

January 21, 2021

Ms. Alicia Kubas
Chair, Depository Library Council
Regional Depository Coordinator
University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
309 19th Avenue South
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455

Dear Ms. Kubas:

This letter is in response to your November 18, 2020 transmittal of the Depository Library Council's (DLC) recommendations and commendation resulting from the fall 2020 meeting of the DLC. I found the recommendations thoughtful and drafted with the best interest of both the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) and depository library staff in mind.

I support these recommendations, and I directed the staff in Library Services and Content Management (LSCM) to move forward with the action items outlined in the Government Publishing Office's (GPO) formal responses, which are attached. The recommendations and responses are part of the permanent record of GPO's work. They will be published on [FDLP.gov](https://fdlp.gov) for the FDLP community and the general public to access.

This is a very challenging time for everyone. I thank the Council for recognizing GPO and LSCM staff with a commendation. We have undergone the biggest operational changes since the Civil War, and GPO teammates have persevered to support depository libraries and to provide them the flexibilities they need during this unprecedented time. The commendation is greatly appreciated.

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I realize that Council members have also given generously of their time, and I thank you all for your continued dedication to the FDLP and for your guidance. I look forward to meeting with you during the Spring Depository Library Council Virtual Meeting this April. Should you have any questions about GPO's responses to your recommendations, please contact Superintendent Laurie Hall.

Sincerely,

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Attachment

Cc: Depository Library Council Members
Superintendent of Documents

**Depository Library Council Recommendations & Commendation, Fall 2020
and
Responses from the U.S. Government Publishing Office**

January 2021

Recommendation 1:

GPO continue to provide programming similar to the open forum held on July 27, 2020, Planning for Reopening: FDLP Libraries Recovering from the COVID-19 Pandemic. Council also recommends that GPO continue to provide additional support, guidance, and flexibility during these unusual times, such as increased communication through the FDLP News & Events alerts and other channels.

GPO Response:

The staff at GPO agrees that FDLP libraries need continued communication, support, and guidance, especially amid the continued pandemic. GPO's Library Services and Content Management (LSCM) will host several Open Forums in 2021 and other FDLP Academy educational opportunities for the government information community to help facilitate the exchange of information from the community, Federal agencies and LSCM. The first Open Forum will take place in March 2021 and will focus on the sharing and exchange of community experiences and best practices. LSCM staff will be available during this session to provide Q&A related to shipments, continuing education, virtual promotion of the depository collection, and other LSCM initiatives being undertaken to support FDLP libraries. Registration for the first Open Forum of 2021 will open in February.

Recommendation 2:

GPO encourage Federal depository libraries to examine lessons they have learned while working in a remote and digital environment, and during their reopening process. They should consider what COVID-19 initiatives can be incorporated into their new normal environment that would enhance and strengthen their overall public service experience. This includes but is not limited to the FDLP online resources.

GPO Response:

LSCM encourages libraries to share their experiences with GPO. LSCM will undertake a communications effort to facilitate this sharing of lessons learned and after-action items and plans with GPO. FDLP Academy staff will work to recruit a panel of community speakers to present webinars on the topics such as working

remotely and new service models during the pandemic. Finally, a new FDLP.gov page will be developed to share any action plans or documentation created by depository staff for the benefit of the entire community.

Recommendation 3:

GPO encourage flexibility for depository library staff that enables a healthy work-life balance.

GPO Response:

LSCM will disseminate a letter from the Superintendent of Documents to FDLP Library Directors encouraging flexibility for depository library staff that enables a healthy work-life balance. Through our interactions with FDLP staff over the past nine months, LSCM recognizes the innovative efforts and “can do” attitudes of so many of our community to ensure that access to Government information is maintained. GPO will also highlight FDLP program flexibilities that we encourage libraries to consider during these times. This letter will be disseminated in February 2021.

Recommendation 4:

GPO, working with the DLC, begin to explore and discuss with the FDLP community the possibility of an all-digital FDLP. To facilitate this discussion, Council further recommends GPO develop a white paper defining what an all-digital FDLP or, in the alternative, a primarily digital FDLP might look like. The resulting white paper is to be shared with Council and the community for comments with GPO reporting on the resulting comments at the proper time.

GPO Response:

Exploring and considering the implications of an all-digital FDLP is a major shift in the operations of a long-standing program. Not only would this have significant impact on the libraries in the FDLP, it would also impact the Superintendent of Documents’ and LSCM organizations that manage this and other Public Information Programs. In order to fully evaluate and plan for such a change, the Superintendent of Documents will convene a Task Force to Study the Feasibility of an All-Digital FDLP. The task force membership will have representation from the DLC, depository libraries of different types and sizes, library association representatives, and GPO. The establishment of this taskforce will take place in FY21 in coordination with the DLC, the Director of GPO and other key stakeholders.

Commendation:

The Depository Library Council commends the staff of the U.S. Government Publishing Office (GPO), particularly the Superintendent of Documents, the Federal Depository Support Services outreach librarians, and the rest of the Library Services and Content Management team, for their commitment to supporting depository libraries during the ongoing pandemic. This has included moving a large conference completely online for hundreds of attendees with great success, coordinating a wealth of webinars on so many different topics, and continuing to exemplify compassion, concern, and flexibility towards depositories as we continue to cope with an ever-changing environment. GPO has also heightened their communication and guidance on library reopening and closing procedures, resuming of shipments, and collections care, which has helped alleviate confusion and worry on the part of coordinators and library staff.

GPO Response:

The staff at GPO thanks the DLC for their commendation. Our role to support nationwide Federal depository libraries is constantly evolving, and 2020 was an excellent example of this. Our goal is to be customer-centric in providing comprehensive guidance, resources, tools, support, and consultations for depository staff. We always welcome suggestions for how we can better serve our FDLP partners. Contact us through [askGPO](#) or at FDLPOutreach@gpo.gov with comments or questions.