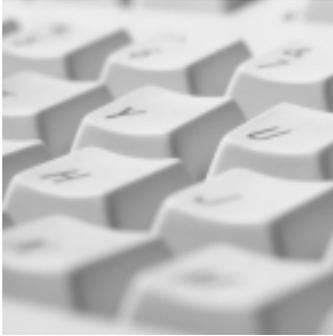


## Highlights (continued)



*GPO's new streamlined procurement processes and simplified purchase agreements alleviate administrative burdens on Federal agencies.*

Acquisition" (September 14, 1998). Where practicable, the *Standards* meet or exceed the Executive Order's minimum postconsumer fiber content requirements of 30 percent.

Barriers to the use of "chlorine-free" pulps and bleached chemi-thermo-mechanical pulps (BCTMP) in the paper manufacturing process were removed from the specification where the intended use of the paper is not affected. An uncoated, vegetable-fiber, book paper standard was also included. Map papers with wet-strength properties now meet Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requirements (at 29 Code of Federal Regulations 1900.1048) on the release of formaldehyde vapors into the atmosphere. Additionally, the specification of a neutral or alkaline pH is a minimum requirement for many grades of paper in order to increase their longevity, in accordance with the National Policy on Permanent Papers (P.L. 101-423). The new *Standards* also utilize metric measurements consistent with the Nation's metric conversion practices, established in the Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act of 1988 (P.L. 100-418).

### **GPO DEVELOPS STREAMLINED PROCUREMENT PROCESS FOR FEDERAL AGENCIES**

In February 1999, GPO announced that it has developed a new streamlined printing procurement process for use by Federal agencies. This process, called the "simplified purchase agreement," will provide streamlined procurement procedures for Federal agencies to acquire printing and information products and services up to \$2,500 in value from local commercial sources. Agencies using simplified purchase agreements will cut their administrative costs and expand procurement opportunities for local small businesses.

The Department of Energy's Savannah River Operations Office is working as a partner with GPO to finalize the criteria for a pilot test of the new procedure. Initial operation of the pilot began in July 1999. GPO is also working on a pilot basis with the Department of Energy's Oak Ridge Tennessee Operations Office, the Internal Revenue Service, the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, and the Department of Justice in Miami. GPO will also work with other customer agencies to develop simplified purchase agreements suitable to their specific needs while working to complete a comprehensive procedure for use by all agencies nationwide.

Simplified purchase agreements will be a GPO procurement option for agencies to use for small local purchases, providing them with the maximum possible convenience and control. Simplified purchase agreements will allow agencies to directly place their orders for printing and information products on the basis of "best value," a concept embracing price and other factors such as responsiveness, business practices, convenience, courtesy, and attention to detail. The agreements also allow agencies to take into account elements of past performance such as work quality, reliability, and schedule compliance.

The new process assures fair and reasonable prices and allows for use of the *Government Paper Specification Standards* and GPO's Quality Assurance Through Attributes Program (QATAP), ensuring continued consistency, compliance with established standards, and quality control in the Government's printing and information products. In addition, simplified purchase agreements alleviate an administrative burden on Federal agencies by providing for GPO payment to printing contractors. GPO will also maintain a detailed accounting of all work performed under simplified purchase agreements.

The new streamlined procurement process provides other benefits as

well. Use of the simplified purchase agreement process for buying exceptional or infrequent items will facilitate the development of more focused direct deal term contracts for agencies, resulting in lower prices. It will provide local small businesses with a vehicle through which they can market their services directly to Federal agencies. Agency use of simplified purchase agreements will also help combat the problem of "fugitive documents" by ensuring that products ordered against the agreement are included in GPO's Federal Depository Library Program.

#### **DEPOSIT ACCOUNT INFORMATION AVAILABLE ELECTRONICALLY**

GPO printing and binding customers have several payment options: credit cards, the Treasury Department's Online Processing and Collection (OPAC) System, and the increasingly popular deposit account.

As agencies discover the ease of using a GPO deposit account to pay for their printing orders, they often increase the amount of funds on deposit. Under a deposit account arrangement, the customer estimates the cost of printing requirements and transfers funds to an account at GPO. As printing and binding charges are incurred, GPO debits the account balance and provides the customer with a monthly statement.

*With immediate  
electronic access to  
their deposit account  
balances, GPO's  
customers can now  
manage their  
printing budgets  
more efficiently.*

