyhtm.html> are especially noteworthy.

Action Items

The Ad Hoc Committee on FDLP Statistical Assessment will continue to work with GPO on service and use statistical issues.

1997

DEPOSITORY LIBRARY COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESPONSES

SPRING MEETING, APRIL 14-17, 1997 • ARLINGTON, VA

Title 44 Revision

Council supports in principle the goals for reforming Title 44 as outlined by Eric Peterson, Staff Director of the Joint Committee on Printing, in his keynote address to the 1997 Federal Depository Conference on April 14, 1997: to resolve the constitutional separation of powers issue; to establish an enforceable compliance mechanism; to ensure public access to taxpayer supported information by preserving and protecting the Federal Depository Library Program; and to ensure that both Title 44 and the Federal Depository Library Program are able to operate effectively in this era of changing dynamics and technologies. Council believes that any reform of Title 44 U.S.C. should include the August 1996 proposed revisions to Chapter 19 submitted by the GPO to the Senate Rules Committee. We believe that the level of specificity articulated in the August 1996 revision is necessary to successfully address these complex issues.

Response

On May 29, 1997, GPO provided a package of revisions and legislative language to the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration, which we believe meets the specificity of the August 1996 draft language concerning the Federal Depository Library Program. GPO's proposed changes were provided to the library community for information.

The draft changes proposed by GPO are intended to respond to the objectives for Title 44 reform outlined at a hearing held on April 24, 1997, by the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration, at which the Public Printer offered to provide legislative language to achieve reform of the public printing and documents chapters of Title 44.

The suggestions for language developed by GPO staff can be grouped into three broad categories:

- Transfer of JCP responsibilities to the Public Printer;
- Modernization of the Chapter 19 provisions concerning the Depository Library Program;
- Miscellaneous changes to provide GPO with greater flexibility in the management of its operations.

Endorsement of JCP Consultations with GPO and NARA

Council endorses the Joint Committee on Printing's pending action, as announced by Eric Peterson on April 14, 1997, to consult with the Government Printing Office and the National Archives and Records Administration to define their respective roles in the preservation of and permanent access to electronic Government information.

Response

The roles of GPO and the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) need to be more clearly defined as to the preservation of and permanent access to electronic government information. Some of the items for potential action affecting these roles include:

- Permanent access to Government information. This includes defining the relative scope of our missions, i.e., GPO's interest in providing permanent public access to Federal digital publications, compared to the broader NARA mandate to deal with the entire spectrum of Federal records.
- The NCLIS "Assessment of Electronic Government Information Products" project. We believe that the information

obtained from this project will assist both GPO and NARA to plan for permanent access to electronic Government information.

- GPO's interest in becoming an NARA "affiliate" for core electronic products in GPO Access.
- GPO's efforts to develop a "Collection Management Plan" for remotely accessible electronic products available on or through GPO Access.

Collection Management Officer for Electronic Products in Superintendent of Documents

The Depository Library Council recommends that the Public Printer create, within the Office of the Superintendent of Documents, the position of collection management officer for electronic products. The implementation of a collection management program for electronic products, whether stored on facilities operated by GPO, by GPO partner institutions outside the Federal Government, or in coordination with other Federal agencies, should be the primary responsibility of this officer. Collection management in this context should encompass selection, acquisition, organization, maintenance, and preservation activities for electronic products and services.

Rationale

When tangible products are distributed to FDLR libraries, GPO has no further responsibility for the preservation of or permanent public access to these products. These responsibilities are fulfilled by the nationwide system of depository libraries. However, in the world of non-tangible electronic Government information products, GPO must take responsibility for the entire life cycle management of these products to ensure that tomorrow's users of Government information can find the Government information they require.

Response

A concept paper entitled "Managing the GPO Access Collection: Permanent Access to Electronic Government Information Products" has been prepared by GPO. Based on the concepts in this paper, a team led by the Library Programs Service (LPS) has been meeting to develop a Collection Management Plan for GPO Access. The group is comprised of staff from LPS, the Office of Electronic Information Dissemination Services (EIDS), and Production. The group has discussed and reviewed collection plans from libraries in Federal agencies and academia, life cycle management issues, organizational roles within and outside of GPO, target audiences, and the scope of the proposal. The team is also drafting a position description for the Collection Development Manager, one of two positions proposed in the Plan.

NTIS-GPO Pilot Project

Council is encouraged by the National Technical Information Service (NTIS) and University of California, Davis pre-pilot project, which provides for no-fee distribution of Federal Government information products from the NTIS collection in electronic format directly to a Federal depository library. We recommend that GPO pursue an expanded pilot project with NTIS that will test the effectiveness of such distribution to a range of depository libraries.

Ongoing evaluation of the project should address the issues of: expanding the range of material available; allowing the end user to receive an electronic copy of Federal Government information; and no-fee depository access to the full range of NTIS bibliographic data.

Rationale

Council encourages cooperation between GPO and NTIS in providing no-fee public access to the Government information products in the NTIS collection previously available only at a cost to Federal depository libraries. However, Council has grave

concerns about the copyright-like restrictions imposed by NTIS, which prevent further dissemination of the electronic image files.

When the information is in machine-readable form, the user should be able to obtain the information at the location most convenient for use, and should be able to study and evaluate the information before determining whether or what parts to print. Such study and evaluation may in some instances be more effectively done outside the library environment and should not be subject to workstation and print constraints.

Council also encourages cooperation between GPO and NTIS in providing no-fee public access to the NTIS electronic bibliographic database, which would assist Federal depository libraries in identifying Federal Government information products.

Response

GPO is seeking JCP approval to participate in the expanded pilot project to provide depository libraries with access to electronic image files from the National Technical Information Service (NTIS). The next step in the project will be to publish an announcement on GOVDOC-L and in Administrative Notes soliciting volunteers for the pilot project. We will work to include public and small academic depository libraries among the libraries participating in the next phase of the test. The technical requirements for successfully accessing these reports were shared with the depository community in the original announcement.

GPO shares Council's concerns regarding any NTIS policies which may restrict the re-dissemination of the electronic files. GPO's position is that the public must have free and unrestricted access to all information in the FDLP, and this position has been expressed to NTIS each time GPO and NTIS have discussed the pilot project. GPO believes that this pilot project, which will make a significant body of scientific and technical information available under the auspices of the FDLP for the first time, can result in significant benefits to the program. We will continue to work with NTIS to fully include the NTIS scientific and technical information in the FDLP and eliminate all copyright-like restrictions on the material.

GPO Web Site

Council recommends that GPO appoint a Web Site Coordinator to facilitate consistent agency-wide Web development, structure, and navigation, and that GPO enhance its Web-based resources by redesigning the Web pages to be more intuitive to all user audiences. This redesign should include the following:

1. "Search-This-Site" mechanism which, at a minimum, will index by agency, product title, subject, and keyword.
2. A cumulative electronic product listing with scope notes, site configurations and mechanisms so that GPO Web resources can be included in the search results of commonly used Web search engines.

Rationale

GPO Web site resources continue to grow in importance as more are added from various divisions of GPO. With growth come difficulties in locating desired information within the site, and in coordinating the consistent and directed inclusion of information from various providers. A Web-site coordinator would eliminate these problems. While remaining aware of security issues inherent with this recommendation, Council suggests that GPO does the following to facilitate public access to GPO Web resources beyond the depository community: 1) continue to rearrange, redesign, and enhance its Web site to meet the needs of various user groups such as the legislators, depository librarians, reference librarians, and the general public; 2) develop internal location tools to facilitate searching and locating information sources within the GPO site (i.e., Index-This-Site); and 3) devise methodologies that facilitate the inclusion of GPO information into the results of popular Web search

engines like Yahoo, AltaVista, InfoSeek and other appropriate Web crawlers and information gathering mechanisms.

Response

GPO agrees that coordination is essential to maximize the effectiveness of the GPO Access Web Site. Much of the infrastructure for this coordination is already in place within the Superintendent of Documents organization. By agreement with the Production Department, a designated representative from the Office of Electronic Information Dissemination Services (EIDS) serves as the coordinator for submitting all changes to GPO Access Web pages. While these changes come from many areas within Documents, they are reviewed by the coordinator to ensure that the pages conform to conventions and are assigned control numbers before being passed on to Production for implementation. This coordination effort also includes follow-up verification to ensure that the requested changes have been made and are working properly.

GPO has also taken the additional step of forming the Documents Web Page Committee, composed of representatives from GPO's Library Programs Service, Documents Sales Service, EIDS, and Production Services. This committee was formed to share knowledge and information about Web page design and development, and to serve as a review panel for major changes, such as the redesign of the main GPO Access page.

The GPO Access pages have been redesigned to be more intuitive to all audiences, by taking advantage of both our internal skills and useful feedback from the user community. The Documents Web Page Committee received particularly effective guidance from participants in a focus group held during the 1997 spring Federal Depository Library Conference. This focus group was built around the question of how to make the GPO Access site more useful. In particular, the GPO Access main page was changed to provide easy access to the products and services of GPO Access regardless of the level of familiarity that the user has with GPO Access or Government information in general. GPO is also exploring the feasibility of creating a "Search-This-Site" tool using existing WAIS software. GPO hopes to have a prototype of this application available for your use and feedback in the near future. At this time, GPO has not opened its site to external search engines due to continuing efforts to minimize system response time and address security concerns.

Frames Technology

Council supports the use of frames technology on the GPO Web site, as long as users accessing the pages using Lynx or non-graphical software have functionality comparable to those using graphical user interfaces.

Rationale

Frames technology has the potential of providing GPO Web site users with a quick and more user-friendly method of accessing materials located on the GPO Web site. Council recognizes that some users accessing the GPO Web site lack the software necessary to use frames technologies. Council supports the premise that people using lower end technologies to access the GPO Web pages should be as well served as users employing more sophisticated means of access. Therefore, Council recommends that GPO utilize alternative methods for providing access to the information included within the frame which would allow users to select the frames or non-frames version of the Web page.

Response

In order to ensure that the general public can successfully use GPO Access, LPS will not employ frames technology on the Pathway Services pages at this time. Other GPO Access applications may offer a frames interface as a user-selected option. CBDNet is the first example of this approach.

If in the future we find other appropriate product for a frames application, we will take into account the limitations of the Lynx users. Eventually, however, those libraries and public users relying on Lynx technology will need to upgrade their capabilities, as

other agencies are constructing Web pages and applications that are not compatible with Lynx.

Core Documents of Democracy

Council endorses the concept behind development of the Core Documents of Democracy: An Electronic Collection as originally presented to Council for review. This collection “should be made available for free, permanent, public access via GPO Access service” and should include vital information beyond the scope of the original list. However, Council recommends that GPO delete the words “of democracy” so that it can more readily include information beyond the scope of the original list. Furthermore, Council recommends that GPO formulate a collection development policy in cooperation with the library community to ensure that it defines such issues as criteria for inclusion, authenticity of information, and organization of this collection.

Rationale

As the Internet continues to become one of the primary resources for permanent public access to Federal Government information, GPO needs a mechanism whereby it can proactively identify information that belongs in a permanent electronic collection and arrange for its incorporation into GPO Access. Furthermore GPO must have the ability to include information already in electronic format as well as to arrange for conversion to electronic format of other information of historical importance. Council believes that the public’s right to know includes access to information beyond the scope defined as Core Documents of Democracy and looks forward to seeing a more fully developed concept.

Response

In order to provide American citizens with direct online access to the basic Federal Government documents that define our democratic society, a core group of current and historical U.S. Government publications is being made available for free, permanent, public access via GPO Access. Where appropriate, the core documents collection points to content at other official Government sites, for example at the National Archives and Records Administration’s Web site. Core Documents of U.S. Democracy, located at <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/dpos/coredocs.html> went “live” at the end of June 1997.

Council Action Items

Biennial Survey

The Working Group on Statistical Measurement will continue to work with the Government Printing Office to develop the 1997 and 1999 Biennial Surveys. Council recognizes the short lead time before the 1997 survey is to be conducted and, therefore, suggests that the depository community be alerted to the general nature of the changes in the survey from the 1995 version as soon as possible. Council believes that the survey should use standard library definitions, ask for basic information, and provide for longitudinal analysis and result in a report of benchmark data for the library community.

Service Guidelines Working Group

Council will appoint a working group to draft public services guidelines for electronic Government information in depository libraries. The working group will include representation reflecting various types of depository library concerns. It will present a progress report at the fall 1997 meeting and a final report to Council at its spring 1998 meeting.

Commendations

Commendation to William W. Thompson, GPO staff

The Depository Library Council commends William W. Thompson of the staff of the Director of the Library Programs Service for his professionalism and resourcefulness in support of Council's work. We deeply appreciate his efforts on our behalf, including the planning and coordination he does prior to the meetings and his cooperative "can-do" spirit when we need him to work his magic to smooth out logistical problems during our sessions.

Commendation on the GILS Application on GPO Access

Council commends the Government Printing Office for creating the Government Information Locator Service (GILS) application on the GPO Access system. This application provides a single point of access for users to search the GILS records of 26 executive branch agencies. The recent enhancement that provides transparent remote access through this application to the GILS records of 14 additional agencies increases the value of this unique service. We commend GPO for developing a partnership with the National Archives and Records Administration to fulfill the Privacy Act provisions of the GILS mandate for all Federal agencies. The impressive user statistics for this application and the very positive public comments demonstrate that this centralized point of access is a valuable means of locating Government information in all formats. We encourage the GPO to continue to develop the GILS application on GPO Access as a valuable service for libraries and the American public.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND COMMENDATIONS OF THE DEPOSITORY LIBRARY COUNCIL TO THE PUBLIC PRINTER

FALL MEETING, OCTOBER 20-23, 1997 • CLEARWATER BEACH, FL

Recommendation 1: Serial Set

Council recommends that the Government Printing Office distribute those documents and reports that comprise the Serial Set in acid free paper with margins wide enough to enable binding of these important publications. Since CD-ROM has not yet been proven to be an archival medium, Council further recommends that Federal depository libraries be permitted to select this important historical title in dual formats -- CD-ROM and either microfiche or paper.

Rationale

Congress has mandated that only one copy of the bound Serial Set be distributed to each regional depository and one to each state without a regional depository. Many Federal depository libraries recognize the historical importance of the Serial Set for the legal and research communities, and are concerned that their Serial Set documents will deteriorate or disappear over time. Allowing depository libraries to select the Serial Set in both CD-ROM and an archival medium would solve the issue of permanent access to this historical collection and respond to objections to duplicative paper distribution.

Response

The Library Programs Service (LPS) recognizes the historical significance of the documents and reports that comprise the *U.S. Congressional Serial Set*. House and Senate Documents and Reports have been distributed to libraries on acid free paper for the last four years. In March 1998 depository libraries were surveyed to select the Serial Set Title Pages and/or Tables of Contents pages for those libraries wishing to bind their own Serial Set volumes. Libraries will be supplied with the Title Pages, also on acid free paper, as soon as possible after the completion of a Session of Congress, beginning with the 105th Congress, 2nd Session.

Concerning a CD-ROM Serial Set, it is not possible at this time to create a complete electronic Serial Set, since many documents and reports are not currently available in electronic format and are too graphically intense to convert to an electronic format. We will work with the Secretary of the Senate and the Clerk of the House, as well as continue ongoing efforts with the information systems planners in both Chambers, toward the eventual production of a complete electronic Serial Set.

Recommendation 2: askLPS

Council applauds the development of the askLPS feature on the FDLP Administration World Wide Web page, as a significant step forward in efficient communication between LPS and all depository libraries. Council recommends that askLPS and the existing *Administrative Notes Technical Supplement* be examined together in order to provide continuing and cumulative information for depositories on the status of depository publications. Council would like to be actively involved with the development team, and encourages LPS to move forward to implement askLPS as soon as possible

Rationale

Changes in the formats and the SuDocs numbers of depository publications are appearing at a rapid rate as more materials migrate to electronic formats. In addition, titles are moving out of (and sometimes back into) the program in great numbers. The current procedure for announcing each change in the *Administrative Notes Technical Supplement* is useful, but makes it

difficult for librarians to keep track of the many changes and retrieve them when needed. Announcing such changes on a non-official discussion list such as GOVDOC-L also provides a useful service but does not assure that information will be at hand at the time a particular library needs it. A GPO electronic service, which provides a method for asking depository questions, and also a way for sharing answers and information from LPS, will be a service to depositories and will also save LPS staff from answering the same question many times. It will provide a communication channel between LPS and depositories which is more efficient than paper and more official than a privately sponsored discussion list. The service will be most useful if the information posted can be cumulated by subject and searchable by number and title. If askLPS is carefully developed with the needs of the depository libraries in mind, it might be possible to stop the publication of the paper *Administrative Notes Technical Supplement* altogether, providing savings in time and money. Council would like to advise GPO staff on the initial development and future enhancements of askLPS, to assure the most effective organization and features which would fulfill the needs of depositories.

Response

In April 1998 LPS began accepting inquiries and questions from depository librarians and the public via the askLPS service. LPS appreciates the advice and active participation of Council member Julia Wallace in the testing and development of this new service.

The askLPS e-mail address is <asklps@gpo.gov> and the web site address is <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/dpos/asklps.html>. AskLPS is an automated inquiry service that makes filing inquiries and directing e-mail to the appropriate LPS contact easier for those in the depository community. There are five components to askLPS:

- An electronic inquiry form;
- WEBTech Notes, a searchable database for postings made in the *Administrative Notes* and *Administrative Notes Technical Supplement*, dating back to 1991;
- FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) and News;
- FDLP Contacts Page; and
- The Federal Depository Library Directory.

All askLPS inquiries receive an immediate response acknowledging the receipt of the inquiry. LPS's goal is to respond to each inquiry sent to askLPS within 10 working days. Occasionally the first response may be an interim answer when responding to the question requires information from another agency. Inquiries received via askLPS are being given priority over inquiries submitted via fax, telephone, or regular mail. Focusing on this one channel for inquiries should help LPS to track the inquiries as they arrive, and should also minimize the duplication of effort to research inquiries by staff throughout LPS. If an inquiry submitted via fax, telephone, or regular mail is on a matter of general concern to the depository community the response will be incorporated into one of the askLPS applications. Depending upon the subject matter of the inquiry, in addition to a direct reply to the person making the inquiry, the response may appear in the WEBTech Notes, the FAQs, or the News area of askLPS. Although LPS is giving priority to inquiries sent electronically, fax inquiry forms will continue to be a useful mechanism when additional information must accompany the inquiry (e.g. photocopies of title pages, introductory pages, etc.).

Recommendation 3: Managing GPO's Electronic Collection

The Depository Library Council is encouraged that the Government Printing Office has produced the white paper, "Managing the GPO Access Collection," and that GPO is drafting a collection plan with which to manage *GPO Access* databases and other electronic Federal Government publications made available through the FDLP. To ensure the effective management and permanency of the electronic collection, Council recommends that in preparing the collection plan GPO develop policies and

procedures to ensure that permanent access to remotely available electronic publications, including necessary redundancy, will be provided. In particular, Council recommends that GPO:

- 1) Delineate clearly the scope and coverage of the FDLP Electronic Collection;
- 2) Maintain mirror sites to provide the redundancy necessary to ensure uninterrupted service and permanent access to materials in the collection;
- 3) Ensure that outreach efforts to agencies and depository libraries include procedures for providing access to electronic publications temporarily made available on agency Web sites;
- 4) Provide for the preservation of and permanent access to information distributed on CD-ROM and other tangible electronic media to ensure that information currently available on CD-ROM will not be lost owing to technological obsolescence;
- 5) Establish and maintain effective bibliographic access to the Collection;
- 6) Continue and refine the FDLP library partnership concept to leverage the skills and resources shared with the FDLP; and
- 7) Ensure that the responsibility for dissemination and preservation of electronic Government information remains with the Federal Government, and that the Superintendent of Documents, as coordinator of the FDLP, is responsible for the dissemination and preservation of publications in the Electronic Collection, whether located at GPO or at FDLP partner institutions.

Rationale

In the Electronic Collection session held at the Depository Library Council meeting in October 1997, significant concern was expressed that in managing remotely accessible electronic materials GPO take special care in addressing the issues identified above. Council is concerned that levels of public access to remotely available electronic publications maintained by GPO and FDLP partners continue at levels equal to or greater than has been provided to print materials traditionally distributed to FDLP libraries.

Response

GPO has prepared a document entitled *Managing the FDLP Electronic Collection*, which we intend to share with the Council and the depository library community in the near future. This policy and planning document (Plan) incorporates the concepts enumerated in Council's recommendation. It is based on the overall vision for the FDLP, which is to ensure current and permanent public access to all Government information products, regardless of format or medium, which are of public interest or educational value, except for those products which are for strictly administrative or operational purposes, classified for reasons of national security, or the use of which is constrained by privacy considerations. The draft Plan defines parameters and requirements for the electronic products and services that constitute the Collection, and establishes a policy framework on which specific procedures for the development and maintenance of the Collection will be built. Managing the Government electronic information products in the FDLP Electronic Collection as a library-like collection will facilitate the accomplishment of the FDLP responsibility to provide permanent public access to these products, as well as other products which meet the definition for Government information set forth in the Plan.

The FDLP Electronic Collection consists of four elements:

- Core legislative and regulatory *GPO Access* products which will reside permanently on Government Printing Office (GPO) servers;
- Other remotely accessible products managed by GPO or other institutions with which GPO has established formal agreements;

- Tangible electronic Government information products distributed to Federal depository libraries; and
- Remotely accessible electronic Government information products that GPO identifies, describes, and links to but which remain under the control of the originating agencies.

Recommendation 4: Monthly Catalog Display on GPO Access

Council recommends that GPO modify the public display of entries in the *Catalog of U.S. Government Publications* to a more user-friendly, labeled format. The underlying MARC tags should remain available as an alternate display format.

Rationale

The *Catalog of U.S. Government Publications* on *GPO Access* is clearly intended to provide the public with information about collections in depository libraries. A display that uses MARC tags is not easily understood by the public, and a simple labeled display indicating author, title, subjects, and appropriate descriptive information, will more easily lead the public to publications. The necessary labels are embedded in the existing MARC tags. The full MARC record should remain as the underlying database, with the MARC format available to librarians as an alternative format.

Response

LPS is redesigning the public user display for the *Catalog of U.S. Government Publications* on *GPO Access*. The default display will feature descriptive labels for the cataloging record data elements instead of the numeric MARC tags. The MARC-tagged display will remain available as a user-invoked display option. Sample displays will be available for review and discussion at the spring 1998 Council meeting.

Recommendation 5: OpenText Z39.50

Council recommends that GPO provide the Z39.50 search interface for the OpenText software.

Rationale

Council appreciates the progress being made in GPO production in migrating toward SGML as the common representation for documents. However, having a common markup language does not by itself provide for common searching across sets of documents. Adding the Z39.50 search interface to OpenText would make the production documents sets interoperable with the WAIS databases as well as the thousands of other relevant government and library resources accessible through Z39.50. Also, the Z39.50 search interface will allow for a variety of user interfaces and Web gateways in addition to those provided by OpenText.

Recommendation 6: GILS Compliance

Council recommends GPO install GILS-compliant software for all of the WAIS databases and assist libraries in obtaining GILS-aware client software.

Rationale

There are nearly 100 WAIS databases accessible at GPO Internet servers. In addition to the *GPO Access* Web interface, these are to be searchable through both the WAIS protocol and Z39.50/GILS. However, the Z39.50/GILS search is currently broken and requires installation of an available fix to the commercial WAIS software. Current FDLP requirements include provision of GILS-aware client software for public access to government information. However, GPO has been distributing only the

WinWAIS software, which is not GILS-aware. GPO could enhance the WinWAIS or other Z39.50 client software to be GILS-aware, or encourage libraries to use available GILS-aware client software such as BookWhere, SIRSI Vizion, Znavigator, etc.

Response to Recommendations 5 and 6

GPO recognizes the value of full GILS and Z39.50 compliance for our online services. However, the lack of current support for the WAIS server software has stymied our efforts to add the Z39.50 capabilities to WAIS necessary for full GILS compliance. Therefore we have investigated what resources would be required to incorporate a Z39.50 interface upgrade into the OpenText software. Based on our discussions with Open Text and another software vendor it appears that this enhancement will be a resource-intensive proposition, of a magnitude that will require a lengthy approval and procurement process. Since GPO's five-year contract with OpenText will expire in FY 2000, we do not believe that modifying GPO's older release of the OpenText software represents the best use of our program funds. Instead, we will concentrate upon the next generation of *GPO Access* software. As GPO plans the future evolution of *GPO Access* we will emphasize:

- Full compliance with all applicable standards, such as Z39.50;
- Interoperability with a variety of source databases and tagging schemes, including SGML;
- Robust search and retrieval capabilities using standard Web browsers; and
- Recognition of the importance of our GILS application.

Council and the depository library community will be involved in the future development of *GPO Access* through a variety of mechanisms, including the focus group discussions held in conjunction with Council meetings. Topics such as Z39.50 compliance and client software will be discussed at the April 1998 focus group, and we expect to receive valuable input for future planning efforts.

However, as an interim measure we are investigating obtaining software to bring the GPO Access GILS application into full Z39.50 compliance. This is expected to be attainable at a reasonable cost, and will improve access to the agency GILS records that are hosted on GPO Access.

In the years since the effort that resulted in GPO's procurement of the OpenText software there have been significant changes in network information discovery and retrieval. While separate client software was once the norm, the explosive growth of the Web has resulted in Web browsers becoming the *de facto* standard method of access for the vast majority of users. Therefore, in order to promote the widest possible use of *GPO Access* we are designing for optimal use with industry-standard Web browsers, rather than with application-specific client software. Additionally, in light of the changes brought about by the Web technology, we are considering eliminating the recommendation for separate client software for depository library computer work stations in the upcoming *1998 Recommended Specifications for Public Access Work Stations in Federal Depository Libraries*. We believe that the best approach to providing full functionality of the products and services of *GPO Access* is to include Z39.50 capabilities in industry-standard Web browsers. This approach could ultimately result in benefiting the largest number of users, both in depository libraries and among the general public.

Recommendation 7: Migration of Microfiche Publications to Online Format

Council recommends that GPO develop, in consultation with Council, selection criteria and a plan for permanent access to microfiche publications migrating to an online format only.

Rationale

In the October 15, 1997, *Administrative Notes*, LPS published a list of tangible products that they intend to eliminate in microfiche and convert to online format. Council believes that explicit criteria for elimination of tangible media must be

established first. Council also believes that certain categories of depository publications must remain in a tangible format. Council would be pleased to work with GPO in establishing these criteria. This plan should be coordinated with the collection plan for the *GPO Access* Collection.

Response

LPS has developed and publicized criteria for identifying and evaluating candidate publications that are currently distributed in microfiche format, and that the originating agency also makes available to the public online. As part of the transition to a more electronic FDL, LPS proposed to discontinue distribution of the microfiche and point to the online version for use by depository libraries and the public. (See *Administrative Notes*, vol.18, no.14, 11/15/97; vol. 18, no.13, 10/15/97; and vol. 18, no. 10, 7/15/97).

During the discussions at the October 1997 Council meeting, concerns were raised about the provision of permanent access to such titles. In the policy and planning document *Managing the FDL Electronic Collection*, we set forth the position that GPO's permanent access responsibility extends to electronic Government information products that we bring under bibliographic control through our cataloging and locator services, but which remain on their originating agencies' servers. Inasmuch as we are still developing a comprehensive approach to ensuring permanent access to this category of electronic products it is premature to proceed at this time with eliminating related tangible information products from the FDL. However, we are working to develop content partnerships, notification procedures, and other mechanisms to ensure permanent public access to agency electronic information products. Once these mechanisms are in place LPS will proceed with identifying candidate tangible products to be replaced by reliable, official electronic versions.

Recommendation 8: Supreme Court Opinions on *GPO Access*

Council recommends that GPO give a high priority to making the Hermes collection of Supreme Court opinions available as a searchable database on *GPO Access*.

Rationale

Since the Supreme Court has made the decision to provide Hermes subscribers with court opinions in PDF and tagged ASCII file formats, Council believes it is imperative that the GPO take full advantage of these enhancements without delay. Timely, ready and easy access to this important body of case law through *GPO Access* will greatly benefit the American public. Users will be pleased with the improved search capabilities as well as the ability to download and print Supreme Court opinions in an official format.

Response

We are taking steps to improve access to Supreme Court opinions from the Project Hermes collection through the development of an OpenText database. Considerable work has been accomplished to develop a full-text searchable database that will offer users multiple field searching capabilities. Completion of this initiative by Production Services has been delayed by other priorities, but it is our goal to roll out the enhanced Supreme Court opinions application in the near future. We have received some valuable comments from individuals who tested this application, and we are incorporating their feedback into the service prior to the formal rollout.

Recommendation 9: Regional Libraries Conference

Council commends the Public Printer for sponsoring the Regional Libraries Conference held in August 1997. Council recommends that the Government Printing Office request funding to sponsor additional regional library conferences in the future.

Rationale

The August 1997 Conference was extremely successful in providing regional depositories the opportunity to discuss and assess the services and responsibilities that are unique to regionals, as well as to identify new areas for service to selective depositories, particularly in light of the ongoing transition to a more electronic Federal Depository Library Program. Council is aware that the August 1997 conference was planned as a one-time event, but, given the complicated issues entailed in shifting to a more electronic FDLP, considerably more focused interaction will be required to further the dialog initiated in August 1997. A follow-up conference in the near future would serve as an appropriate forum for this continuing dialog.

Response

GPO appreciates Council's compliments on the successful Regional Libraries Conference held in August 1997. In GPO's FY 1997 appropriation Congress granted GPO's request for an increase in the statutory limitation on travel funded by the Salaries and Expenses appropriation. The request was for the specific purpose of funding this Conference, and was made with the understanding that this was a one-time event intended to strengthen the abilities of the regional librarians to assist their selective depositories in the transition to a more electronic FDLP.

To continue the work begun at the August 1997 Conference GPO scheduled a ½-day program for regional librarians at the fall 1997 Council meeting. In April 1998, a special one-day Regional Librarians' Meeting is being held at the University of Maryland. GPO intends to continue programs specifically by and for regional librarians, but these programs will be held in conjunction with future fall Council meetings and spring Federal Depository Conferences rather than being independent events.

Commendation

Council commends the Public Printer on his appointments of Robert T. Mansker as Deputy Public Printer, Andrew M. Sherman as Director of Congressional, Legislative and Public Affairs, as well as his intention to appoint Francis J. Buckley, Jr. as Superintendent of Documents. Council is gratified by the speed with which the Public Printer made these appointments and impressed with the admirable qualifications of all three individuals. The appointment of Francis J. Buckley, Jr. to be the new Superintendent of Documents is especially significant. Mr. Buckley, a public library director and former depository librarian, has long been a champion of public access and the depository library program. Furthermore, Council believes that these appointments send a very positive message to Congress and the depository community on the future direction of the depository library program.

Commendation

Council commends former Council member Susan Dow and Joseph Paskoski of GPO's Electronic Transition Staff for their extraordinary efforts in developing and maintaining the Depository Library Council's home page. Its well-organized and user-friendly arrangement leads visitors to a very comprehensive wealth of information about Council activities, both current and past. Council believes that its home page will become a valuable resource for librarians and others interested in the depository library program, and is very grateful to Susan and Joe for their efforts to create a truly outstanding information resource.

Commendation

Council commends the Library Programs Service for resuming the in-house fulfillment of paper claims, discontinuing the use of an outside contractor. The prompt fulfillment of claims is important to depositories, and the Government Printing Office will be able to provide more efficient service, and to monitor problems more accurately by managing this service in-house.

Commendation

Council commends the Electronic Transition Staff (ETS) for the role they have played in implementing goals outlined in *Federal Depository Library Program: Information Dissemination and Access Strategic Plan FY 1996 - FY 2001*. Council recognizes that ETS was directly responsible for the Pathway Indexer and the FDLP Administration pages, and has been significantly involved in the development of various other electronic products on the Superintendent of Documents Web site. Council also recognizes the important role ETS has played in establishing content and service partnerships with FDLP libraries and with Federal agencies, and in supporting efforts with NCLIS to initiate the Assessment of Standards.

Commendation

The Depository Library Council commends the Government Printing Office for making significant progress in providing *GPO Access* training for depository librarians and others. The high-quality training sessions conducted by the staff of the Office of Electronic Information Dissemination Service, with scheduling coordinated by the Depository Services Staff, have been highly praised by participants. The successful completion of the first cooperative “train the trainers” workshop will also lead to a broadening of efforts, which will benefit even more end users.

Commendation

Council commends Wayne P. Kelley, former Superintendent of Documents, for his professional and personal commitment to the Federal Depository Library Program and the GPO Sales Program. Since his appointment as Superintendent of Documents in 1991, Mr. Kelley has provided strong leadership within the Government Printing Office and the depository library community in championing broad public access to Federal Government information. Council appreciates his substantial role in the development of and enhancements to the highly acclaimed *GPO Access* system, the establishment of its User Support team, and the creation of the Superintendent of Documents home page. Mr. Kelley’s commitment to the broad principles of public access to Government information are further evidenced by his chairmanship of the GPO Study group and his willingness to bring all interested constituencies, including the library community, into the process. We especially commend Mr. Kelley for his dedication and firm resolve to keeping Government information in all formats in the public domain. This is perhaps best exemplified in his eloquent speech regarding the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* that so impressed Sen. John Warner that it was attached to the Senator’s remarks in the Congressional Record this past February.

1998

RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESPONSES OF THE DEPOSITORY LIBRARY COUNCIL

SPRING 1998

Recommendation 1: Service Guidelines

Council recommends that GPO adopt the “Draft Depository Library Public Service Guidelines for Government Information in Electronic Formats” as amended at the spring 1998 Depository Library Conference. Council understands that GPO may need to make certain technical amendments.

Rationale

The eighteen-month process of creating the Draft Guidelines has provided the entire depository library community with adequate time to comment, recommend changes, and dialog with one another. These comments and recommendations, as well as those from GPO, resulted in many changes to the original draft. It is now time to move forward and finalize the Guidelines.

Response

The “Depository Library Public Service Guidelines for Government Information in Electronic Formats” have been reviewed by the GPO Office of the General Counsel, and have been found to conform to existing law and policy and fit within the statutory framework of Title 44. Any library selecting items in electronic formats must maintain a capability to allow for the unimpeded use of those documents by public patrons. The Library Programs Service (LPS) published the guidelines in the September 15, 1998 issue of Administrative Notes. They are also available on the FDLP Administration page under Miscellaneous – Fact Sheets, Speeches, Proceedings, etc. at: <www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/dpos/fdlppubs.html#5>.

Recommendation 2: Biennial Survey

Council recommends that:

- GPO formalize and standardize the Biennial Survey.
- The core elements of the Biennial Survey remain consistent over time.
- The core elements of the Biennial Survey be made compatible with other major data surveys (e.g., ARL, IPEDS, Public Libraries Data Survey) wherever possible.
- Council and FDLP libraries be consulted on the content of the survey instrument.
- Experts in survey research be consulted on the methodology of the survey instrument.
- Council and GPO review the instrument in the intervening years between surveys.
- New questions to survey be announced with sufficient notice.
- If the Biennial Survey must be used to gather data needed on an occasional or emergency basis those questions should be relegated to a special section.

Rationale

Although the Biennial Survey, as it currently exists, has yielded useful information for the GPO, the process could also be made useful to depository libraries if the data were tracked over time and made compatible with other data collection instruments. The data that are gathered should meet the needs of GPO and the FDLP libraries for FDLP management, FDLP advocacy, reporting to Congress, depository library management, depository library advocacy; and for satisfying the requirements of

the law. We need to begin to gather data on a consistent and methodologically sound basis. Each data element should be sufficiently defined so that FDLP libraries can complete the survey instrument with accuracy and consistency. FDLP libraries should have sufficient notice of new data or definitions to allow them to prepare; e.g., if annual data are required, the libraries should know at least a year in advance.

Response

LPS staff is providing support to Council's Statistical Measurement Committee as it works on issues relating to the Biennial Survey. Volunteers from the depository library community were sought and several have been appointed to two subcommittees: Cost Benefit Study and Biennial Survey Content. The subcommittees include LPS staff, current and former Council members, and interested documents librarians

In order to maximize the response rate, basic questions on costs of staffing, equipment, bibliographic tools, etc., will be asked on the 1999 Biennial Survey rather than in a separate survey. The Committee has developed a proposed set of questions, which are being reviewed and discussed. It is the Committee's goal to have a draft Biennial Survey ready for discussion at the October Council meeting.

Two programs at the October Council meeting are planned to provide opportunities for discussion and consultation with the depository library community. One program will focus on the Biennial Survey and the other is titled, "How to Determine Costs of Being a Depository." LPS' goal is to advise the depository community of the contents of the 1999 Biennial Survey before the end of 1998.

Recommendation 3: Training

Council recommends that the Public Printer allocate appropriate resources for GPO Access training and user support and asks the Public Printer to provide a progress report to Council on the GPO Access Learning Center. In addition Council recommends that GPO expand its GPO Access hands-on training efforts.

Rationale

The remarkable success of GPO Access as evidenced by the phenomenal growth in its use as well as the positive publicity that has appeared in the professional literature demonstrate the need for expanding training opportunities. Despite the reality of constrained funding, Council reiterates the importance of training and user support in the continuing transition to a more electronic Federal Depository Library Program. The entire GPO Access user community continues to benefit from the training efforts at conferences as well as on-site training and user support.

Response

The Public Printer recognizes the value of GPO Access training and user support and has endeavored to provide as many high quality services in these areas as resource constraints will allow. During the past year approximately 1,000 individuals in the depository library community have received hands-on GPO Access training at classes held around the United States. Many thousands more have visited the GPO booth at library conferences and trade shows to receive information and personal assistance with GPO Access.

Many of those who attended the training classes have gone on to teach GPO Access classes of their own. More than 1,100 copies of the GPO Access training manuals have been shipped to individuals who have planned such classes. These dedicated individuals who are working to pass on what they have learned to others are rendering a great service by providing GPO Access training. This multiplier effect is essential to providing the maximum number of GPO Access training opportunities to the library community.

A Congressionally mandated ceiling on travel in support of the Federal Depository Library Program and the other programs funded by the Salaries and Expenses Appropriation imposes limits on the number of GPO Access training trips. Superintendent of Documents personnel have worked to ensure the widest possible coverage for GPO-taught training opportunities and will continue to supply training materials to others teaching GPO Access classes. In addition, the GPO Access User Support Team is now fully staffed and has increased its hours of operation to 7:00 am to 5:30 pm, Monday-Friday EST, in order to extend services for our West Coast customers. The User Support Team responded to more than 85,000 user inquiries in the past year.

GPO also continues to study the feasibility of constructing and operating a GPO Access Learning Center at the main GPO facility in Washington, DC.

Recommendation 4: Processing of Monthly Catalog Tapes

Council recommends that GPO resolve problems related to the processing of cataloging records so that these records are available in a timely manner for the production of GPO's own products and for use by libraries. Specifically, Council urges GPO to:

- In the short term, intensify the current analysis of tape processing problems within GPO and with the Cataloging Distribution Service of the Library of Congress, to ensure that a usable product is available promptly each month.
- In the longer term, work toward a solution based on modernizing the entire technological infrastructure.
- Keep the depository library community informed of developments because of the importance of these records to the libraries and their users.

Rationale

Cataloging of depository information is an essential function of GPO. In addition, many libraries depend on tapes of GPO records for their online catalogs. Delays in the production and distribution of these tapes cause serious problems for libraries.

Response

We share Council's concerns regarding the delays in distributing GPO cataloging data that occurred during the first quarter of this year. We have worked closely with data processing personnel of GPO and the Cataloging Distribution Service (CDS), Library of Congress, to ensure that monthly data sets are issued promptly by GPO to CDS for data processing and distribution to vendors.

Short term solution:

Our efforts to re-establish effective services have succeeded. From April 1998 (when all data sets from January through April were issued, including the 1998 Periodicals Supplement) through August 1998, prompt service has been restored. Monthly data sets are being distributed to CDS via tape cartridges within two days of production at GPO. For their part, CDS staff has expeditiously disseminated data to customers within one or two days of the receipt and additional processing of GPO-produced records.

Longer term solution:

Although distribution of cartridges remains a viable manner of transferring data from GPO to CDS, both GPO and CDS personnel recognize that a more convenient and potentially more effective method of sharing data would be to transmit cataloging records from GPO to CDS via an FTP (file transfer protocol) service. Personnel from GPO and CDS are testing and evaluating such an option as an alternative to the continued use of cartridges. We will advise Council of progress with these

efforts. In the meantime, we are confident that procedures employed for resuming services this past April will ensure continued and effective distribution of cataloging data.

We also appreciate that the “technological infrastructure” used in producing cataloging records should be modernized. We are pleased to report that, in this regard, SAMANTHA, the primary software package used for producing Monthly Catalog products, is itself Year 2000 compliant. Tests to determine whether SAMANTHA will run without additional modification on GPO’s new Y2K compliant operating system, OS/390, are expected to take place in October. LPS staff will advise Council of test results and are prepared to pursue necessary measures to assure that Monthly Catalog products will continue to be supported and produced.

We recognize that an integrated library system (ILS) for use in producing records, maintaining our Web site, and publishing CD-ROM and paper versions of the Monthly Catalog would do much to improve the efficiency of dissemination efforts. Preliminary reviews of some commercial software applications suggest that ILS products currently available support Web OPAC and record creation applications but do not support the publishing of CD-ROM and paper catalogs. At present, we do not see an urgent need for an ILS but shall continue to seek products that will meet our needs.

Recommendation 5: Frequency of Updating the Superseded List

Council recommends more frequent updating of the online Superseded List. Council and GPO should establish an ongoing committee of depository librarians to evaluate new items for retention decisions, with special emphasis on tangible electronic products.

Rationale

The Superseded List is heavily used in depository libraries as a collection management tool. More expeditious updating of the list for new information products would greatly assist these libraries in the management of their collections. Information about agency policies relating to retention of electronic products is especially necessary, since it may be more difficult to ascertain from the product in hand. Council believes that GPO is in the best position to determine from the publishing agencies their policies and recommendations regarding retention. Regional libraries as a group should be encouraged to evaluate new items, in particular new tangible electronic products, to make recommendations on retention by some or all Regionals.

Response

LPS staff has recently converted the information in the Superseded List to a data file, including annotations for new material not contained in the 1996 revision. We are reviewing the converted data for any errors that may have occurred in the conversion process. When completed we plan to update the database on a weekly basis similar to the process used for WEBTech Notes.

The superseded information lends itself to development of an Open Text Database, as part of the askLPS service. This will allow users to search the records using the already familiar Open Text search strategy. The new application will include the information presently in the printed Superseded List: classification number, item number, title, retention notes, and regional requirement. In addition, we will add a field for the person who submitted the entry to LPS, and a status field to identify if the title is active, inactive, discontinued, or new, and a date field associated with any change in status.

The next step in this process is to obtain assistance from the librarians in the depository community to review the current entries and recommendations to be added to the list. It is imperative that we have this assistance as LPS does not maintain a physical collection. All material obtained for the FDLP is distributed to depository libraries. An initial group of volunteers has already been identified, and LPS will continue to seek additional volunteers. Progress depends upon the available resources and the makeup of the volunteer committee. LPS will publish new Superseded List information as it becomes available, but we intend to complete the project by April 1999.

Recommendation 6: Guidance on Retention of Tangible Products

Council recommends that GPO provide the FDLP community with guidance on retention of tangible products that are available in the FDLP Electronic Collection.

Rationale

GPO is now providing permanent public access to many Congressional and administrative publications through GPO Access. GPO is also developing plans for the FDLP Electronic Collection. In light of these developments, depositories are asking whether they may withdraw a tangible product and rely on the electronic version as their official depository copy. While the electronic collection plan is still under development, it is time to begin the deliberations about this complex policy issue. Council will want to work with GPO and regional libraries as the requirements of the law are clarified and appropriate guidelines are developed.

Response

LPS is formulating guidance to the depository community on the retention of tangible products when official and reliable electronic alternatives are available. At LPS' request the GPO General Counsel is reviewing the legislative history and extant opinions relevant to retention of publications also available via online databases. In our preliminary discussions, the General Counsel has advised us that incorporating an online electronic product into a depository collection by substituting it for a tangible product appears to be acceptable, providing that certain conditions are satisfied. First, the electronic product must be a complete and official version. Second, permanent accessibility to the electronic version must be assured. Third, the library must be able to offer to its users unimpeded access to any electronic product incorporated into the library's depository collection. And fourth, the procedures for disposition of the tangible product copies shall conform to the requirements established by the Superintendent of Documents and the regional depository library.

Recommendation 7: Hearings

Council recommends that GPO work with the Secretary of the Senate and the Clerk of the House to encourage more Congressional committees to create electronic files of hearings transcripts, and that these be made available through the GPO Access database of Congressional hearings.

Rationale

GPO Access provides online access to important congressional resources, including the Congressional Record, bills, House and Senate Reports and Documents, and other valuable congressional materials. Council applauds efforts by GPO to enhance the GPO Access system by creating a database of selected hearings from the 105th Congress (1997) forward and encourages further efforts to develop this into a more comprehensive database.

Response

The transcripts of more than 110 congressional hearings are now available through GPO Access. Although the inclusion of hearings is still dependent on the request of the originating committee, more are requesting that their hearings be added to GPO Access as time goes on. GPO personnel are working to encourage more committees to do so and to facilitate the generation and transfer of the necessary electronic source files. In order to gain additional insight about congressional intent for the electronic dissemination of hearings, we have included hearings of key House and Senate committees among the products being studied in the GPO/NCLIS "Assessment of Electronic Government Information Products."

Recommendation 8: Congressional Research Service

Congress is currently considering legislation (S. 1578 and H.R. 3131) that would provide no-fee public access through the Internet to issue briefs and reports of the Congressional Research Service (CRS). If this legislation is enacted, Council recommends that GPO pursue making these important congressional materials available through GPO Access.

Rationale

CRS Issue Briefs and Reports are an important part of the congressional decision-making process. Council believes that, if this legislation is enacted, these important materials should be available to the public through GPO Access.

Response

GPO staff is monitoring activity on legislation that would provide public access to Congressional Research Service (CRS) reports and issue briefs via the Internet. In addition, a team, created by Office of Electronic Information Dissemination Services (EIDS) that includes LPS and the Office of Congressional, Legislative, and Public Affairs staff, is examining the possibility of obtaining publicly released CRS products in electronic format to either point to or put up on GPO Access. One scenario might be to point to CRS products on individual member's or committee Web sites. There are some drawbacks to this idea: it does not address permanent access issues and would entail a great deal of staff time. Another scenario would have GPO Access hosting the CRS products for all users, with the member or committee site pointing to it at GPO Access. This approach requires that GPO obtain the source data files from CRS once the member or committee has cleared the product's release. Also under consideration is how cataloging, locator, and classification services should be applied to these products.

Recommendation 9: Z39.50/GILS

Council recommends that GPO continue to provide an update at Council meetings on its progress in implementing Z39.50/GILS compliance for the databases GPO maintains.

Rationale

Council reiterates its concern, expressed in recommendations of October 1997, that GPO remain committed to the interoperability of its online services using the ISO 23950 (ANSI Z39.50) international search standard and GILS Profile. This particular interface is essential to GPO's ability to keep pace with technology evolution in its own information systems, as well as to GPO's ability to enable access to information throughout government.

Response

GPO continues to work toward providing a Z39.50 search interface for GPO Access. This effort has examined several possibilities without success, but has identified other potential options and is currently exploring them. Among these is the Advanced Search Facility (ASF) project currently being examined for possible use with several GPO Access applications. GPO will continue to report on this effort as it progresses.

Recommendation 10: Information Architecture Committee

Council recommends the formation of a committee to provide expert advice to GPO and Council on issues of information architecture in systems operated in support of the FDLP.

Rationale

The complexity of systems supporting the FDLP would be a design challenge under any circumstances. The pace of change

in information technologies compounds the challenge and makes it even more critical to attend to the basics of information architecture, such as the interfaces between central and distributed databases or facilities for networked information discovery and retrieval. Council and GPO could benefit greatly from an ongoing source of architectural advice focused specifically on the FDLP. Council believes such advice could be obtained directly from information architecture expertise available among institutions participating in the FDLP. The work of such a committee might also generate a greater awareness of the FDLP among computer science and networking leaders.

Response

The challenges from rapidly changing information technologies require a great deal of attention to maintain services such as GPO Access. GPO is fortunate to have a depth of experience and talent in this area. Staff constantly monitors and evaluates emerging technologies for possible use in improving the products and services of GPO Access. As these efforts progress, GPO experts enter into a dialog with outside experts to complete this evaluation process. GPO does not, however, think it is necessary to set up a formal committee structure to accomplish this valuable interchange.

Commendations

Electronic Service Guidelines

Council commends Dan Barkley and Ridley Kessler for their extraordinary efforts in the writing of the “Draft Depository Library Public Service Guidelines for Government Information in Electronic Formats”. Their commitment to work on this project with the entire depository community and GPO is greatly appreciated.

Persistent Names for Internet Resources

Council commends GPO for its active and positive role in assigning and maintaining persistent names for cataloged Internet resources. In addition to the challenges of tackling a complex technical problem, GPO has demonstrated leadership in accepting the risks associated with choosing among competing technologies such as PURLs and DOIs. Council looks forward to GPO’s continued leadership in this critical area.

Biennial Survey Data

Council commends GPO for making the raw data from the 1997 Biennial Survey available for downloading from the Federal Bulletin Board.

Needs & Offers List

Council commends Kevin Reynolds of the University of the South for his implementation and maintenance of the online “Needs and Offers List.” This service provides a rich opportunity to Federal Depository Libraries to exchange depository publications.

“User-Friendly” Web Site Display of Catalog Records

Council commends GPO for developing a new user-friendly default public display of entries in the Catalog of U.S.

Government Publications, while retaining the MARC display as an option. Council believes that the public will more easily understand this descriptive-label display.

Periodicals Supplement to the Monthly Catalog

Council commends GPO for resuming publication of the Periodicals Supplement to the Monthly Catalog. The recent selection of this title by 990 depository libraries is a clear indication of continuing need for this product.

Department of Energy Information Bridge

Council commends the GPO and the Department of Energy for providing no-fee public access to the Office of Scientific and Technical Information's "Information Bridge" through GPO Access. This partnership between a major technical agency and GPO provides a convenient and cost-effective successor to the DoE depository microfiche collection.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESPONSES OF THE DEPOSITORY LIBRARY COUNCIL

FALL 1998

GPO to fill the position of electronic collection manager

Council recommends that GPO direct additional resources to building and managing the Electronic Depository Collection, including establishing and filling the position of Electronic Collection Manager described in *Managing the Electronic Collection: A Policy and Planning Document*.

Rationale

Council believes it is imperative that GPO allocate sufficient resources, both financial and personnel, to assure the effective coordination of activities directed toward building the Electronic Collection described in *Managing the Electronic Collection: A Policy and Planning Document*. Council recognizes that various activities and functions associated with the electronic collection are currently distributed among various GPO units, e.g. collection development criteria, outreach, marketing, locator tools, metadata, etc. Council believes that the establishment of the position Electronic Collection Manager would provide the most effective means to coordinate and use this expertise present in GPO. (Please see Action Item at end of document for additional information.)

Response

GPO is taking several steps to allocate additional resources to managing the FDLP Electronic Collection. The Library Programs Service (LPS) has established an ongoing Electronic Collection (EC) Team that includes personnel from the Depository Administration Branch, the Cataloging Branch, the Electronic Transition Staff, and the Office of the Director. The purpose of the EC Team is to develop, document, communicate, test, and, when necessary, modify work procedures and related policies for the FDLP Electronic Collection. The scope of EC Team's effort include the full range of activities for products in the Electronic Collection, including (but not limited to) identification, evaluation, selection, classification, bibliographic control, persistent naming, archiving, and communication with stakeholders. The EC Team is also the focal point in LPS for tracking such related issues as persistent naming, digital archiving technology, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) policies, and other emerging issues.

Actions are underway to establish and fill the Electronic Collection Manager position in LPS. As with any new position there are numerous steps in the process. We have developed a position description, it has been classified and graded, and we plan to proceed with advertising the vacancy soon.

Managing the FDLP EC is a cross-organizational effort that involves many offices and individuals both within GPO and at partner libraries and agencies. Within the Superintendent of Documents organization, the Office of Electronic Information Dissemination Services (EIDS) has several vital EC roles. EIDS has a major role in the identification, evaluation, selection, archiving, and communication with FDLP stakeholders, and participation in these activities will continue. More specifically, EIDS manages the training and user support functions for *GPO Access*, coordinates the development of Documents' Web pages, and works closely with publishing agencies to bring new electronic products into the FDLP and Documents Sales Programs. In addition, EIDS acts as the Documents liaison with GPO Production Department on *GPO Access* developments.

At LPS' request the Production Department has designated a staff member to work with our EC Team on developing an FDLP EC archive, and also has provided server space for our archiving development work.

On the financial side, GPO has requested an additional \$1 million for our FY 2000 appropriation for purposes of increasing the resources allocated to managing the FDLP EC. The outcome of the FY 2000 appropriations process is not finalized at this time.

Microfiche Contracts

Council recommends that GPO evaluate and resolve problems with the current microfiche contractor procedures and performance to identify other options which would better serve the needs of the depository community. Council further recommends that GPO take additional steps to bring microfiche processing procedures and requirements to the attention of the depository libraries.

Rationale

Since the distribution and claiming of depository microfiche has moved from GPO to full service microfiche contracts with independent contractors, microfiche processing has become more complex for depository libraries. Some contractors' inability to fulfill all elements of GPO contracts, including shipping list and claims delivery, continue to be ongoing problems. Options which might be considered include: multi-year contracts; return of microfiche to GPO for distribution; use of additional resources for shipping list preparation, contract compliance, and quality control; and a link from the microfiche shipping list web page to an information page on current microfiche shipment practices and procedures.

Response

LPS and the Term Contracts Division of GPO's Printing Procurement Department have identified several specific steps to improve contractor performance. We have:

- Instituted more rigorous pre-award testing of new vendors bidding on FDLP work.
- Changed from tape cartridges to FTP transfer for selection and library address data so contractors can respond more quickly to changes in libraries selection profiles.
- Designed and staffed a more strenuous review of the administrative contract receivables, such as the microfiche masters, shipping lists, and associated electronic data files.
- Requested hiring a second microfiche inspector who would focus more specifically on contract compliance issues.

These changes have improved LPS' ability to address and correct performance problems with the microfiche contractors, as in the recent situation with the nearly opaque headers on the microfiche produced by CRS, Inc.

For the longer term, we are taking active steps to identify titles currently distributed in microfiche for which reliable, official electronic versions are available. As we announced at the 1999 Midwinter meeting of the American Library Association, we will migrate the depository library distribution version of certain titles from microfiche to an agency-issued online resource. This direction is in accordance with the plans for the transition to a more electronic FDLP. The specific criteria for identifying candidate titles were published in the February 15, 1999 issue of *Administrative Notes* (v. 20, no. 4, pp. 4-6).

In addition, we have reviewed the other suggestions from Council for possible implementation. With the current staffing level and allocation of resources in LPS it is simply not feasible to bring the microfiche distribution activity back in-house. Our efforts are focussed on strengthening contract compliance and quality review, and on enhancing the administrative and record-keeping infrastructure required to support effective action against a deficient contractor.

Discontinue or consolidate “traditional” LPS products and services in tangible formats

Council recommends that GPO, in consultation with the depository library community, decrease the frequency of publication of the paper editions of GPO administrative tools that are available online and are more frequently updated. Some titles with a strong sales history should remain in the sales program in print editions as long as sales justify the cost of production.

As an example, since the online *List of Classes* is updated monthly, Council recommends that the print version of the *List*

of Classes be updated, published and distributed (via FDLP and sales) only annually, and that each library receive only one depository copy.

Council further recommends that, provided the annual publication date is flexible, GPO consult with the depository community to determine the most appropriate time of year to produce the print version.e

Rationale

Frequently updated online tools are more useful than print editions that are often dated by the time they are printed and distributed. All program libraries should have access to the FDLP web site and the ability to download. The online version of the *List of Classes* is updated monthly and can be manipulated to serve multiple purposes. However, libraries may need time to learn how to exploit this FDLP electronic resource. During the transition period, some titles may need to remain in print even if less frequently updated. This issue should be revisited.

Response

LPS has changed the production schedule for the *List of Classes* from quarterly to semiannual, and reduced the number of copies distributed free of charge to each depository from two to one. The next issue is expected to be available in April 1999, prior to the annual selection update cycle.

In addition, LPS will examine other administrative publications currently issued in both print and electronic format for migration to solely electronic availability. Some potential candidates for this migration are the *Administrative Notes Technical Supplement*, the *Inactive or Discontinued Items from the 1950 Revision of the Classified List*.

In the longer term, LPS will determine on a case-by-case basis whether new or existing administrative publications require a print analog. In general our direction will be to use the online information services and reserve the production of new printed products for exceptional cases.

Structure of Council Meetings, Amount of Time, Location

Council recommends that the fall Council meeting be held permanently in the Washington, DC area, sometime between the Columbus and Veterans Day holidays, and that the annual Federal Depository Library Conference coincide with the fall DLC meeting in Washington. The spring DLC meeting would be held in the field, rotating around the country, as it was prior to 1992.

Council further recommends that the fall DLC meetings begin on Sunday evening and end on Wednesday afternoon, instead of beginning on Monday morning and ending on Thursday afternoon. Sunday evening would be reserved for Council's organizational meeting, open to observers. The full Conference would begin on Monday morning and conclude on Wednesday afternoon, with the Regionals' session continuing to be held on the Sunday immediately prior to the Federal Depository Library Conference. The spring DLC meeting schedule would be modified in similar fashion.

Council also recommends that GPO continue to monitor attendance at DLC meetings and FDL conferences to determine whether changing meeting structure, locations, and dates has an adverse affect on depository library participation.

Rationale

A fall meeting in Washington will produce fewer conflicts with other library-related meetings and a wider range of choices for hotel accommodations. This change will also restore the opportunity for newly appointed Council members to visit the GPO facility. The change to Sunday through Wednesday reduces meeting space rental and other FDL expenses, such as an extra day's use/rental of meeting rooms at the hotel, A-V equipment, and coffee breaks. Potentially, per diem expenses for DLC members would be reduced.

Response

GPO has implemented this recommendation, and the revised sequence of meetings and use of the Sunday through Wednesday meeting structure will begin in 2000. The upcoming sequence of Depository Library Council (DLC) meetings and Federal Depository Conferences (FDC) is:

Month/Year Event Location:

10/1999 DLC Kansas City, MO

04/2000 DLC Providence, Newport, or Warwick, RI

10/2000 DLC/FDC Arlington, VA

04/2001 DLC To be determined

10/2001 DLC/FDC Washington, DC area

We will monitor the effects of these changes on event attendance and participation and, in the event that any adverse impacts are found, will recommend other changes for consideration by the Council.

1999

RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESPONSES OF THE DEPOSITORY LIBRARY COUNCIL

SPRING 1999

Recommendation 1: Cease Production of Most Availability Records

Council recommends that GPO eliminate the production of availability records for all non-map serial and multi-part monograph products (tangible and electronic) for the Monthly Catalog.

Rationale

Availability records are currently created only for annual and semiannual serials. This practice is a procedural holdover from the pre-automated Monthly Catalog era. Eliminating production of these availability records would free up GPO cataloging resources to be allocated to other work and would eliminate the confusion that these duplicate records create.

Response

The Library Programs Service (LPS) ceased producing availability records for serials and multi-part monographs beginning October 1, 1999, the beginning of the data entry period for the year 2000 Monthly Catalog issues. We will continue to create, maintain, and update serial records but without accounting for the availability of specific issues. Implementing this recommendation permits re-allocation of personnel to more useful tasks, particularly in the area of providing additional cataloging and locator services for electronic resources.

Recommendation 2: Replace Periodicals Supplement

Council recommends that GPO replace the Periodicals Supplement with a more comprehensive tool, which will list all serials in the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) and all serials cataloged in the preceding year.

Rationale

The Periodicals Supplement of the Monthly Catalog currently contains serial titles issued three or more times a year; serial titles issued once or twice a year receive availability records and appear in the regular monthly issues of the Monthly Catalog. Council has recommended elimination of the production of these availability records. Therefore, all serials, regardless of frequency, should now be included in an enhanced Periodicals Supplement.

Response

The Periodicals Supplement for 2000 will be the last one to include only periodicals issued three or more times a year. In 2001, all serials, without regard to frequency of issue, will be included in the supplement, which will revert to its previous title of Serials Supplement.

Recommendation 3: Integrated Library System

Council recommends that GPO investigate the feasibility of acquiring an Integrated Library System that would represent bibliographic records and holdings for all pieces distributed to depository libraries (e.g. serial check-in, individual volumes of a multi-volume set) and be available for public online inquiries. Council also recommends that in its investigation, GPO consider the cost savings to be gained from acquiring an Integrated Library System, including savings gained from the elimination of inquiries about holdings on AskLPS.

Rationale

Council believes that both GPO and the depository community would benefit from an Integrated Library System that would reflect holdings to the piece level. Such a system would provide current awareness for materials processed by the Cataloging Branch and would eliminate any need for availability records.

Response

LPS recognizes that the acquisition of an Integrated Library System (ILS) would be beneficial. The installation of an ILS will cause many operations within LPS to be changed, including, but not limited to, the production of cataloging records, the automated check-in of serial titles and the development of an online public access catalog with holdings display capabilities.

Currently, LPS staff members are documenting operational and systems requirements, preparing preliminary cost estimates, investigating procurement options, and evaluating ILS project documentation obtained from several national libraries. However, the procurement and installation of an ILS within LPS would be a major project for the Superintendent of Documents and would involve the participation of several offices within GPO. These offices are currently committing resources to the installation of the Integrated Processing System (IPS) for Superintendent of Documents Sales operations, and are also still involved with Year 2000 (Y2K) remediation, testing, and contingency planning. GPO resources cannot be allocated to assist with the analysis, procurement, and implementation of an ILS in LPS at this time.

Recommendation 4: Fee-based products

Council recommends that GPO strengthen its efforts to bring fee-based electronic products into the FDLP at no cost to the library.

Rationale

Council believes that fee-based electronic government information products and services should be made available to depository libraries at no cost, in compliance with Title 44 and other laws and regulations. In addition, Council has noted the increased use of limited passwords for fee-based products and services. Council strongly encourages GPO to aggressively pursue no-fee access to fee-based databases for depository libraries, including a sufficient number of passwords so depositories can provide adequate access to their user communities. Alternative approaches of acquiring no-fee access for depository libraries should be explored with agencies that are not now complying with the law.

Response

GPO continues to address the issues surrounding no-fee depository library access to agency fee-based information products and services. Each case is unique and FDLP access must be negotiated on a case-by-case basis. GPO strives to convince agencies that extending no-fee access to depository libraries is an effective way to implement the agencies' public access missions. LPS' earlier experience with GPO Access highlighted administrative and service limitations associated with password-based access. GPO now suggests that agencies provide depository library access through the allocation of a "pool" for a number of simultaneous users, rather than by assigning single passwords or IP (Internet Protocol) address recognition. The simultaneous user method proved effective during the GPO Access gateways project startup.

Recommendation 5: GPO Access and Search Engines

Council recommends that GPO investigate and implement strategies to include top level GPO Access pages on popular Internet search engines, e.g. Yahoo!, Northern Light, and Lycos.

Rationale

The general public often relies on popular Internet search engines and services to locate information. Therefore the inclusion of GPO Access pages into these services will achieve two very positive goals: first, it will promote the GPO Access system and its related services; and second, it will link citizens to the official versions of the government information they need.

Response

GPO shares Council's desire to enable searchers on popular search engines to easily locate the many resources available to them on GPO Access. As a result of capacity concerns that required us to exclude indexing robots from our servers, we have been pursuing a much more labor-intensive strategy of using metadata for getting our pages included, but that has not always proved as effective as was intended.

As part of the development of a site-search capability for GPO Access, several different types of metadata are being coded into GPO Access pages, including accurate and descriptive title tags, an authoritative page description, and lists of appropriate subject terms included as metatags. In addition to improving the index used by the site-search mechanism, this metadata will improve results on popular Internet search engines.

Effective September 18, 1999, GPO discontinued the robot exclusion policy on GPO Access on a trial basis. If there are adverse effects on GPO Access response time, the hours during which the system is open to robots may have to be reduced or eliminated.

Recommendation 6: NRC Public Document Room Collections

Council recommends that GPO work with depository libraries to continue its planning with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to assure permanent public access to NRC documents. GPO should identify a small group of depository librarians, including LPDR (the NRC's Local Public Document Room program) and regional libraries, to work with them on final guidelines and procedures.

Rationale

GPO and NRC have entered into discussions about moving the NRC microfiche depository collections under the auspices of the FDLP, since the NRC's LPDR program is being phased out at the end of fiscal year 1999. The LPDR program was designed to provide information to citizens in the immediate vicinity of nuclear power reactors throughout the licensing and operating life of the reactors. The LPDR collections have some overlap with FDLP collections, but also include many unique materials. The focus of the current discussions is 73 collections of microfiche from 1981 to date. While some LPDRs may choose to retain their collections, others may choose to withdraw them. Designating these collections as part of the FDLP program and finding homes for an appropriate number of those withdrawn from LPDRs will preserve public access to these valuable materials across the country.

Response

For more than a year, LPS staff has been working closely with NRC on a cooperative plan for permanent public access to an important body of NRC information. Due to budgetary constraints, and because of an electronic transition in the way NRC information is made available to the public, NRC decided to end the LPDR program as of September 30, 1999.

Under the LPDR program, NRC distributed a series of scientific and technical reports on nuclear energy related topics on 48X microfiche to participating sites for public access. Most of these publications were not included in the FDLP, although many of them would have been eligible for the program.

The goal of the GPO and NRC is to maintain at least one microfiche collection in a depository library in each state formerly served by one or more LPDRs to ensure that the information in the LPDR collections remains accessible to the public. This past August, the Superintendent of Documents accepted the collections from LPDR libraries into the FDLP. This acquisition brought these materials under the permanent access provisions of 44 USC §§1911-1912, and the guidelines and requirements of the FDLP.

NRC staff surveyed LPDR libraries and determined that 18 chose not to retain the microfiche, while the others indicated a desire to keep the materials in their collections. The 18 rejected collections are being redistributed to appropriate regional depositories. In most cases, regional depositories will receive a collection from a former LPDR library in its own state. In a few instances, collections will move from one state to another, in an attempt to provide an even geographic distribution. In 31 other cases, microfiche collections currently reside in libraries that are selective FDLP depositories that have agreed to retain the collections.

GPO's goals in acquiring the NRC microfiche collections for the FDLP are:

- to provide equitable, geographically dispersed access to a significant body of government information to which the public, particularly in the general vicinity of nuclear facilities, should have access.
- to assure that the public's access to this information is preserved permanently.

Permanent public access will be assured for the 49 collections in two forms:

- Collections that reside or are placed in regional depositories will be retained permanently.
- Collections that reside in selective depositories may be disposed of only with the expressed consent of the regional library under the usual procedures of the FDLP.

NRC is providing financial support for the relocation of the 18 collections that must be physically moved. The regionals were notified that the NRC microfiche would remain U.S. Government property as a depository item. Collections of microfiche not covered in the above provisions, as well as other NRC material in the LPDRs, have been abandoned to the custody of the libraries currently housing them, to be disposed of as they see fit.

Recommendation 7: Migration of Physical Format Products to Online Distribution

Council recommends that GPO test the policies, procedures, and criteria for migrating titles to online electronic delivery only, as outlined in the document "Migration of Physical Format Products to Online Distribution" (Administrative Notes, v. 20, no. 4, Feb. 15, 1999, p. 4), and report back to Council within an appropriate time frame.

Rationale

This document provides useful guidelines for evaluating FDLP titles that have been identified for conversion from physical to electronic format. Prior to any implementation of these guidelines, Council asks GPO to conduct one or more pilot projects to evaluate the effectiveness of these criteria and procedures. Of special interest to Council would be procedures for FDLP input on the title selection process and the management plan and procedures for the digital archive. Council expects that GPO will be able to report on its progress in testing these guidelines at the next Council meeting.

Response

The policies, criteria, and procedures for migrating products historically disseminated in a tangible medium to solely online electronic dissemination are applicable only in those cases in which LPS has a choice of dissemination media. In many cases the publishing agency has already made the decision to eliminate the tangible medium. Then LPS incorporates the online product into the FDLP Electronic Collection by describing it bibliographically and linking to it.

It is important to note the distinction between migration and conversion. Migration refers to choosing between available dissemination media when the agency publishes both online and tangible versions. Conversion refers to changing the agency's published medium to another, as LPS does when converting paper documents to microfiche. At present LPS has no program to convert print products to electronic media, for example through scanning and digitization.

During routine processing, LPS' Depository Administration Branch, Cataloging Branch, and Electronic Collection Team often identify new products that agencies issue in both print and electronic (online) versions. When LPS determines that the content of the online version is substantially equivalent or superior to the print version, LPS selects the online version for the FDLP. These decisions are made in accordance with criteria described in "Migration of Physical Format Products to Online Distribution" (Administrative Notes, v. 20, no. 4, Feb. 15, 1999, p. 4) and Appendix II of Managing the FDLP Electronic Collection. These titles are described as "EL" in the List of Classes. Some examples include The Food Safety Educator (A 110.19:), FEWS (Famine Early Warning System) Bulletin (S 18.68:), and the Economic Working Papers (T 12.22:).

Given the continued pattern of essentially flat funding for the FDLP, and the delays inherent in the processing, conversion, and delivery of microfiche, LPS intends to begin actively migrating products currently distributed in microfiche and also available online by eliminating the distribution of the microfiche versions. Whenever possible, the cessation of a microfiche serial title will take place at the end of a volume or annual run. LPS will announce these changes in distribution media in the Administrative Notes Technical Supplement. Some candidate microfiche titles for this migration include titles with low selection rates, such as the New Publications of the Rocky Mountain Research Station (A 13.151/2:), Small Business Innovation Research Program annual report (D 1.48/3), and the annual Report on the Survey of U.S. Shipbuilding and Repair Facilities (TD 11.25:). Other titles are under consideration for migration because they are currently offered in multiple formats with the online version available on GPO Access. Examples of this category include the daily Federal Register on microfiche (AE 2.106:), the daily Congressional Record on microfiche (X 1.1/A:), and the Congressional Bills on microfiche (Y 1.4/).

Recommendation 8; Federal Agency Outreach

Council recommends that GPO accelerate its outreach efforts to agencies to inform them of the mutual benefit that agencies, GPO, depository libraries, and the American public derive from the dissemination of information through the FDLP.

Rationale

Our democratic system depends on ready public access to Federal Government information as has been provided through the FDLP. The loss of electronic government information products from agency Web sites is a widespread, yet unrecognized, problem and perhaps the greatest challenge of the change in government publishing from the print to the electronic environment. Accelerated outreach efforts, such as promoting the "Internet Information Product Notification Form," will impress upon agencies the significant steps GPO is taking to address this great challenge and to make Federal electronic information readily available to the public through the FDLP.

Response

GPO continues to expand its efforts in promoting the benefits of agency participation in the FDLP. GPO staff from LPS, the Office of Electronic Information Dissemination Service (EIDS), and the Sales Program together have become more actively involved with agencies by meeting with agency publishing staff including Webmasters and other staff directly responsible for the creation and dissemination of electronic information. Acquisition of information products for the FDLP and Sales programs has expanded beyond the receipt of agency material through routine procurement tasks. We work directly with agencies as they create new products and services for their constituents and the public. Three such projects include our ongoing work with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the Background Notes project with the Department of State, and the Occupational Information Network (O*NET) project with the Department of Labor.

Recently, new promotional materials, including an FDLP information package and partnership flyers, were developed to promote the FDLP and its mission and programs. This information is freely distributed when GPO staff visit agency libraries and attend government publishing and technology meetings, workshops, and conferences.

Revisions to GPO Circular Letters 320 and 413, emphasizing the role of the FDLP and our transition to a more electronic depository program, are being prepared for dissemination to the agency publishing community. An article promoting use of the "Internet Information Product Notification Form" will be included in the GPO Newsletter distributed to Federal agency publishers and others in the Federal information community.

Recommendation 9: Partnerships

Recognizing that permanent public access to electronic government information is an essential element of the FDLP Electronic Collection, Council recommends that GPO allocate the resources necessary to accelerate the process of identifying new partnership models and potential agency and institutional partners.

Rationale

The strategic plan identifies as a priority that GPO establish a distributed system for ensuring that government information products available via government information services are maintained permanently for public access through the FDLP. Council recognizes that GPO has initiated some efforts toward this goal. However, Council believes that, since partnerships are essential to a successful FDLP Electronic Collection, GPO must work more aggressively with agencies to develop partnership opportunities for libraries, consortia, and other institutions.

Response

GPO is committed to permanent public access to government information products. Establishing new and maintaining existing partnerships continues to be a priority as we make the transition to a more electronic depository program.

During FY 1999, LPS expert consultants met with staff from several agencies, including the Department of Health and Human Services, Environmental Protection Agency, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Library, to identify possible opportunities for establishing content oriented partnerships and encourage participation in FDLP activities.

Our new Electronic Transition Staff member, Steve Kerchoff, continues the work begun by previous consultants, Judy Andrews and George Barnum. Steve, who comes to us from the Library of Congress' Federal Library and Information Center Committee (FLICC), brings an extensive knowledge of Federal libraries and information contacts to this position. Working together with the new Electronic Collection Manager, Steve will focus on strengthening existing partnerships, building new ones, and refining the partnership process.

Recommendation 10: Substituting Electronic for Tangible Versions

Council recommends that GPO finalize and distribute the FDLP Guidelines on Substituting Electronic for Tangible Versions of Depository Publications. In publicizing the guidelines, GPO should emphasize that depository libraries should review their collection development and public service policies to ensure appropriate user services as they make decisions about substituting electronic formats for tangible versions of publications.

Rationale

The draft guidelines presented at this meeting provide a reasonable procedure for beginning the process of substituting reliable

and permanently accessible electronic publications for tangible products. The guidelines include appropriate cautions about considering user needs, as well as requirements for following disposal guidelines of the Regional depository. Implementation of these guidelines will allow depositories to begin a reasoned process of collection management that includes fully electronic versions of products. The initial list of official GPO databases provides a good starting point and will be expanded as appropriate. Council suggests that it is not necessary to append a List of Official GPO Partnership Sites to this document in its initial distribution.

Response

The FDLP Guidelines on Substituting Electronic for Tangible Versions of Depository Publications, accompanied by the List of Official GPO Permanent Full-Text Databases, was published in Administrative Notes, v. 20 #9, May 15, 1999, pp. 2-6, and is also available at <www.access.gpo.gov/su-docs/dpos/subguide.html>. At the fall 1999 Depository Library Council meeting regional librarians plan to discuss implementation issues surrounding this policy. Over time, LPS anticipates adding additional products from official partnership sites and GPO Access to the substitution list.

Recommendation 11: Permanent Public Access Archive

Council recommends that GPO develop a prototype of an archive of FDLP electronic products to ensure Permanent Public Access (PPA).

Rationale

The archive prototype is a critical component of the life cycle process within a Permanent Public Access system. The archive must demonstrate success before other aspects of PPA are implemented. Ideally, the archive prototype should be developed by summer 1999.

Response

One critical step in the transition to a more electronic FDLP is to establish a digital archive for the FDLP Electronic Collection (FDLP/EC). Such an archive will address the “storage facility” requirements of the GPO Access law, pursuant to 44 USC §4101(a)(3).

Dissemination of online electronic information is now the fastest-growing component of the FDLP, accounting for over 45% of the titles made available to depository libraries during fiscal year 1999. A significant portion of the FDLP/EC consists of titles at agency sites to which we point. While some of these more than 59,000 titles reside on servers at agencies or institutions with which we have formal agreement that provide for permanent public access (PPA), many of these titles are not under our control. In our 1998 report, *Managing the FDLP Electronic Collection: A Policy and Planning Document*, we stated that the FDLP/EC includes “remotely accessible electronic government information products that GPO identifies, describes, and links to but which remain under the control of the originating agencies.” It is GPO’s goal to assure PPA to the electronic products to which we point and link since, by definition, pointing and linking makes those products part of the FDLP/EC and means that we have a permanent public access responsibility for them. Meeting our PPA commitment for the FDLP/EC requires bringing agency-disseminated Internet resources under GPO control by incorporating them into a digital archive.

The FDLP/EC digital archive is a cooperative venture shared by LPS, EIDS, and GPO’s Production Department. Since early this year a Production staff member has worked with LPS to provide space for our initial archive testing activity. Production intends to devote additional personnel resources to the development of the digital archive once certain vacant information technology positions are filled. Initially, LPS and EIDS will utilize existing staff in this effort, but as the electronic archive grows in size and complexity additional staff may be required.

The next step is the development of an integrated service to bring under GPO control selected individual electronic products that originated on other agency sites, and for which we do not have interagency or partnership agreements for PPA. Although we can capture agency files from the Internet at a particular point in time, without an agreement or a notification process in place we will face difficulties assuring that the publishing agency does not subsequently modify or supersede the product. Therefore a critical element in the archiving process is to establish communication with the publishing agency in order to develop a partnership or other formal relationship, so that the agency will notify us concerning changes in its products.

A new server and a backup initially configured with two years' projected storage capacity were procured specifically for the digital archiving project. The first of the new servers was delivered in July and has been configured for use as the prototype digital archive. Functionally, the prototype FDLP/EC archive will be populated with electronic source data files by FTP transfers, downloads, file captures, or other means. The initial set of test files consists of source data files captured by LPS staff earlier in FY 1999 in conjunction with processing additions to the Browse Electronic Titles service. The files will be accessible through a persistent naming application and made freely accessible to public users through a Web interface. Users will be able to search cataloging or Pathway locator services record descriptions linked directly to the content described. We plan to open the FDLP/EC archive for public use later in 1999.

Recommendation 12: Outreach to Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA)

Council recommends that GPO broaden its contact with the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA).

Rationale

Council is encouraged by, and very supportive of, GPO's outreach efforts. The Chief Library Officers are responsible for overarching library technology planning at the state level. Therefore, it is essential that they are part of the planning for the FDLP and are involved in how that might relate to other statewide electronic information planning needs.

Chief Library Officers meet at least once annually in the Washington, DC, area and participate in National Legislative Library Day. Chief Library Officers work with their Congressional delegations on an ongoing basis. These officers are responsible for organizing the rapid and pervasive pace of technological change. Many state library agencies are regional depository libraries and most are at least selective depository libraries. The Chief Officers therefore understand the importance of citizen access to, and interest in, electronic government information. Many state document programs benefit from and are related to Federal document activities and services.

Chief Library Officers participate in and lead statewide technological interaction among libraries in their states.

Under the Federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), government information support is an allowable activity. Access to government information will increasingly depend on library building level technological capacity as well as the focal role of technologically sophisticated regional and selected depositories. The State Library Officers should be included in the planning for future government options and services.

Response

The Superintendent of Documents has talked with Ray Ewick, Indiana State Librarian and current Chair of COSLA, about an enhanced liaison relationship. This would build upon our practice of including COSLA in our distribution of important FDLP studies and reports, such as the Assessment of Electronic Government Information Products and Managing the FDLP Electronic Collection. The Superintendent of Documents has suggested a stronger relationship between GPO and COSLA given the number of state libraries that are depositories and the importance of access to Federal Government information to the libraries within their states.

GPO continues to refine our outreach efforts in venues where we can educate audiences about GPO's efforts in keeping America informed and to identify potential partners for information dissemination endeavors. Over the past year GPO staff has participated in, spoken and exhibited at a variety of organizations' conferences and meetings both in the Washington, DC area and around the country, including:

American Association of Law Libraries

American Bar Association Technology Show

American Library Association

Association of College and Research Libraries

Computers in Libraries

Department of Energy Office of Scientific and Technical Information Inforum

Federal Publishers Committee

Government Printing and Information Council, Printing Industries of America

Interagency Council on Printing and Publication Services

Michigan Council of Depository Libraries

Mountain Plains Library Association/Montana Library Association Joint Conference

NASA Information Managers Workshop

National Online Meeting

Online World

Special Libraries Association

U.S. Dept. of Agriculture Digital Publications Preservation Steering Committee

Recommendation 13: Congressional Information/Comparative Web Site Analysis

Council recommends that GPO continue efforts to improve coverage of Congressional and other legislative information on GPO Access. To this end, Council recommends that GPO conduct a comparative analysis of the legislative branch information available through GPO Access with that of THOMAS, committee Web sites, and other relevant government and non-government sites. Council anticipates that GPO staff will provide a report on this topic at the fall 1999 Council meeting.

Rationale

Council reiterates the Fall 1998 action item on congressional information and continues to emphasize the importance of expanded GPO Access to current and archival legislative branch information.

Council believes the report will facilitate better understanding of the competitive position of GPO Access vis-à-vis other related

Web sites for legislative branch information. This will also provide a test case of comparative analysis of GPO Access and implementation of the Electronic Collection plan.

Response

A report will be provided to Council at the upcoming meeting in Kansas City. The report will contain a comparison of the Congressional and other legislative branch information available through GPO Access with that available on other relevant government and non-government Web sites. The following factors will be analyzed:

- What resources are available (e.g., Congressional Record, Public Laws, U.S. Code)
- The scope of those resources (i.e., years, volumes, sessions of Congress, etc.)
- The source of those resources (i.e., Are they produced and housed by another provider or do the records on other Web sites point back to GPO Access?)

The report will recognize that some of the other Web sites in this comparison have resources that span a different period of time than GPO Access, as well as having different mission mandates. Recognizing these fundamental dissimilarities is critically important in both performing a comparative analysis and understanding its results.

Commendations

1. Council commends GPO on their latest marketing efforts that include a new Web design, booth display, and promotional materials. Council is especially pleased with efforts to promote the full range of GPO services to existing and new constituencies. Council encourages GPO to continue broadening their marketing efforts to new audiences and industries.

2. Council commends Nan Myers and Ablah Library, Wichita State University, for taking a leadership role in developing and improving the Documents Data Miner, a Web-based, interactive tool integrating GPO-provided and other data elements. The DDM provides significant benefits to individual depository libraries, their ability to network and coordinate collection development, referral and other services.

Recommendation 3

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Rationale

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Response

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Action Items

1. Council will work with GPO to plan a report on methods and metrics for measuring usage of the GPO Access Web site and major components thereof.

2. Council will work with GPO staff to identify resources available for evaluating the value of depository collections of various sizes and ages. Libraries that have gathered information will be invited to share it, to be combined with cost information that

GPO can supply.

3. Council will continue, through its Operations Committee, to consult with GPO on specific electronic products that present difficult software or usage challenges for GPO and depositories.
4. Council Operations Committee will explore with GPO, depository libraries, and vendors the current functions of item numbers for online electronic formats and consider alternatives.
5. Council has received the Report on the Assessment of Electronic Government Information Products commissioned by GPO to assist in planning and implementing the transition to a more electronic FDLP. Council will work with GPO in the analysis of the key findings and data.
6. The Electronic Transition Committee will analyze the Council Discussion Paper on Completing the Transition to a More Electronic FDLP and will report that analysis to GPO.
7. Council will respond to the University of California San Diego summarizing our discussions of UCSD's correspondence regarding their suggestion that source files be made available for depository library selection.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESPONSES OF THE DEPOSITORY LIBRARY COUNCIL

FALL 1999

Recommendation 1: Technological Capabilities

Council recommends that the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO) evaluate and report on the technological capabilities of the depository libraries to provide cost-effective public access to electronic Government information products. This will include using information from the 1997 and 1999 Biennial Surveys about the costs and availability of equipment, software, telecommunications, staff training and other depository library expenses for accessing and utilizing electronic Government information products through the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP).

Rationale

In the Progress Report on the Transition to a More Electronic FDLP 1996-1999, GPO reported the Biennial Survey includes questions on the technological readiness of Depository Libraries. Council would like a qualitative assessment of the technological capabilities of depository libraries.

Response

GPO has analyzed the relevant data from responses to the 1999 Biennial Survey of depository libraries. Of 1,335 responding libraries, 1,274 (95.4%) meet the requirements for public access to electronic information provided through the FDLP. This requirement is based on the 1996 "Recommended Specifications for Public Access Workstations" which specifies a low-end Pentium-chip PC workstation. The 1999 survey responses show continued improvement compared to the results of the 1995 and 1997 Biennial Surveys. In 1995 only 38% of the responding depository libraries reported offering graphical Web access to the public, but by 1997 88% reported having this capability.

Over the corresponding time period the FDLP has evolved to the point at which the majority of new products disseminated to depositories are in online electronic format. GPO is concerned that 61 libraries (4.6%) still do not offer even a minimal level of public access to FDLP electronic content. Of even greater concern is that 22 of the 268 (8.2%) public libraries do not meet this expectation.

GPO has not yet analyzed the responses to the 1999 Biennial Survey optional questions on costs. Data on responses to the cost questions will be included in the published report on the 1999 survey.

Recommendation 2: Disposition of Depository Collection to NARA

Council recommends that GPO report at the Spring 2000 Depository Library Council Meeting on the status of records disposition of depository publications cataloged in the Monthly Catalog, including electronic files for publications with no paper copy, microfilm, or microfiche equivalent, and the related file documentation.

Rationale

The GPO collection of depository publications cataloged in the Monthly Catalog is a valuable resource in terms of options for permanent public access. Council encourages GPO's efforts to ensure appropriate records management practices for these publications and would like to be kept current on progress in this area.

Response

Under the provisions of the Federal Records Act, government agencies are required to take a variety of actions that ensure that the essential evidence of the functions of the government is appropriately preserved by the agency and the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). NARA and agencies work together to develop records retention schedules which guide the life cycle of records and the process of selecting which records are permanently retained and which are destroyed.

Tangible government information products in all formats that have been cataloged by LPS are subject to these requirements as essential evidence of GPO carrying out its statutory function of cataloging and indexing.

In 1995 records officers in GPO Support Services initiated a request to NARA to schedule the disposition of publications with no paper, microfilm, or microfiche equivalent (primarily CD-ROM and floppy disks) accumulated from the cataloging activity. In order for electronic products to be eligible for transfer to NARA, the products must meet certain requirements, principally that data must be in a format independent of any software (such as retrieval software). The most common manifestation of this requirement is ASCII text. As issued by their publishing agencies, very few products in the FDLP meet this requirement.

During the review process, the request for records scheduling was withdrawn and has not, to date, been reactivated. NARA advised GPO that “[a]t this time, it is not feasible to complete our appraisal of these records as many technical, legal, and organizational issues relating to the preservation of electronic information products and digital publications are still pending.” However, in the absence of a records schedule providing otherwise, such records are considered **permanent** and must, by law, be retained by the agency. Therefore, tangible FDLP electronic products are being retained by LPS.

In accordance with existing records schedules, print and microfiche Government publications cataloged by LPS are regularly transferred to NARA in four-year increments that coincide with presidential terms. Each four-year block of print publications must be interfiled into a continuous sequence in Superintendent of Documents classification number order. This requirement also applies to the microfiche copies transferred to NARA. The three most recent blocks, consisting of publications cataloged during the 1984-1996 presidential terms, were prepared for transfer to NARA by private sector contractors. The GPO material in Record Group 287 is first transferred to NARA’s Washington National Records Center, and later is accessioned by NARA for public access. GPO is working with NARA to review certain NARA concerns over the accession and interfiling of products transferred to NARA during the 1980’s, and these concerns are being addressed within NARA and GPO.

For electronic files for which no tangible equivalent is in the FDLP, the application of NARA requirements is still unclear. Records retention schedules are still based on actual custody rather than the concept of a virtual collection. Standards for electronic records are still evolving. GPO’s concern in this area will be for the files we place in the FDLP Electronic Collection archive. GPO will be working to assure that our practices conform to NARA’s requirements to preserve the evidence of this function. GPO’s discussions with NARA on the relationship between our permanent public access initiatives and permanency of records are ongoing.

Recommendation 3: GPO Access Gateways

Council recommends that GPO evaluate and define the future role of GPO Access Gateways.

Rationale

GPO encouraged depository libraries to become GPO Access Gateways in order to expand free public access to GPO Access. Gateway libraries expend time and resources in this effort, which still requires all gateways to update their sites with links to all GPO Access databases. Recently several libraries have dropped their gateway status. Gateway providers and the depository community need clarification regarding the continuing role and purpose of gateways.

Response

GPO staff facilitated a discussion on the role and goals of the GPO Access Gateways initiative at the October 1997 Council meeting. An assumption of that discussion was that the Gateways initiative began with specific objectives at the time of GPO Access as a fee-based service, and that when those objectives were substantially achieved (when GPO Access was made free) no new benchmarks were put in place for Gateways.

Four goals for the Gateways initiative were defined or reaffirmed at the 1997 session:

- The Gateways initiative should promote and enable low-end access to GPO Access through dial-up and Telnet connections.
- The Gateways initiative should provide an environment for high quality service, innovation and experimentation.
- WWW-based Gateways should provide significant locally tailored instructional, navigational, or interpretive content.
- The Gateways initiative should support stability and consistency for end users.

Since that time, no further action has occurred except to address concerns raised at the meeting. Occasionally GPO has received a request to grant new Gateways status, and several libraries have dropped out.

In reviewing these four goals, the one most specific to Gateways is the issue of low-end, dial-up users. Based on anecdotal observations of the operations of the SWAIS interface, it appears that users not connecting to GPO Access through a graphical user interface and the World Wide Web are a rapidly diminishing population. The second and third goals are addressed either within the context of general depository operations or by continuing GPO efforts to refine the GPO Access organization and interface.

GPO acknowledges and appreciates the successes of the Gateways initiative in opening no-fee access to Government information, and the effort of many depository librarians and administrators, systems staff, and others in creating those successes. However, GPO also recognizes that the Gateways initiative has served its purpose and is no longer a program with a clear mission or need. Thus, GPO will end formal support of the Gateways initiative as of September 30, 2000. The SWAIS interface will continue to be operated by GPO, and no links will be disabled, so current Gateways will be able to continue to operate if they so choose. In the future such activities will be acknowledged as outreach activities within normal depository operations, rather than as part of the separate Gateways program effort.

Recommendation 4: Communication between GPO and Library Directors

Council recommends that GPO establish direct, periodic (minimally on an annual basis), issue-oriented communications to directors of depository libraries. Copies of the communications should be supplied in advance to depository librarians.

Rationale

Council recognizes the need for direct communication from GPO to directors at Depository Libraries in order to reinforce the importance of the program, to inform directors of current issues facing depositories, and to form a basis of discussion between depository librarians and their administrators. The proposed communications would assist in building awareness and support at higher levels. The communications might be patterned on the “Briefings for Academic Officers” that is an adjunct piece to Journal of Academic Libraries.

Response

GPO will initiate issue-oriented communications with the directors of Federal depository libraries when necessary to advise the directors about significant program activities or changes. Examples of such issues include changes in FDLP public service

requirements, or situations that may have library budget implications, such as updates to the recommended minimum technical specifications for public access computer workstations. Communication with directors is a shared responsibility, and GPO encourages depository staff to actively engage their directors in ongoing communications about the FDLP, for example by sharing issues of Administrative Notes that include important statements from the Public Printer or the Superintendent of Documents.

Recommendation 5: Digital Storage Facility

Council is pleased at the efforts by GPO to develop a digital storage facility to provide permanent public access to its electronic resource collection. Council urges GPO to develop a plan for the archive and to move its current state from test bed to a publicly accessible electronic repository.

Rationale

Council understands that the online facility has two years storage capacity. Council urges GPO to develop strategies to manage material which may be transferred to offline on-demand storage and update Council at the next meeting.

Response

GPO is pleased to report that the archive component of the FDLP Electronic Collection (FDLP/EC) is in operation. Issues of two publications in the FDLP/EC recently became unavailable from their agency source and users are being redirected, via the PURL, to archived copies on GPO servers. Except for the intermediary access screen that explains the status of the publication and the date of its capture, the process is seamless and invisible to the user.

Electronic publications acquired for the FDLP/EC in online form only (with no tangible equivalent in the FDLP) are being captured, documented, and stored. GPO staff are still learning to effectively manage a multiplicity of file types, formats, and web design issues, but are actively transferring earlier experimental captures to the archive server, and are adding newly acquired publications regularly.

Planning for the archive is taking place within the larger context of the electronic collection plan. Over the coming months the Electronic Collection Manager, the Electronic Collection Team, and other key contributors will begin to more fully flesh out the outlines of the plan with policies and procedures based on our experience to date. In terms of infrastructure, we are very fortunate that the archive utilizes servers dedicated solely to it, and therefore planning for additional capacity and operational improvements will be based solely on FDLP utilization and concerns.

Recommendation 6: Silver Halide Masters

Council recommends that GPO verify the presence of silver halide masters for microfiche distributed through the FDLP and stored at NARA and/or LC and to identify cost effective procedures for replacement copies of aging microfiche in our collections, and inform the library community of these procedures.

Rationale

Council assumes that the depository program will still have access to copies made from the silver halide master. Since many of our microfiche are approaching 25 years old, we believe that setting a procedure now for libraries to follow for getting replacement copies would be wise planning.

Response

The conversion of depository publications from paper to microfiche format results in three categories of microfiche:

- First generation silver halide master copies. These are sent to NARA every four years according to an established records disposition schedule.
- Second generation silver reproducible microfiche. Reprints for depository claims are made from these copies until the material is transferred every two years to the Library of Congress.
- Diazo copies sent to the Federal depository libraries.

In 1989, the Library of Congress (LC) and GPO entered into an interagency agreement (IA), which provided for the transfer of the second generation silver reproducible depository microfiche to LC. Under this agreement, LC agreed to house the microfiche in its permanent collection. This material is now available in LC's Serials and Government Publications Division.

According to the IA, "The Library of Congress can use this collection to better serve the information needs of the United States Congress and its other users, to fulfill claims from foreign libraries under the International Exchange Program, and has the facilities to reproduce microfiche and paper blowbacks for the public."

Every two years GPO sends the second generation silvers to LC. Under the IA, LC assumed responsibility for all interfiling of microfiche into Superintendent of Documents classification number order at its site. LC also agreed to assume sole responsibility for on-demand sales of microfiche and/or paper blowbacks to the public. GPO agreed to direct all inquiries to LC for microfiche copies for material already transferred to LC. If GPO needs a temporary loan of some of this microfiche material, LC loans the material to GPO on a short-term basis.

Libraries may obtain replacement copies of individual titles from LC. The standard fees for duplication are \$4.00 per microfiche for silver and \$1.75 per microfiche for diazo. There is a minimum charge of \$10.00 per order. If a cost estimate is required, there is a \$10.00 prepayment. This amount will be applied to duplication costs if an order is placed. Shipping and handling charges are extra.

As covered in the response to Recommendation 2, Disposition of Depository Materials to NARA, LPS transfers cataloged copies of microfiche publications to NARA in four-year blocks. However, LPS recommends contacting LC for replacement copies of FDLP microfiche.

LPS does not believe it is in the best interests of the FDLP to expend funds from the limited appropriations budget for replacement copies of the diazo microfiche material. LPS does not systematically expend funds for replacement of aging tangible products in any other format. If the decision were made to replace this material, there would have to be a corresponding decrease in other products and services to offset the costs involved in replacing this material.

Recommendation 7: Coordinate Government-wide Discussion of Permanent Public Access

Council recommends that GPO continue to assume a leadership role in bringing together key government officials and other appropriate representatives to hold collaborative discussions regarding the permanent public access of electronic Government information.

Rationale

The current federal government information landscape has become increasingly fragmented as individual federal agencies publish directly to the Web in lieu of using traditional channels for printing, dissemination, and records disposition. Though agencies publishing directly to the Web often meet immediate missions to create and distribute information, they too often

ignore issues of permanent public access and preservation, functions traditionally carried out through the FDLP and NARA. High level discussions among major federal and private stakeholders, including GPO, NARA, the national libraries, and the archivist and library communities, will help clarify roles and focus issue oriented discussions regarding electronic information resources.

Response

GPO continues to organize and host a series of meetings regarding permanent public access to electronic Government information. These meetings bring together key Government officials and other stakeholders representing agencies and organizations active in the permanent public access arena, including NARA, the Library of Congress, the National Libraries of Agriculture, Medicine, and Education, the Department of Energy's Office of Scientific and Technical Information, the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science, the Council on Libraries and Information Resources, the Office of Management and Budget, and staff from key Congressional committees. The sessions, now held on a quarterly basis, emphasize top level discussions and cross-cutting awareness of permanent public access initiatives in various Government and related settings. The most recent meeting, held March 31, 2000, featured presentations from GPO on the FDLP Electronic Collection archive and from NARA on the research initiatives concerning large groups of electronic records. The group also previewed the prototype of new permanent public access forum web site, located at <<http://www.ppa.gpo.gov>>.

Recommendation 8: Review of Online Locator and Finding Aid Tools

Council recommends that GPO conduct a comprehensive review of online locator and finding aid tools to evaluate the need, redundancy, and organization of current tools. The report should also address possible development of new tools. The review process will require Council and depository library input as well as an analysis of available statistics. The Council requests a report prior to the spring meeting.

Rationale

Council is concerned that the current online tools may be redundant with other online tools and may not be as effective or necessary as when they were first developed. Council believes that an analysis of usage from the Biennial Survey and Web statistics will assist GPO in its review of these tools. The report will assist GPO and Council in deciding the future of GPO locator tools.

Response

GPO has conducted a comprehensive review of online cataloging and locator services, and copies of the resulting report were provided to Council in March. A primary purpose of this review is to evaluate the need, usability, and organization of current tools. In essence, the review concluded that GPO's suite of cataloging and locator services needs to be refined rather than replaced. To this end, GPO has initiated several actions to improve these services, and has proposed other related changes for Council's consideration. In conducting this review GPO also found that issues relevant to the online cataloging and locator services led to a consideration of changes in the print and CD-ROM publications based on GPO cataloging. Therefore, the report includes two proposals concerning the future directions for the Monthly Catalog-based tangible output products.

Recommendation 9: Self-Study Process

Council is encouraged by the modifications that GPO is making in the self-study schedule. Council recommends that GPO investigate methods for providing timelier acknowledgment of the submission of self-studies, and information for depositories on the status of self-studies and inspections.

Rationale

Depository libraries take the self-study process seriously, and devote large amounts of time to the preparation of their reports. Libraries now receive no acknowledgment that their self-studies have been received. A brief acknowledgment, even by e-mail, would assure depositories that their studies were in the process, and would be a courtesy much appreciated by the libraries. The time delay between self-study submission and evaluation reports would be more acceptable to libraries if some information on progress could be made available. Efficient ways of accomplishing this could be regular communication with Regionals, and/or a web page with general information on the schedules of the inspection team.

Response

Beginning with the batch of self-studies due in May 2000, Depository Services will notify each depository by e-mail of its receipt at LPS. Depository Services will continue to notify the regionals of any self-studies not received at LPS by the deadline. Subsequently the regionals can remind the depository under their purview to complete the self-study. LPS is working with the Library of Michigan on a partnership for “regional pages” including a section on inspections and self-studies.

Action Items

1. Electronic Transition

The Electronic Transition Committee will review GPO’s progress on the transition to a more electronic FDLP and prepare a final report to Council for the Spring 2000 Council Meeting.

2. Digital Products on Tangible Media

Council recognizes the importance of preserving digital products distributed to the FDLP on tangible media. Accordingly, the Preservation Committee will examine issues concerning library cooperation in digital preservation activities, digital preservation training for depository librarians, and develop a draft assessment tool to list and describe at-risk titles distributed through the FDLP. The Preservation Committee members will report to Council at the spring 2000 meeting and provide an assessment tool for review.

3. Closing of NTIS

Council will monitor developments regarding the Department of Commerce’s decision to close NTIS. Council will analyze any legislative proposal and advise the Public Printer about concerns Council may have regarding organizational, access, or preservation issues. Council sent a letter to the Public Printer in September 1999 <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/dpos/council/dlcpubs.html> recommending that GPO take an active role in deliberations regarding the closing of NTIS. Council’s letter also articulated several concerns regarding the continuation of NTIS’ important functions.

4. GPO Access Usage Report

The Chair of Council will appoint an ad hoc committee to review the GPO Access Statistical Report (October 14, 1999) for methodology and content and to report back to Council and GPO.

5. Value of Depository collections

Council will establish a web page to assist libraries in estimating the cost or replacement value of their depository collections. Relevant research, reports and data from GPO and other sources will be added as appropriate.

6. Archiving dynamic databases

The Council Preservation Committee will work with GPO on issues associated with the archiving of dynamic databases and will report their work to Council.

7. LPS Administrative web pages

Council will work with LPS staff to evaluate the components of the administrative web pages to improve their functionality for depository libraries. The implementation of a site search capability will be an important component of this activity.

Commendations

1. PubSCIENCE

Council commends GPO and the Department of Energy's Office of Scientific and Technical Information for sponsoring public access to PubSCIENCE, a web-based product that provides access to more than a million citations to journal articles in the physical sciences with connections to a growing number of full text articles. Council is especially pleased to see GPO and OSTI continue in their partnership to provide essential energy-related information to the public and hopes to see additional products available in the future.

2. GPO Access Improvements

Council commends GPO for the significant improvements made to the GPO Access site, including the development of Site Search, the opening of GPO Access to Web indexers, and the reorganization of the GPO Access interface. These enhancements improve the intelligibility of the site through more intuitive organization and "search this site" capabilities. The enhancements further demonstrate GPO's commitment to open public access to Federal Government information by allowing Web crawlers to index GPO materials, thereby adding important links from Web search engines to the rich collection of materials on GPO Access.