

Decision Framework for Federal Document Repositories

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This draft Decision Framework for Federal Document Repositories was prepared by the Center for Research Libraries (CRL) for the U.S. Government Printing Office. The decision framework is intended for use in creating the specifications for a system of regional repositories for tangible federal government documents. The decision framework will enable the Superintendent of Documents to evaluate the qualities, resources, and capabilities of potential repository facilities and their governing organizations, and to identify the configuration of light and dark repositories most appropriate to ensure the persistent archiving and public availability of tangible federal documents.

The target system of repositories will include depository libraries, which will make federal documents available to the general public in conformance with the requirements of the depository system; possibly multiple “light” archives providing coordinated preservation and access services for designated categories of tangible documents, and at least one “dark” or secure archive, whose purpose will be to ensure survival of archival copy (copies) of the tangible documents.

The functions of the light and dark archives are defined below. These working definitions derive from the purposes that such archives would serve under the GPO and the FDLP efforts to provide a “collection of last resort.” Formation of such archives would enable Federal depository libraries to consolidate or reduce their local tangible collections secure in the knowledge that copies will be perpetually available from the GPO Collection.

Dark archive – A collection of tangible materials preserved under optimal conditions, designed to safeguard the integrity and important artifactual characteristics of the archived materials for specific potential future use or uses. Eventual use of the archived materials (“lighting” the archives) is to be triggered by a specified event or condition. Such events might include failure or inadequacy of the “service” copy of the materials; lapse or expiration of restrictions imposed on use of the archives content; effect of the requirements of a contractual obligation regarding maintenance or use; or other events as determined under the charter of the dark archives.

Light archive – A collection of tangible materials preserved under optimal conditions, designed to safeguard the integrity and important artifactual characteristics of the archived materials while supporting ongoing permitted use of those materials by the designated constituents of the archives. A light archive normally presupposes the existence of a dark archive, as a hedge against the risk of loss or damage to the light archives content through permitted uses. A light archive is also distinct from regular collections of like materials in that it systematically undertakes the active preservation of the materials as part of a cooperative or coordinated effort that may include other redundant or complementary light archives.

The decision framework is tailored to the nature, value and uses of documents to be maintained on both light and dark archives and in depositories. In developing the decision framework CRL has referenced existing auditing standards for federal depository libraries and statistical metrics and standards for quality assurance and sampling.

The decision framework takes the form of a matrix identifying the archiving activities and conditions affecting the survival and persistent availability of “tangible” federal government documents, including but not limited to levels of access, service layers, institutional governance and funding base, nature of the constituent base, geographical location, security, and level of content validation. The matrix indicates the relative levels of cost and risk associated with each factor.

The factors are made to be assessed cumulatively. The assurance matrix does not provide or establish standards for archiving and tangible repository activities, but merely the degree to which various levels and standards of activity are likely to promote the persistence and availability of the government documents.

The Center for Research Libraries is an independent 501(c)3 organization, located in Chicago, Illinois. It is a consortium of North American universities and research libraries whose mission is to ensure the availability of the rich and diverse resources for advanced research and teaching. The Center is not a federal depository library.

CENTER FOR RESEARCH LIBRARIES

Draft Assurance and Decision Framework -- Part 1

Assurance level	FACILITIES	Factors	Additional Values	References
			Low value >>> High value	

Storage Environment

Climate Control

low	"General user" conditions: a steady temperature of 70° and 50% RH are maintained at all times. (Preservation Index of ~42 years)			Reilly, James M., Douglas W. Nishimura, and Edward Zinn. <i>New Tools for Preservation: Assessing Long-Term Environmental Effects on Library and Archives Collections</i> . Washington, DC : Commission on Preservation and Access, 1995. Reilly, Nishimura, et al.
med	"Staff use only" conditions: a steady temperature of 60° and 30% RH are maintained at all times. (PI of ~142 years)			Reilly, Nishimura, et al.
high	"Cold storage" conditions: a steady temperature of 32° and 5% RH are maintained at all times. (PI of 2634 years)			Reilly, Nishimura, et al.

Lighting and Ultra Violet Radiation -- The extent and intensity of light exposure in gov docs storage area

low	Material is periodically or continuously exposed to ultra violet lighting conditions (below 450 nm).			Wilson, William K. <i>Environmental Guidelines for the Storage of Paper Records</i> . NISO Technical Report, TR01-1995. Bethesda: NISO Press, 1995
high	UV lighting is filtered (below 415 nm) and/or minimized. Material is not exposed to ultra violet radiation and light sources are kept to a minimum (e.g., motion sensor lighting and automatic shut off).			Wilson. <i>Environmental Guidelines</i> Wilson. <i>Environmental Guidelines</i>

Air Filtration--Particulate Matter -- The relative exposure of gov docs to air-borne contaminants in storage area

low	"General user" conditions: level of air filtration of particulate matter is 60-89% of contaminants.						Wilson, William K. Environmental Guidelines for the Storage of Paper Records. NISO Technical Report, TR01-1995. Bethesda: NISO Press, 1995
		60%					Wilson. Environmental Guidelines
	"Staff only" conditions: level of air filtration of particulate matter is 90-95% of contaminants.	90%	91%	92%	93%	94%	
high	Level of air filtration of particulate matter is 95% of contaminants or higher.	95%	96%	97%	98%	99%	Wilson. Environmental Guidelines

Air Filtration--Gaseous Contaminants -- The relative exposure of gov docs to gaseous contaminants in storage area

low	Gaseous contaminants not filtered and/or measured						Wilson, William K. Environmental Guidelines for the Storage of Paper Records. NISO Technical Report, TR01-1995. Bethesda: NISO Press, 1995
high	Gaseous contaminants measured and partially filtered Gaseous contaminants measured and highly filtered. Air filtration minimizes gaseous contaminants (e.g., sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, ozone) to no more than 10 parts/billion/ volume.						Wilson, William K. Environmental Guidelines. Wilson, William K. Environmental Guidelines.

Physical Plant

Geographical locale

low	Facility is located on or near a fault line / flood plain, or in a severe weather zone (e.g., subject to hurricanes, tornados). Facility is located in a stable area						Federal Emergency Management Administration guidelines for risk assessment and mitigation Federal Emergency Management Administration guidelines for risk assessment and mitigation
high	Facility is located in a stable area and is reinforced, seismically sound.						Federal Emergency Management Administration guidelines for risk assessment and mitigation

Strategic locale

low	Facility is located in or near an area of strategically important potential targets						Federal Emergency Management Administration guidelines for risk assessment and mitigation
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