

Regional Depository Libraries and Selection of Online Materials

Regional Depository Libraries Survey Findings

**Office of the Superintendent of Documents
U.S. Government Publishing Office**

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Introduction

Regional depository library coordinators have long indicated a strong desire for increased flexibility to effectively manage their depository resources, including the ability to adjust their Government documents collections to meet local needs and to expand their capability to serve the increasing number of remote users. They also have expressed the desire to move to more digital collections, as other areas of their libraries are doing.

The Superintendent of Documents seeks to accommodate regional depository libraries with such flexibilities as much as practicable. One way is for Library Services and Content Management (LSCM) to explore the ability to have “online” as a format selection option for regional depository libraries, without them having to also select an equivalent tangible version. To this end, a [Superintendent of Documents Public Policy Statement](#) was drafted, but is not yet signed nor is it in effect.

In the planning stages is a test to adopt this selection process for the *Federal Register* and the *Congressional Record* (Daily). At the onset a survey was conducted of regional depository library coordinators in order to:

- Gauge regional depository interest in this prospect.
- Provide LSCM an insight into how regional depositories might implement such a practice.
- Inform the development of processes for LSCM.

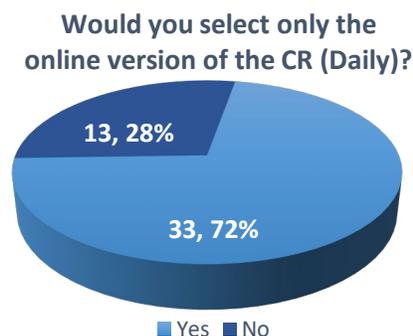
The survey was launched September 17, 2020 and closed October 19, 2020. There was a 100% response rate, with all forty-six designated regional depository libraries submitting the survey.

Question by Question Results

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD (DAILY) QUESTIONS

Question 1: *If given the opportunity to select the online version of the Congressional Record (Daily) without having to select a tangible version, would you select only the online version?*

Thirty-three, or 72%, of regional depository libraries responded that, yes, if given the opportunity they would select only the online version of the *Congressional Record* (Daily). The thirteen libraries that answered “No” were asked the follow-up question, “Why would you continue to select the tangible version of the *Congressional Record* (Daily)?” Three libraries answered that library users prefer the tangible version. While five “other” responses related to having reliable back-up copies in case online versions are not available, another five responses conveyed the importance of having tangible versions in a comprehensive collection. The officialness of



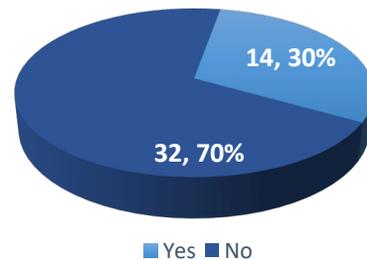
the *Congressional Record* (Daily) printed version was also mentioned as a reason for continuing to select it. Listed here are the “other” responses as submitted:

- Printed is still considered official.
- Access in multiple formats means more reliable access.
- Librarian concerns over online availability.
- Although the *Congressional Record* daily is not part of our Preservation Steward agreement, I would still hang on to this for posterity and preservation. We receive these in microfiche so they don't take up much space.
- To create a comprehensive collection and have a way to provide access even if technology is not available.
- Backup copies.
- We believe it is important, as the regional repository to have a tangible copy available in the state.
- Our regional policy overall prefers tangible for comprehensive collections of record.
- For preservation purposes, and in case of Internet outages. If microfiche were discontinued, however, we would select online rather than paper.
- If we would still receive the bound *Congressional Record*, then the answer to the previous question would be yes.

Question 2: *Is the Congressional Record (Daily) retained in your regional collection once the Bound Congressional Record is received?*

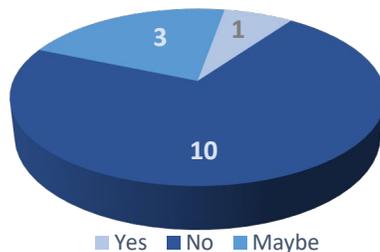
Many, thirty-two or 70%, regional depository libraries do not retain the *Congressional Record* (Daily) once they receive the Bound Edition. Fourteen, or 30% of regionals, do retain the dailies. One cannot determine, however, the format of the retained issues from the responses.

Do you retain the CR (Daily)?



An additional question was asked of the fourteen regional depository coordinators who indicated they retain the *Congressional Record* (Daily): “Would you consider being a

Would you consider being a Preservation Steward for the CR dailies?



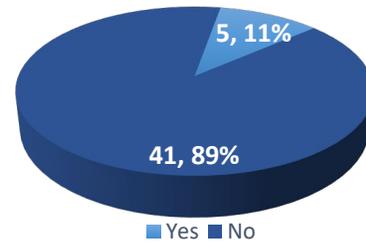
preservation steward for the *Congressional Record* (Daily)?” One indicated they would consider becoming a preservation steward, while three indicated they might consider it. The greatest response from regionals when asked if they would consider becoming a preservation steward for the *Congressional Record* (Daily) was “No”.

Question 3: *Do you have a signed agreement with another institution to retain and share the Congressional Record (Daily)?*

Most, forty-one or 89%, regional depository libraries do not have signed agreements with another institution to retain and share the *Congressional Record (Daily)*. However, five regionals reported that, yes, they do have such agreements. Institutions with which they have signed agreements were identified:

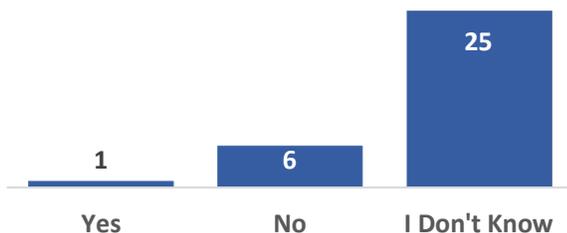
- Intrastate shared regionals, University of North Dakota receives and retains congressional materials and they share with North Dakota State University.
- The University of Virginia has a shared regional agreement with the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, where the *Congressional Record (Daily)* is retained.
- The University of Missouri has an agreement with the University of Missouri School of Law Library.
- The State Library of Oregon has an agreement with Portland State University.
- The University of New Mexico has agreements with New Mexico State Library and New Mexico State University.

Do you have agreements to retain the CR dailies?



Question 4: *Do any of your selectives retain the Congressional Record (Daily)?*

Retention of CR dailies by Selectives



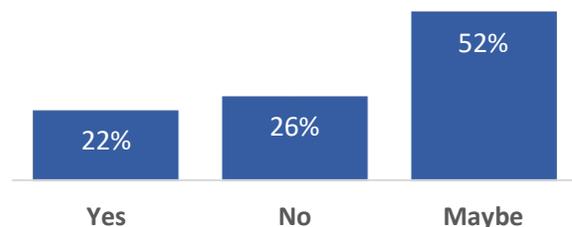
The intent of this question was to try to determine how widespread the retention of the *Congressional Record (Daily)* is among depository libraries. Thirty-two, or 70% of regional coordinators, responded to this question. Of those, 78%, or twenty-five, indicated they did not know if their selectives were retaining the *Congressional Record (Daily)*. While one regional indicated there are a

couple of their selectives that retain the dailies, six, or 2%, indicated that none of their selectives keep them.

Question 5: *Would your library be interested in receiving the Congressional Record (Daily) through digital deposit?*

The number of regional depository libraries with an interest in receiving the *Congressional Record* through deposit of digital files is almost the same as those who do not have an interest. Ten expressed an interest, while twelve did not. The overwhelming number of responses,

Interest in digital deposit for CR dailies

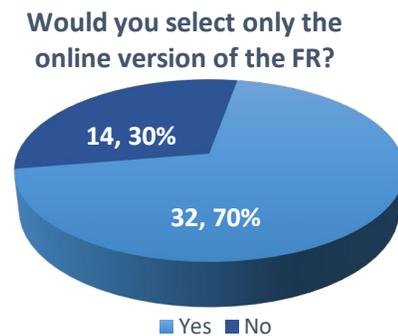


twenty-four or 52%, came from those libraries who might be interested in digital deposit of the *Congressional Record* (Daily) and responded with “Maybe”. This is not surprising. Though digital deposit is being explored, there are no details about how it would work or what might be required for libraries to receive files. “Maybe” is a prudent answer with so much uncertainty about the process.

FEDERAL REGISTER QUESTIONS

Question 1: *If given the opportunity to select the online version of the Federal Register without having to select a tangible version, would you select only the online version?*

Thirty-two, or 70%, of regional depository libraries responded that, yes, if given the opportunity they would select only the online version of the *Federal Register*. The fourteen libraries that answered “NO” were asked a follow-up question, “Why would you continue to select a tangible version of the *Federal Register*?” The responses given were very similar to those for the *Congressional Record* (Daily) — four libraries answered that library users prefer the tangible version. Other reasons for continuing to select the tangible version relate to having reliable back-up copies in case online versions are not available, and the importance of having tangible versions in a comprehensive collection. The need for “a tangible record of governmental actions to ensure effective public oversight of the federal government” was a unique response. Listed here are the “other” responses as submitted:

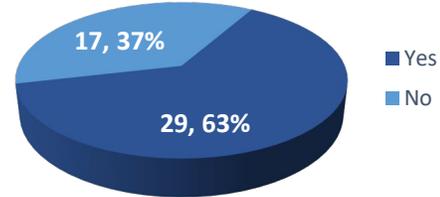


- Multiple formats ensure greater access.
- Feel it is important to preserve a tangible version, even if users prefer online format.
- Librarian concerns over online availability.
- A tangible record of governmental actions is needed to ensure effective public oversight of the federal government.
- Again, we get this in fiche and would retain for posterity.
- To create a comprehensive collection and have a way to provide access even if technology is not available.
- Backup copies
- We believe it is important, as the regional repository to have a tangible copy available in the state. Copies from the tangible copy are requested by users
- Our regional policy overall prefers tangible for comprehensive collections of record
- In case of Internet outages. Some of our users in the legal community prefer tangible. If microfiche were discontinued, however, we would not want a paper version.
- We only retain the paper for two years plus present. We keep the microfiche longer.

Question 2: *Is the Federal Register retained in your regional collection once the Code of Federal Regulations is received?*

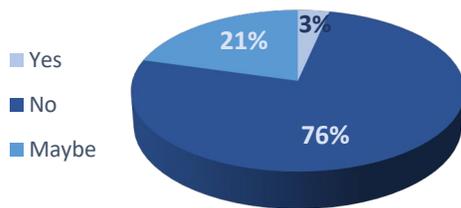
A majority, twenty-nine or 63%, of regional depository libraries continue to retain the *Federal Register* once they receive the *Code of Federal Regulations*(CFR). Though, once again, it is not known in which format the title is kept. Seventeen, or 37%, of regionals discard the *Federal Register* upon receipt of the CFR.

Do you retain the Federal Register?



An additional question was asked of those twenty-nine regional depository coordinators who answered “Yes” to retaining the *Federal Register*:

Consider being a FR Preservation Steward?



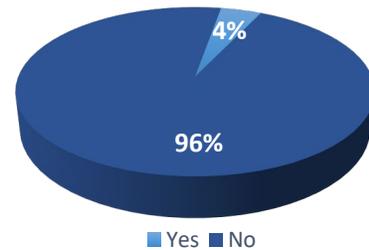
“Would you consider being a preservation steward for the *Federal Register*?” One regional indicated they would consider becoming a preservation steward, while six, or 21%, said they might consider it. When asked if they would consider becoming a preservation steward partner for the *Federal Register*, the response most often given, at twenty-two or 76%, was “No”.

Question 3: *Do you have a signed agreement with another institution to retain and share the Federal Register?*

An overwhelming majority, forty-four or 96%, of regional depository libraries are not party to an agreement to retain or share the *Federal Register* with another institution. The two regional coordinators who responded “Yes”, identified with whom they have signed agreements:

- The University of Virginia has a shared regional agreement with the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill (microfiche)
- The University of New Mexico has agreements with the New Mexico State Library and New Mexico State University

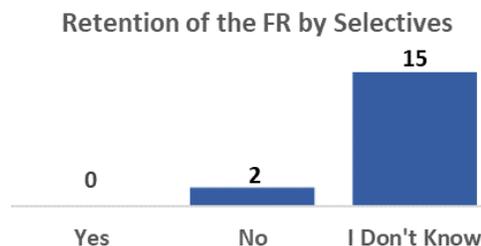
Do you have agreements to retain the Federal Register?



Question 4: *Do any of your selectives retain the Federal Register?*

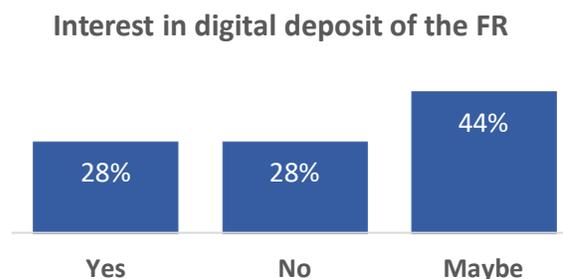
Fifteen fewer regional depository coordinators responded to this question than did for this identical question for the *Congressional Record* (Daily). Of the seventeen who answered, 88% or

fifteen replied they did not know if any of their selectives retained the *Federal Register*. Another two coordinators indicated that none of their selectives keep it. As the figure to the right shows, there were no “Yes” responses to the question: “Do any of your selectives retain the *Federal Register*?”



Question 5: *Would your library be interested in receiving the Federal Register through digital deposit?*

Regional depository coordinators are somewhat more interested in receiving the *Federal Register* through digital deposit than they are with the *Congressional Record*, as shown with a 6% increase in “Yes” responses. However, there also was a slight increase in the “No” responses. Both “Yes” and “No” replies numbered thirteen, or 28%, each. The “Maybe” responses totaled twenty, or 44%. Again, this is not unexpected, given that there is no digital deposit process in place.



GENERAL QUESTIONS

Question 1: *For which other titles/series would you like to be able to select only the online format? Let us know up to 5 of your top priorities.*

Fifteen regionals responded with N/A, None, or Not sure, and one regional responded that they could not answer this as they were teleworking and didn’t have access to their collection management files. Two general categorical statements were made:

- Titles that will later be collected into a bound volume
- Titles that supersede rather quickly (within 1-12 months). These materials require personnel processing time that is not warranted for the shelf life of these items.

Five or more regional depository coordinators identified the following titles as being among those they would like to have the capability to select only the online version. The number in parentheses indicates how many times it was suggested.

- Code of Federal Regulations (8)
- Committee hearings (8)
- FCC Record (7)
- House Documents (5)
- House Reports (5)
- Senate Documents (5)
- Senate Reports (5)

The complete list of titles recommended by respondents is found in Appendix I.

Question 2: *Please provide any comments you have about regional depository libraries selecting "online" as a format without having to also select a tangible format.*

Six regional depository coordinators indicated they had no comments. The responses of the remaining forty coordinators offered sixty-nine observations. Regional depository coordinators who specifically stated they support or favor the ability to select an online version without having to select a corresponding tangible version received the highest number of responses at twelve, or 17% of the observations, while six or 9% indicated a continued value in receiving tangible materials. Another respondent pointed out that there are positives and negatives on both sides of this question.

Twelve, or 17% of observations, expressed uncertainty about or reluctance to select only an online format without having to select a corresponding tangible version of the title. The greatest reluctance conveyed was for the permanent availability of online titles with five, or 7%, of the total observations. Concern was expressed over Internet connectivity/outages, file corruption,



“censorship of web-based resources”, “continuity of information access across administrations,” and “technical or political issues that could affect digital access” such as government shutdowns. Concern for library patrons who prefer to use paper resources was reflected in 4%, or three observations. Two respondents, 3%, had concerns about being able to maintain a tangible depository collection.

One shared their collection philosophy that there should be a comprehensive tangible collection in the state, while another shared that their selectives rely on the regional’s tangible collection. The officialness of the online content being offered was questioned and seen as a concern to selecting only online versions for one respondent, as was the completeness of online content.

In addition to the twelve, or 17%, who favored selecting only online versions, one respondent stated that allowing regional depository libraries this option “aligns appropriately with patron access needs and changing library dynamics (space, staffing, etc.)”. This is supported by the comments of others. Ten, or 15%, of the observations viewed this option as being a “space saving measure”. Four, or 6% of respondents shared that most of their patrons are using online resources, and one respondent took this thought further and said online content makes “materials more accessible to a larger portion of our state”. Another 6% indicated a collection development preference for digital content, as is shown in this statement, “My administrators jump at every chance to go online/discard print”. Three respondents, or 4%, addressed their need for flexibility with comments like this is a “great way to allow us flexibility in managing our collections and space.” It was thrice mentioned that staff time spent on certain processes could be saved as it would be

“helpful not to have to process a piece multiple times — when it arrives and later when it is replaced by a bound volume or superseded”; there would be less exception processing with dailies online.

Ten respondents indicated they would be more receptive to the idea of selecting only online versions if there were certain stipulations, shown in the table below:

If there were certain stipulations ...	#	%
Applied to titles that are superseded or replaced by bound volumes	5	7
Assurances that tangible copies are geographically distributed	2	3
Online versions are maintained on a secure and permanent site	1	2
Patrons can easily access items when needed without restrictions	1	2
Online version of the <i>Congressional Record</i> was considered “official”	1	2

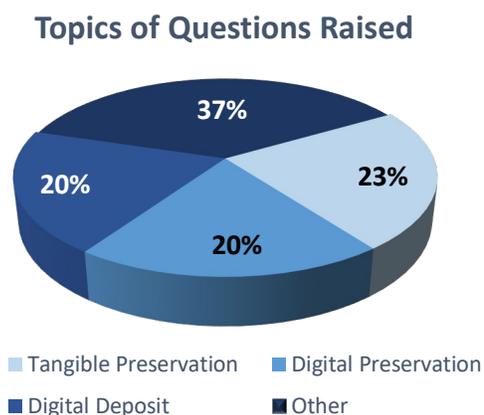
All of the comments provided in response to this question are found in Appendix II.

Question 3: *Please provide any questions you have about regional depository libraries selecting "online" as a format without having to also select a tangible format that you would like GPO to address.*

Twenty-five responses to this question conveyed the coordinator had no questions for the U.S. Government Publishing Office (GPO) at this time. The other twenty-one submissions generated thirty observations. Three major themes emerged from those questions/comments:

- Preservation of the tangible versions;
- Preservation of the digital versions; and
- Meaning of digital deposit.

Seven, or 23%, of the observations related to the preservation or continued accessibility of the tangible versions of titles, with questions revolving around the regional discard policy and the concept of preservation stewards. “Would regionals who still receive and retain the tangible be something like preservation stewards for those items?” and “Would we try to retain four geographically dispersed copies in tangible?” are representative of this topic.



The concern for preservation and permanent public access to the digital versions of titles was expressed in six, or 20%, of the twenty-eight observations. “Will there be a dark archive for the online version so that it can be restored in the event of a disaster?” and “What plans are in place to insure the long-term accessibility of such

resources?” reflect these apprehensions. And yet another offered a suggestion for consideration, “Would the GPO consider working with universities to establish a network of secondary hosting services to ensure long-term continuity of access for online-only resources?”

Digital deposit also accounted for six, or 20%, of the remarks. They dealt primarily with clarifying what digital deposit means. “Does digital deposit mean storing digital files?” and “Will a digital copy be sent to the libraries that select "online" as a format?” are representative questions.

The other remaining eleven, or 37% of the observations, include a variety of remarks such as:

- Would the online format be acceptable for legal purposes?
- How will the catalog records for the "online" format differ from the records we now receive for the document which includes the PURL?
- Many individuals still prefer paper format as it tends to be easier to search.
- I think this is a good idea.

All of the responses to this question are found in Appendix III.

Question 4: The selection rates for the Congressional Record (Daily) and the Federal Register in microfiche are high, though we hear anecdotally that library patrons do not like to use it. Briefly, tell us why you select microfiche and how you use it, e.g., weed the paper daily editions when they supersede, but retain them in microfiche.

Regional depository libraries are required to retain the daily issues of the *Congressional Record* until they receive all the bound editions for a volume; this includes the bound volumes for the dailies and the indexes. Regional depository libraries are required to retain only two years of the *Federal Register*. It is the decision of the library as to whether they select and retain the paper, microfiche, or both formats.

Forty-four of the respondents offered comments about their use of microfiche. The remaining two responded N/A, indicating that they do not select microfiche. Library reasons for selecting microfiche, and practices for retaining the tangible versions, of the *Congressional Record* (Daily) and the *Federal Register* vary greatly.

Multiple observations were found in most of the comments. Twenty-five responses indicated that the microfiche version of the *Congressional Record* (Daily) and the *Federal Register* is kept by regional depository libraries. Space issues in the library were identified in twenty responses as the reason microfiche is selected. While there were four mentions of selecting microfiche in order to meet the statutory requirement to “retain at least one copy of all Government publications either in printed or microfacsimile form,” in another four comments the regional depository coordinator conveyed they would de-select the microfiche if they were able to select only the online version. There were twelve instances of patrons being referred to or preferring online editions of the *Congressional Record* (Daily) and *Federal Register*. And there were seven indications that microfiche is rarely used, and would not be missed by library patrons if it were no longer available.

All the responses to the question on microfiche uses for the *Congressional Record* (Daily) and the *Federal Register* are found in Appendix IV.

Conclusion

To provide regional depository library coordinators increased flexibility to effectively manage their depository collections, the Superintendent of Documents is exploring the option of having “online” as a format selection without them having to also select an equivalent tangible version. Part of the exploration includes a test using the *Congressional Record* (Daily) and the *Federal Register*. As a first step, a survey was conducted of regional coordinators. With a 100% return rate, much was learned from the results, and the three goals of the survey were achieved:

- Gauge regional depository interest in this prospect.
- Provide LSCM an insight into how regional depositories might implement such a practice.
- Inform the development of processes for LSCM.

With 72% of regionals indicating they would select only the online version of the *Congressional Record* dailies and 70% indicating they would select only the online version of the *Federal Register*, it is clear a majority of regional depository libraries are interested in the possibility of being able to no longer receive a tangible version of these titles.

Some libraries would make the switch to only online selection as soon as possible. They see it as being in the best interest of their patrons and the library. Some regional depository libraries are selecting microfiche only because of the requirement to retain a tangible copy. Not only is this seen as wasteful, “it doesn't contribute to enhanced access.”

Other libraries, though using online resources, would continue to receive the tangible version of these titles. The reasons vary from concerns of preservation and permanency of the access to the digital versions, to a philosophy that a comprehensive tangible collection of depository materials should reside in their state, to serving patrons who still prefer paper, and serving their selective depository libraries that rely on the regional as they manage their own collections. As these trepidations are addressed, or circumstances in libraries change, more libraries may change to only online. As one regional coordinator said, “We would appreciate having the option of online only selection whether or not library takes advantage of it.”

The issues and concerns raised, and the questions asked, by the regional depository coordinators will provide guidance in the planning and implementing the test for this new process.

Appendix I – Recommended Titles for Online Only

The table below shows all the titles suggested in response to this question: *For which other titles/series would you like to be able to select only the online format? Let us know up to 5 of your top priorities.*

Titles Recommended for Online Only Format			
Title	SuDoc Number	Item Number	Times Suggested
Appropriations Committee hearings	Y 4.AP 6/1:	1011 (P) 1011-A (MF) 1011-B	2
Budget of the US Government	PREX 2.8:	0853 (P) 0853-C-01 (EL) 0853-C (CD)	1
Calendar of Business, Senate	Y 1.3/3:	0998-B (EL)	3
Calendar of United States House of Representatives and History of Legislation	Y 1.2/2:	0998-A (P) 0998-A-06 (EL)	3
Census	C 3.	multiple	1
Code of Federal Regulations	AE 2.106/3:	0572-B (P) 0572-B-01 (EL) 0572-C (MF)	8
Congress. House Documents	Y 1.1/7:	0996-A-02 (P) 0996-B (MF) 0996-F (EL)	5
Congress. House Reports	Y 1.1/8:	1008-C-02 (P) 1008-D (MF) 1008-I (EL)	5
Congress. Senate Documents	Y 1.1/3:	0996-A (P) 0996-B (MF) 0996-D (EL)	5
Congress. Senate Reports	Y 1.1/5:	1008-C (P) 1008-D (MF) 1008-G (EL)	5
Congressional Committee Hearings	Y4.*	multiple	8
Congressional Record (bound)	X 1.1:	0993-A-01 (P) 0993-A (MF) 0993-B-02 (EL)	2
Digital - Chart Supplement (d-CS) [Formerly Airport/Facility Directory (A/FD)]	TD 4.79:	0982-L-13 (P)	1
Digital Terminal Procedures Publication (D-TPP)	TD 4.80:	0982-O	2
FCC Record	CC 1.12/3:	0284 (P) 0284-A-01 (EL)	7
Federal Register	AE 2.106:	0573-C (P) 0573-D 0573-F	1
Internal Revenue Bulletin	T 22.23:	0957-A-02 (EL)	1
List of Sections Affected	AE 2.106/2:	0573-G (P)	1

Titles Recommended for Online Only Format			
Title	SuDoc Number	Item Number	Times Suggested
		0573-C-01 (EL) 0573-D-01 (MF)	
MMWR (multiple series)	HE 20.7009*	0508-A*	1
Private laws	AE 2.110/2:	0575-A (P) 0575-A-03 (EL)	1
Public laws (slip laws)	AE 2.110:	0575 (P) 0575-A-02 (EL)	1
Public Papers of the Presidents	AE 2.114:	0574-A (P) 0574-A-02 (EL)	2
Senate Journals	XJS:	1047-A (P) 1047-B (MF) 1047-A-02 (EL)	1
Serial Set (regionals only)	Y 1.1/2:	1008-F	1
Special Reports	Unsure which special reports series was intended		1
Statutes at Large	AE 2.111:	0576 (P) 0576-A (EL)	3
Supreme Court Decisions (slip opinions)	JU 6.8/B:	0740-A-02 (P) 0740-A (EL)	3
Supreme Court Reports (preliminary prints)	JU 6.8/A:	0740-B (P/EL)	3
United States Code	Y 1.2/5:	0991-A (P) 0991-A-01 (EL)	3
United States Reports	JU 6.8:	0741 (P) 0741-A (EL)	2

Appendix II – Regionals’ Online Only Format Comments

The table below conveys all the responses to this request for comments: *Please provide any comments you have about regional depository libraries selecting "online" as a format without having to also select a tangible format.*

Regionals’ Comments on Selecting Online Only Format
Several of the selective depositories in our region have expressed the feeling that they are able to withdraw the tangible in favor of the online because they know that the regional will have the print if they need it.
In general, if we could get a title electronically instead of microfiche we would select that. Since we only collect 1/2 of the FDLP collection in paper, we try to collect everything else electronically. We are also talking about a possible shared electronic collection.
As long as the online versions are on a secure, permanent site, I support replacement of tangible with online. I anticipate that in the not-too-distant future, these publications will no longer be printed anyway.
I'm still a little leery of this, since we have had to provide patrons with tangible documents during government shutdowns and Internet outages. For now, I would mostly use the option for preliminary versions of titles for which we eventually get a permanent version. I would probably also use it for items that supersede.
I think this aligns appropriately with patron access needs and changing library dynamics (space, staffing, etc.).
This would be wonderful.
I'm very supportive of this potential change. We often select items in microfiche in order to adhere to the requirement for regionals to select a tangible format and doesn't contribute to enhanced access.
Some patrons do like to see the tangible copies, they do not want to use the online format. I would have to consider our usage and patrons more before making a firm decision to get the online format only. My only other comments concern access and accessibility to online formats. If we only receive online, I would want to make sure patrons can easily access items when needed without restrictions.
Allowing regionals to select only online formats of publications which are later issued in bound/compiled form is a great way to allow us flexibility in managing our collections and space while ensuring that the content of those publications is preserved.
It is a welcome option. Most customers are using online only. This will save space and paper.
I think this plan would give many of us the flexibility that we need. However, I do worry about the long term affects to Regional collections. This should be done thoughtfully and strategically.
I think this is a good and necessary flexibility for regionals overall. Our current practice and policy leans towards retaining physical copies of most titles that are superseded, but this may change in the future and it'd be nice to fall back on this if necessary.
We believe it is important, as the regional repository to have a tangible copy available in the State. This guarantees there will be access to the copy regardless of Internet connectivity and file corruption. Copies from the tangible copy are requested by users - this may be a request for a legal copy.
The Arkansas State Library has limited space and will always consider digital resources in collection development.
This is a wonderful option!

Regionals' Comments on Selecting Online Only Format

I think the online format is more readily used. In general, I find benefit in keeping tangible format for bound volumes but less benefit in maintaining tangible volumes that are superseded; not only is there low usage, but it requires a lot of work for staffing to pull, update holdings records, withdraw items, etc. (especially problematic since the FTE allocation for gov-docs cataloging work at my library is much lower than it was before).

A good idea.

Is selecting "online" as a format different from "electronic." If so, how?

This would be great for my library. Although our collection is growing at a slower rate - any reduction of that would be very helpful.

There are positives and negatives to both. If the building burns down or some natural disaster than there might not be a digital copy because it did not meet criteria for digitization. If everything is online then administrators think there is no need for an FDLP.

It would certainly help save paper.

For Texas Tech, space is a major concern. The Library is currently looking at repurposing most of the Library Basement where our print/microform documents collection is. My administrators jump at every chance to go online/discard print. I am pleased to have a fellow regional - Texas State Library - that has the space to continue building their print collection and has complete support of their admin. So far, I am pretty confident that we can remain a regional but we will see.

We would appreciate having the option of online only selection whether or not library takes advantage of it.

I think this is fine as long as you ensure that these are tangible copies geographically distributed

I think this idea makes sense for any title that that is superseded shortly after receipt (within 3 months to a year). However, for titles that are meant as long-term records of federal decision-making, selecting online only seems antithetical to the FDLP's mission. Recent political developments that resulted in the destruction and censorship of web-based information resources (e.g., the EPA website) illustrate that continuity of information access cannot be insured across administrations.

For so many of these titles our patrons tend to start searching for online formats before they turn to the paper, so the paper is not getting as much use as it once did. Add since our collections are in off-site storage during renovations (and portions will remain there) it could be helpful not to have to have to process a piece multiple times - when it arrives and later when it is replaced by a bound volume or superseded.

This is a good idea and a space saving measure. It would be helpful for publications with long runs that may not have heavy use.

- 1) Concerns were voiced about the permanent availability of online formats.
- 2) Our answers are based on the current situation. Space will become an issue in the future.

Our library would be in favor of digital selection of these titles.

Only concern is the completeness and officialness of the online version being offered/distributed.

While we are blessed with substantial storage facilities near campus, the reality is that print on demand would be a more cost-effective option for our institution than cataloging and storing hard copy, especially given the growing number of satellite campuses that the KU Libraries is supporting.

We are currently in a transition phase with a new incoming State Librarian. It is still to be determined what their priorities may be.

Regionals' Comments on Selecting Online Only Format

Although there are titles I would love to get only in online format, a lot of what we get title-wise has value as tangible items.

It is unclear to me what this survey is really asking. Do you want to know if Regionals, who are required to permanently retain FDLP publications, would prefer to do that with online formats? Is the option to switch from tangible deposit to digital deposit, or are you asking if we want to give up our retention responsibility and rely on GPO to do this through GovInfo? I still believe in the value on distributed holdings of FDLP tangible collections to assure preservation.

As a front-line librarian, I'm still nervous about technical or political issues that could affect digital access to depository materials. As far as what I'd like to select in digital format, I balance what are essential pubs for our users, and what are space hogs or difficult to process.

I would be interested in this option

Workarounds for daily receipt depend on institutional knowledge of the paraprofessionals. As attrition takes those folks, it may be harder to develop efficient or effective solutions to daily receipt in the next generation.

This would be extremely helpful regarding space concerns within our libraries in addition to making these materials more accessible (particularly during a pandemic or limited building hours) to a larger portion of our state.

Selecting online format would save us space. Our library is looking into moving our collection yet again.

As I stated in my message for the Congressional Record, if the online version is considered "official" then I would be willing to select the online; to date the only title that meets that requirement is the "Federal Register"

Appendix III – Questions Raised

The table below conveys all the responses to this request for questions: *Please provide any questions you have about regional depository libraries selecting "online" as a format without having to also select a tangible format that you would like GPO to address.*

Questions Raised about Selecting “Online” as the Regional’s Only Format
I think this is a good idea and the option to select high interest items in paper is appreciated. I realize ND is in an odd position but I suspect the shared regionals will feel the same way.
The publications we would really like to deselect in print are FCC record, terminal area charts and terminal procedures publications, the latter 2 of which are not available electronically. We are running out of space!
I would like some assurance that there will be robust permanent access to the online items, meaning that they will still be available during government shutdowns, and there would be some provision for access in the event of a long-term Internet outage, or other potential disruption.
Would you (GPO) require one regional per geographic area to receive and retain a print copy of these titles (similar to Preservation Stewards)?
Will hard copy be kept by GPO or any libraries?
Can you explain what receiving through digital deposit means?
What does "digital deposit" mean? Will a digital copy be sent to the libraries that select "online" as a format?
Will there be a dark archive for the online version so that it can be restored in the event of a disaster?
When using the term "digital deposit" does this require repositories the ability to house and maintain digital assets on a server?
The only concern are long-term ones - ensuring that they are usable in a 100, 200, etc. years and is sustainable. I think it would also help for there to be preservation stewards as back up.
Will this happen through an automated digital deposit process?
Would it be beneficial for some regionals to still receive and retain the tangible version even if others only select the online version (would regionals who still receive and retain the tangible be something like preservation stewards for those items)? Is the idea of the regional as a resource to the regional's selectives for tangible items selectives don't have changing?
Does digital deposit mean storing digital files? Or does it mean linking to files stored elsewhere? We can't do the first, but we can do the second.
Is this related to the Regional Discard Policy? As long as you follow those guidelines, I don't see any problem with this
What plans are in place to insure the long-term accessibility of such resources? What office or agency maintains the servers used in providing this service? Would the GPO consider working with universities to establish a network of secondary hosting services to ensure long-term continuity of access for online-only resources? Does the GPO realize that once tangible materials are no longer distributed, many libraries will move to silently decommission depository services?
How will the catalog records for the "online" format differ from the records we now receive for the document which includes the PURL? Digital deposit is a great idea for libraries that have the online storage space, which is too expensive for us to commit to.
Many individuals still prefer paper format as it tends to be easier to search.

Questions Raised about Selecting “Online” as the Regional’s Only Format

Would the online format be acceptable for legal purposes?

Can you clarify how you will ensure permanent public access to tangible FDLP collections with this policy change?

Would we try to retain 4 geographically dispersed copies in tangible?

see answer to #8: As I stated in my message for the Congressional Record, if the online version is considered "official" then I would be willing to select the online; to date the only title that meets that requirement is the "Federal Register"

Appendix IV – Microfiche

The table below has all of the responses to this question about microfiche: *The selection rates for the Congressional Record (Daily) and the Federal Register in microfiche are high, though we hear anecdotally that library patrons do not like to use it. Briefly, tell us why you select microfiche and how you use it, e.g., weed the paper daily editions when they supersede, but retain them in microfiche.*

Why Microfiche Is Selected and How It Is Used
We only retain the Federal Register for two years plus present in paper because we retain it in microfiche. If there is a request we can scan the fiche and email it to the patron.
We select the microfiche due to space issues. Weeding rarely happens, but as we start to run out of room it will happen. It is kept off site and is available upon request- which is not often. If the cabinets were on site weeding would occur more often.
We have selected and retained microfiche daily CR and FR but they are never used because we refer users to the online versions. It would be great not to have to select the microfiche. We are facing huge budget cuts due to COVID-19 and it is increasingly difficult to justify receiving and housing documents that no one uses.
We retain all of the microfiche permanently. We rarely get in-person patrons using the fiche. Usually, I am either using the fiche myself to answer a question, or we copy specific articles and send them to the patron. We have a microform reader that can scan and email fiche pages.
Selecting microfiche ensures I have a tangible copy if I need to weed the paper, if it is damaged or lost. It allows me flexibility. If I could do the same with the online format, I would likely deselect microfiche as the online format is more accessible for patrons.
We select microfiche due to lack of space on the shelf for print volumes. The fiche is never is used, and we're starting to run low on space for this format, too.
We have access to these resources in multiple digital formats, so the fiche is only selected (and retained) in order to adhere to the requirement for selecting a tangible format. We don't select the paper editions of either of these titles.
To reduce space issues
We select microfiche because we weed the paper daily editions when they superseded, but retain them in microfiche. We honestly haven't had a lot of usage of the microfiche copies.
We select the Congressional Record (Daily) and Federal Register only in microfiche and online versions. We no longer select the print versions. For several years, those publications in print have gotten zero usage - patrons much prefer the online versions. We retain the microfiche for the rare occasion that a patron needs the tangible version. Microform is a high priority for us - we have other high-use microform collections (e.g. historic newspapers) and have state-of-the-art microform readers.
We have deselected paper for the FR and must select the microfiche. We are planning to do the same with the CR. If online only is an option, we would deselect the microfiche as customers do not use it. There is also not a way to recycle it when it is superseded.
The MF is discarded once the final editions are received. My predecessor took items in multiple tangible formats. I am slowly working on bringing us down to taking only one type of tangible format.
For both of these titles, we retain the microfiche as our physical copy and keep only the last two years in paper for the Federal Register and weed the Congressional Record daily in paper once the bound edition is received. Since our regional policy and procedure has leaned towards retaining physical copies of (mostly)

Why Microfiche Is Selected and How It Is Used

all superseded federal documents, we've had to rely on microfiche for these large serials just for practicality on space. Mostly, our patrons rely on the electronic for access.

to weed the superseded paper daily editions

Space is the biggest reason

The NYS Library weeds the tangible copy of the Congressional record (Daily) editions when we receive the bound tangible copy. The NYS Library weeds the Federal Register when we receive the microfiche. The microfiche is used to fulfill requests for copies used for legal purposes that cannot be fulfilled by a digital copy.

We retain only the daily editions in paper that we did not receive in microfiche. Microfiche is selected due to space limitations.

N/A

We weed paper daily editions when they supersede and the microfiche act as legacy documents.

Retain the fiche and weed paper editions when they supersede.

N/A

Microfiche is selected solely for housing purposes. Paper is takes up more room more quickly than microfiche. However, we are also running out of microfiche room as well. A next good option would be to have an online or electronic format only option.

We select microfiche because they use less space than paper copies. We have superseded some in the past, but we retain a couple of years before we withdraw them from the collection. Weeding them is a challenge, but we have not done much microfiche weeding. We have been de-duping titles and keeping the microfiche - also due to space constraints.

Even though microfiche is not popular it still saves space.

We do weed the paper daily editions after we receive the microfiche. We have traditionally selected microfiche as the tangible backup for the daily.

Retaining copies in microfiche is the best preservation medium and takes up the least space. There is also value in backup copies. Lastly, if the paper is weeded, we have the fiche.

We had selected microfiche before I came to Tech and I didn't see a reason to change it. We do weed the paper daily editions and retain them in microfiche, which is a benefit of still receiving microfiche. However, I think almost 100% of our patrons use Congressional Record/Federal Register online only.

CR - Paper dailies are discarded when bound is received. We retain fiche dailies. We retain fiche instead of paper due to space concerns. FR - Paper kept until fiche received. Fiche is retained instead of paper due to space concerns.

We select FR microfiche because it satisfies the requirement to take one tangible format, but our users prefer to use our library's subscription databases because they offer the best search functions.

It's all about space and ease of storage. The shipments are small and the processing work is minimal.

If patrons do not like using them, it is due to the readers involved. With the most modern fiche readers, digital scans of content are made possible. Fiche are the best means by which tangible records can be disseminated within a system running low on physical space resources.

I believe the decision to select fiche was made because it is easier to retain/store than the paper daily editions, which are weeded periodically.

Why Microfiche Is Selected and How It Is Used

We retain the paper daily editions until we receive the MF. We keep the MF long term so we have access to the daily editions. If a daily issue is missing in MF, we retain the paper format of that particular issue.

We have received both formats in case we would miss a paper issue (although microfiche distribution has been erratic for the last few years).

We retain the microfiche editions and weed the superseded paper edition.

We select microfiche because we do not keep Congressional Record/Federal Register daily editions longer than five years due to space concerns; we have plenty of room for these titles in our fiche collection. We have frequently used fiche to locate information for patrons who are requesting material that is decades old.

I have taught legal research classes in recent years and the graduate students did not know what a microformat was. The electronic resources are more widely used and easier to manage and share.

Microfiche is selected due to space issues and staffing.

I like microfiche because it is easier to store. Being able to cull the print version of the Federal Register frees up space. Congressional Record on fiche has value in that if a patron is keying in on a citation in the daily edition, we can provide.

We select microfiche to meet our obligation to retain a permanent tangible copy of this title. Microfiche is still a relevant preservation format, and we find it easier to manage than printed material. We point users to online formats because they are easier to use, but still believe in the importance of having tangible versions of titles to ensure permanent public access to the material in our state.

We do get the odd question occasionally that can only be answered by the CR (Daily) or the Federal Register, and when we have the fiche, we can answer those questions.

Easier to store

In my experience, I have directed patrons to print or digital subscription. Microfiche is not a preferred format.

We select the microfiche because we are running out of shelf space for print materials.

We selected microfiche to save space and at the time we were moving to a shared regional and moving our gov docs into other areas in the library due to library space needs. Patrons do not like to use microfiche because often the viewing machines are cumbersome and they want to look and go. They prefer online version.

I select the microfiche as a back-up; I would not shed a tear if it went away and the customer wouldn't know the difference. I believe the online is more a substitute for microfiche than the paper.