



# Keeping America Informed

*GPO keeps America informed. GPO ensures the public's right to access Government information by collecting, organizing, maintaining, preserving and disseminating it. For 140 years, GPO has produced and distributed Federal Government information products. Currently, GPO captures, stores, authenticates, produces, and disseminates information from Congress and other Federal publishers for the public to access directly and through the Federal Depository Library Program.*

GPO has begun a transformation process into an information service for the 21<sup>st</sup> century—creating, disseminating, and preserving Federal information. GPO is engaged with customers and stakeholders to identify their needs and concerns and to determine GPO's strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities. The demands of Congress, the agencies, and the American public for Government information will guide GPO in identifying the optimal technologies to employ to meet those requirements.

GAO is presently conducting a congressionally mandated study of Federal Government information dissemination. GAO is also conducting a management audit of GPO. These studies will provide the basis for our fiscal year 2004 strategic planning effort to effect needed changes.

Over the next several years, the transformation of GPO will require investments in its workforce and technology infrastructure. The results will be improved effectiveness and efficiency of GPO and increased value to the customers we serve.

### **Role in Government**

The Public Printer, who serves as GPO's chief executive officer, is nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate. GPO operates under the authority of the public printing and documents chapters of Title 44 of the U.S. Code.

Created initially to satisfy the printing needs of Congress, GPO today is the focal point for printing and information dissemination for the entire Federal community. In addition to Congress and the White House, approximately 130 Federal departments and agencies rely on GPO's services. Congressional publications, Federal regulations and reports, census and tax forms, and U.S. Passports are among the documents produced by or through GPO. At one time, GPO's mission was accomplished through the production and procurement of conventional ink-on-paper printing. Today, after more than a generation of experience with electronic printing systems, GPO is providing Government information in a wide range of formats, including print, microfiche, CD-ROM, and online through **GPO Access** (<http://www.gpo.gov/gpoaccess>).

### **Facilities and Personnel**

Carrying out GPO's mission today is a skilled and dedicated workforce of more than 3,000 employees nationwide. Most are based at GPO's central office facility in the Nation's Capital, making GPO the largest industrial employer in the District of Columbia. Also located in the National Capital area is a storage and distribution facility. GPO operates a printing plant in Denver, a technical documentation facility in Atlantic City, NJ, a publication distribution facility in Pueblo, CO, as well as regional and satellite procurement offices and bookstores throughout the country.

### **Funding**

Unlike most Federal agencies, GPO operates much like a business—it is reimbursed by its customers for the cost of work performed. GPO also receives two appropriations, one to pay for the cost of congressional printing, and the other to fund the cataloging, indexing, distribution, and online access to Government documents, through the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) and as required by law. These funds are provided through the annual legislative branch appropriations bill, and together they comprise about 4 percent of total legislative branch appropriations. In fiscal year 2002, GPO's revenues totaled \$701 million. An independent auditor audits GPO's finances every year, and GPO has been receiving an unqualified opinion every year.

### **Procurement Services**

More than 70 percent of GPO's printing revenue is from agencies for work procured by GPO from the private sector printing industry. GPO has a long-standing partnership with America's printing industry to provide for the Government's printing needs. GPO competitively buys products and services from more than 2,260 private sector firms in all 50 States. It is one of the Government's most successful procurement programs, assuring the most cost-effective use of the taxpayers' printing dollar.

## In-Plant Operations and Information Technology

GPO's in-plant facility provides electronic information systems and production technologies to support the information product needs of Congress and Federal agencies. GPO produces the *Congressional Record* overnight when Congress is in session, and bills, hearings, documents, reports, and committee prints in time to support Congress' legislative needs. Also produced in-plant are the *Federal Register*, the *Code of Federal Regulations*, and other key Government documents, such as the annual *U.S. Budget*. In fiscal year 2002 GPO's in-plant operations produced more than 8.7 million U.S. Passports for the State Department and nearly 249 million postal cards for the U.S. Postal Service. With few exceptions, all paper used by GPO and its contractors meet Federal recycled paper requirements and all GPO printing inks utilize vegetable oil.

Beginning in the 1960's, GPO was one of the first printing organizations nationwide to pioneer the use of electronic typesetting systems in place of traditional practices. Since then, successive generations of technology have been deployed by GPO to develop electronic databases of Government information products from which publications in both print and electronic formats are produced. Computer-to-plate technology has further updated GPO's capabilities. GPO has also been a leading producer of CD-ROMs of Government information for more than a decade. GPO uses electronic information technology to increase efficiency in its print production processes, facilitate e-commerce in its printing procurement and documents sales programs, and expand public access to Government information via the Internet.

## Superintendent of Documents

Through its Superintendent of Documents' programs, GPO disseminates the largest volume of U.S. Government publications and information in the world. More than 30.5 million printed publications were distributed in fiscal year 2002 and approximately 372 million Government documents were downloaded from **GPO Access** at a cost of less than one penny per retrieval. **GPO Access** is available at [www.gpo.gov/gpoaccess](http://www.gpo.gov/gpoaccess).

To keep America informed, GPO also offers Government publications for sale to the public. Approximately 9,000 titles are available for sale at any given time, including books, CD-ROMs, and other electronic formats. This provides the

public with a wide variety of low cost consumer-oriented publications as well as Congressional documents, regulatory materials, research reports, reference books and guidebooks for National Parks. Documents can also be ordered through GPO's secure Online Bookstore site at <http://bookstore.gpo.gov>. Publications are also sold by mail, telephone, fax, and through bookstores located around the country. Free and low-cost publications are distributed through the Federal Citizen Information Center in Pueblo, CO.

The Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) is the public's primary source of free access to the published information of the Federal Government, and its enabling legislation has been called "America's first freedom of information act." More than 1,200 Federal depository libraries nationwide provide free public access to Government information in both print and electronic formats. Federal depository libraries are designated by Members of Congress or by law. Many are college, university, and academic law libraries, making the FDLP a key component of the Nation's education system. In fiscal year 2002, GPO distributed 5 million copies of over 14,000 tangible products in print, microform, and CD-ROM formats to depository libraries. Every depository library also has access to the vast range of information made available online via **GPO Access**.

Superintendent of Documents' programs catalog and index Government information, distribute publications as required by law, and provide reimbursable distribution services for other Federal agencies. Under the International Exchange Program, which is administered by the Library of Congress, GPO distributes U.S. Government publications to nearly 70 nations.

## GPO Access

In this age of pioneering advancements in information technology, the public requires immediate access to official Federal Government information to stay up-to-date with regulations, laws, and consumer information materials that affect their personal and professional lives. To meet this need, **GPO Access** makes online Government information products available to Federal depository libraries and the public with the goal of widespread and equitable information dissemination.

More than  
1,200 Federal depository  
libraries nationwide provide  
free public access to  
Government information in  
both print and electronic  
formats.

**GPO Access** is a leading online source of free, official Government information. Its publicly available resources, covering all three branches of the Federal Government, have grown to encompass more than 2,800 separate databases through more than 80 applications including the *Congressional Record*, the *United States Code*, *GAO Reports*, Congressional Bills and Reports, *Public Laws*, the *Federal Register*, the Code of Federal Regulations, and many more. In total, more than 145,000 titles are available on GPO servers, and more than 92,000 additional titles are linked from **GPO Access**. Since 1994, **GPO Access** retrievals have exceeded 1.6 billion, and it is currently averaging 31 million retrievals each month.

In addition to this, **GPO Access** hosts 20 Federal Web sites including the Web site for the Supreme Court of the United States. In accordance with GPO's goal of timely delivery of official government information, most electronic documents appear on the day of publication, exactly as they appear in print, and are the official published version. GPO maintains permanent public access to Government information products residing on **GPO Access**, as well as through partnership agreements with depository libraries and other institutions.

**GPO Access** is designed, developed, and implemented for easy access to, and use of, free online Federal information products and services. GPO recognizes and accommodates the various special needs and technological capabilities of the public. The GPO Access User Support Team provides immediate assistance to customers on **GPO Access** via e-mail, toll-free phone, and fax. Finally, *Ben's Guide to U.S. Government for Kids* is an educational component of **GPO Access** that introduces children and adults alike to the basics of Government.

In recognition of the growth and accomplishments of the service, **GPO Access** has received numerous awards and recognitions, such as the E-Gov 2001 "Trailblazer" award.

