



United States
Government Printing Office

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PREPARED STATEMENT BEFORE THE
JOINT COMMITTEE ON PRINTING
ON
OVERSIGHT OF THE GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Joint Committee on Printing (JCP), I am pleased to assist in your oversight of the programs and operations of the Government Printing Office (GPO). I am providing herewith a consolidated statement that is responsive to your letter of invitation to me dated March 5, 1997.

You have called this hearing at an opportune moment in the history of Title 44 of the U.S. Code, the statutes that govern GPO. New and emerging information technologies, changing information dissemination practices, and the growing demand by the public for enhanced and expanded access to taxpayer-funded Government information are impacting the ways that GPO serves the Government and the public. With the guidance and direction of Congress, GPO—as one of the Federal Government’s principal assets dedicated to the task of keeping America informed—is meeting these challenges.

GPO’S MISSION IN THE INFORMATION AGE

An abiding commitment to public access to Government information is deeply rooted in our system of Government. *GPO is one of the most visible demonstrations of that commitment.* For more than a century, our mission has been to fulfill the needs of the Federal Government for information products and distribute those products to the public. Through much of that time, our mission was accomplished through the production and procurement of traditional printing technologies. However, a generation ago we began migrating our processes to electronic technologies, well in advance of most of the printing industry, and in 1993 Congress amended Title 44 with the GPO Electronic Information Access Enhancement Act (P.L. 103-40) to require us to disseminate Government information products online. This Act is the basis of *GPO Access*, our award-winning Internet information service.

Today, GPO is equipped with state-of-the art technology and a superbly trained workforce dedicated to producing, procuring, and disseminating Government information products in a wide range of formats. *In GPO the Government has a unique and unequalled asset that combines a comprehensive range of conventional production and electronic processing services, procurement facilitation, and multi-format dissemination capabilities to support the information life cycle needs of Congress, Federal agencies, and the public.*

We provide printed and electronic information products and services to Congress and Federal agencies through inplant processes and the purchase of information products from the private sector. In fact, we buy approximately 75 percent of all information products requisitioned from us in one of the Government’s most successful procurement programs. We disseminate Government information directly to the public through a low-priced sales program and to Federal depository libraries nationwide where the information may be used by the public free of charge. We also disseminate a growing volume of information via the Internet. We catalog and index Government information products, and we distribute them on behalf of other Federal agencies. Information on all of our programs and services, as well as access to a large and growing range of Government information, is available through our home page on the World Wide Web, at <http://www.access.gpo.gov>.

We conduct all of our services in a non-partisan, service-oriented environment that emphasizes the primacy of the customer’s requirements for timeliness, quality, security, and economy, and we are committed to achieving the greatest access and equity in information dissemination whether through printed publications, CD-ROM, or online. *At the bottom line, our programs reduce the need for duplicative and costly production facilities throughout the Government, achieve significant taxpayer savings through a centralized procurement system, and enhance public access to Government information, an increasingly vital resource in the Information Age.*

SCOPE OF FEDERAL PRINTING AND REPRODUCTION ACTIVITIES

There is no complete inventory of all Federal printing and publications activities and costs. Despite the requirement in section 501 of Title 44 that all printing be performed through GPO, with limited exceptions, there is a substantial amount of work that is not performed through our operations.

The problem of work by-passing GPO has been a continuing concern. As several studies have concluded, there are significant savings when printing and publications are obtained through GPO's cost-effective operations. Utilization of GPO also ensures that Government publications and information products will be included in our sales program and the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP). To the extent that this work by-passes GPO, there is a potential for higher than necessary costs as well as impaired public access to important Government information.

One indicator of the amount of work by-passing GPO is in the object class analysis for the FY 1998 Budget published by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). This analysis indicates that printing and reproduction (object class 2400) for the Federal Government totaled \$1.747 billion in FY 1996. However, this amount appears to double-count the value of GPO's printing procurements, first in the amounts budgeted by each agency and second in the figure reported as the aggregated cost for reimbursable obligations. GPO has provided testimony on this double counting problem previously.

If the double-counting is subtracted from total obligations, the result is \$1.231 billion. Of this amount, GPO handled approximately \$544 million in commercial procurements, \$84 million in congressional printing, and \$112 million in other in-house printing, yielding a total value of Federal printing currently by-passing GPO of approximately \$491 million, about 40 percent of the total. We believe the printing by-passing GPO is primarily performed in-house by Federal agencies, although there may be some procurement directly by agencies. If more of this work were brought through GPO, there is the potential for a substantial reduction in costs as well as a reduced incidence of "fugitive documents." These are Government publications that by law are required to be included in the FDLP but which are lost to the Program, most commonly through production or procurement outside of GPO.

GPO AND CONGRESS

GPO was established to provide Congress with *immediate, reliable service* in a work environment under its direct control. We produce the daily and permanent editions of the *Congressional Record*, bills, resolutions, amendments, hearings, committee reports, committee prints, documents, stationery, and a wide variety of other products that are essential to the legislative process in Congress. We produce this work for Congress in our central office facility through the creation and storage of electronic databases of publications, printing, and dissemination, as well as the provision of CD-ROM, online access, and print-on-demand services.

We work closely with the staffs of the leadership in each House of Congress, the JCP, the Secretary of the Senate, the Clerk of the House, the Senate Rules and Administration Committee, the House Oversight Committee, other committees, and individual Senators and Representatives to ensure that all congressional products are produced promptly, uniformly, and economically, and that they facilitate the orderly flow of essential legislative business.

Support for the Cyber-Congress. Over the past three decades we have built a core capability for electronic information and communications services to support Congress's information needs. Today, our state-of-the-art electronic systems are characterized by a complex of direct electronic linkages via CAPNET to a variety of congressional offices on Capitol Hill for data interchange. Once considered only the by-product of the print production process, digitized electronic databases of congressional information are now the primary product: they are the databases from which the official versions of documents are produced in print, CD-ROM, and online access formats made available to the public through *GPO Access* as well as other systems such as the Library of Congress's THOMAS information system.

Our electronic systems and associated staff expertise uniquely position us to support the continued development of the cyber-Congress. I recently had a very cordial meeting with the Clerk of the House of Representatives to discuss the House's proposed document management system. In a subsequent letter to her I reiterated that GPO has the resources and the expertise to support the modernization of the House's system effectively and efficiently. I understand that in testimony before the Senate Rules and Administration Committee last week the Secretary of the

Senate discussed his plans for a comparable Legislative Information System for the Senate, and I can assure you that GPO will provide all necessary support to those plans. I also stated recently before the House Subcommittee on Legislative Appropriations that we are committed to supporting the House's effort to provide the public with access to more committee materials online, pursuant to a recent rules change.

Print-On-Demand Systems. We are using electronics to support print-on-demand systems for Congress as well. We operate a print-on-demand system in the Senate Document Room that has reduced the requirement for printing extra copies of Senate documents for storage. This system, and another print-on-demand system located at our central office facility, are both networked to our congressional databases resident at GPO.

Advantages from Electronic Support. Our electronic systems provide Congress and the taxpayers with a number of advantages. They provide a standardized system for use by both Houses of Congress, resulting in compatibility of production processes and uniformity in the resulting products. They provide for the interchangeable use of databases to produce different congressional publications, generating significant savings. Our systems are a centralized resource where production and dissemination equipment and staffing can be concentrated, yielding significant economies of scale. Finally, they facilitate both production and dissemination. Databases prepared for printing are easily converted into databases suitable for CD-ROM distribution and for online dissemination via the Internet to libraries, schools, offices, and homes nationwide and around the world.

SGML Software Conversion Project. To meet the requirements of the P.L. 103-40, we pursued two levels of online search and retrieval capabilities. The first was a Wide Area Information Server (WAIS) application, using the existing GPO data coding structure (locators). This allowed the system to become operational by June 1994 and provided access to several initial databases, including the *Congressional Record* and the *Federal Register* on the Internet. The second application, known as GPO Access Phase II, has involved a significant software procurement and encompasses the use of Standard Generalized Markup Data (SGML)-structured data as input. An award has been made and we are now in the initial stages of implementing many different Phase II applications built upon the comprehensive adoption of SGML as the data standard.

The SGML conversion project will allow us to utilize databases among different publications without additional data manipulation, and the databases will be suitable for publication in conventional print, demand print, online, and CD-ROM media. We anticipate that all major Government information products used within the legislative branch, including reports, committee prints, bills, and related documents, as well as other Government information products, will be changed to the SGML structure. Working with congressional input and guidance, the objective of this plan is to ultimately produce and distribute the *Congressional Record* and other Government information products only in SGML.

Savings from the Use of Technology. Productivity increases resulting from technology have enabled us to make substantial reductions in staffing requirements while continuing to improve services for Congress. In the mid-1970's, on the threshold of our conversion to electronic photocomposition, we employed more than 8,200 persons. Today, we have 3,674 employees on board, *fewer than at any time in this century. In the past 4 years our staffing has been reduced by 25 percent.* While this reduction has been across the board in all GPO programs, it also has been substantial in the operations supporting Congress. The reduction has been among Senior Level Service managers, supervisors, and employees alike, and was accomplished while at the same time modernizing and improving our services.

Electronic technologies have significantly reduced the cost, in real economic terms, of congressional publications. In FY 1978, the appropriation for Congressional Printing and Binding was \$84.6 million, the equivalent in today's dollars of *\$209.5 million*. By comparison, our approved funding for FY 1997 is \$81.7 million, a *reduction of nearly two-thirds in real economic terms*. This has yielded a savings to the taxpayer of well over \$100 million per year. While some of that reduction is due in part to decisions Congress has made to reduce print runs for various publications, the vast majority of it is due to productivity improvements and staffing reductions made possible through the use of improved technology.

GPO AND FEDERAL AGENCIES

GPO's Printing Procurement Program. Approximately 75 percent of the printing and information products requisitioned from GPO are procured from private sector industry. GPO historically has retained for inplant production only work which cannot be procured on a controlled, timely, and cost-effective basis. The vast majority of the work procured from the private sector is for Federal agencies in the executive branch. We provide procurement services through our central office facility and through a network of 20 regional and satellite procurement offices nationwide.



Our printing procurement program saves a significant amount of money for the taxpayers. The program operates on a highly competitive basis, driving prices down. Approximately 10,000 firms--or about a quarter of the nationwide printing industry, representing nearly 200,000 employees--are registered on GPO's Master Bid List according to their equipment, staffing, and production capabilities. About 3,500 of these firms do business with us on a regular basis, ensuring intense competition for Government printing and information product contracts.

Our printing procurement program provides a number of advantages to Federal agencies. It would be very difficult for every entity in the Government (represented by more than 4,000 billing address codes distributed among more than 130 different departments, bureaus, and agencies) to maintain individual printing procurement systems large enough and sophisticated enough to obtain the same level of competitive printing procurement that GPO achieves. In a decentralized system of procurement, the Government would lose the ability to group together orders for similar products from different sources to achieve better prices. By consolidating the Government's specialized printing procurement skills and resources in GPO, agencies save money in their printing programs.

Moreover, agencies achieve savings without giving up essential controls when they work through us. Most of our printing procurements are conducted through direct deal term contracts, permitting agencies to place their printing orders directly with the contractor. Our centralized program in fact utilizes a service infrastructure that allows agencies to directly control the vast majority of their printing needs from the point of origination.

Comparison of GPO and Executive Branch Procurement Models. As I discussed in the hearing before the Senate Rules and Administration Committee last summer, the question has been raised about whether agencies might not be better off procuring their own printing, just as they are able to procure items that they formerly were required to obtain through the General Services Administration (GSA). However, the use of GSA and executive branch procurements as a model for comparison to GPO's procurement operation has a number of limitations.

Procurements in the executive branch use the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR). We use our Printing Procurement Regulation (PPR), which ensures a greater degree of flexibility and timeliness in printing procurements than the FAR. GSA and executive branch procurements buy "off-the-shelf" items, some of which are relatively easy to obtain through other channels. GPO, by contrast, is involved only in the procurement of printing and information products, which are custom products since the specifications of each job are unique and vary widely, and delivery must be timely to have value.

Buying printing and information products is not like buying paper clips. A knowledge of printing and information product requirements and processes is essential to ensuring the best possible value. Our printing specifications are developed by knowledgeable experts. There are cases in which agencies have paid exorbitant prices for printing they have procured themselves. For example, the national news media reported last year that a Federal agency incurred a \$30,000 printing bill for copying services that would have cost approximately one-tenth that amount if procured with the same requirements through GPO, and approximately \$500 if procured through GPO utilizing GPO-recommended cost-saving measures. Comparing executive branch procurement methods, which are designed to buy many things, with GPO's, which buys only printing and information products, does not fully address the possible impacts of decentralizing printing procurement authority back to Federal agencies.

Effects of Decentralized Printing Procurement Authority. If agencies were given the authority to buy printing and information products themselves, the decentralization of printing procurement authority would significantly increase costs. With such authority, agencies would be likely to choose to produce much of their printing and information products in-house, which is frequently more expensive than procuring printing from the private sector. For those agencies that choose to procure their own printing and information products, increased costs are also likely. It would be extremely costly for each agency to maintain the range of procurement services that GPO provides. Without it, competition would decrease and prices would be likely to rise. In an environment of reduced competition, there are also likely to be increased opportunities for favoritism and corruption, evils that GPO was originally established to prevent.

Our procurement program also lowers costs by offering "one-stop-shopping" to printing and information product contractors. Without it, contractors would be compelled to increase their sales forces to search for contracting opportunities among multiple agencies. They would also confront greater difficulties by having to deal with a multitude of different agency solicitation formats, a problem that is overcome by GPO's standardized procurement solicitation packages.

For a nominal cost, we offer a package of contracting services that saves money for agencies. We review requisitions and offer suggestions for economizing; develop specifications; maintain an automated bid list of potential suppliers; compete, award, and administer contracts; perform press inspections and other on-site reviews to assure quality; perform quality control reviews utilizing a unique program that quantifies quality ranking factors which has become widely recognized throughout the industry; provide examination and payment services for contractor invoices; provide legal advice on contracting; and make available a dispute resolution service through GPO's Board of Contract Appeals. For every agency to provide a similar scope of services would result in increased printing costs.

In a centralized procurement system, GPO can also ensure that Federal printing procurements are conducted in concert with pertinent statutory requirements, such as requirements for the use of recycled paper and vegetable inks that make Federal printing among the most environmentally sensitive products in the Nation today. Most importantly, we can ensure that information products are placed in the appropriate dissemination programs, such as the FDLP. For these reasons, a decentralized procurement program for printing and information products has several distinct disadvantages.

Electronic Support for the Procurement Process. As I also reported to the Senate Rules and Administration Committee last summer, we are using electronic technology to improve the printing procurement process. Electronic versions of printing procurement bid solicitations are now accessible from the Internet via GPO's World Wide Web home page. We did not need to undertake a large-scale effort to develop a system for accomplishing this. We developed our World Wide Web page originally as part of our mission to electronically disseminate Federal documents. To post bid solicitations, we simply added another electronic link to a printing procurement web page containing a list of currently available bid solicitations.

The electronic posting of bid solicitations benefits the Government in several ways. It allows us to reduce the cost of making this information available to the public. The estimated cost of preparing a typical multipaged bid solicitation for our Web page is less than \$1.00 per document. This cost is expected to drop further, because once a GPO term contract or other solicitation has been tagged it will not need to be tagged again when it is renewed.

Posting bid solicitations electronically has the benefit of enabling more contractors to bid on Government printing jobs, thereby increasing competition and lowering procurement costs. By posting electronic versions of these documents on the Internet, all potential bidders, even remotely located small businesses, have immediate access to additional bid opportunities. We have found that increasing the dissemination of formal bid solicitations results in more contractors submitting bids. The increase in competition also results in a decrease in contract prices, lowering the overall cost to the Government for printing. Our electronic posting initiative has generated considerable interest and enthusiasm in the printing industry. It has been praised by the Printing Industries of America, Inc., and by the GPO Contractors Coalition. In addition to the trade groups, individual printers have contacted GPO, both in writing and electronically, to voice their support for the program.

Our electronic posting of procurement solicitations is one way we are using electronic commerce measures, consistent with the intent of both Administration and congressional efforts to streamline the Federal procurement process. We are also using electronic funds transfer to pay those contractors who can receive payments electronically. In the future, we envision posting small purchases on the Internet and receiving price quotations electronically. These and related developments can only be accomplished through office automation improvements in GPO's Printing Procurement Department. We currently are implementing a program, approved by the JCP, to equip our procurement offices with computers, servers, and software. This equipment will end the Department's reliance on an obsolete mainframe-based system, reduce computer and telecommunications costs, and improve communications Department-wide and with customer agencies and contractors. The capabilities of this system will also be used to implement additional electronic commerce initiatives that will increase competition, improve service, and lower the costs of our printing procurement program.

ELECTRONIC SUPPORT FOR AGENCY PRODUCTS

Federal agencies are turning to GPO for assistance in the management of their publications and related information products through all stages of the information life cycle: the creation and/or collection of information, processing the information into a product, dissemination of the product, use and storage of the product, and product disposition through archival management. Our electronic technical capability and expertise, in combination with our procurement capabilities, are playing a major role by assisting agency publishing programs in the creation of cost-effective and innovative information products.

CD-ROM Services. Since 1988 we have been a leading Government producer of CD-ROM technology, providing agencies with a complete range of CD-ROM production services. Our development services take source material from any submitted medium and convert it to a CD ROM product, including the provision of a search engine using standard licensing agreements with three different companies. We provide test discs, quality testing and control, and graphic design work for the CD-ROM disc face and cover booklet. We procure the mastering of the data and its replication on standing CD-ROM contracts. We maintain stock and supply agency needs, and then can provide dissemination of the final product through our sales program and the FDLP without cost to the publishing agency.

These efforts have not gone unrecognized. In 1992, we received the annual CD-ROM Award from the Special Interest Group for CD-ROM Applications and Technology (SIGCAT), the largest CD ROM user group in the world. The following year, the General Accounting Office cited our CD ROM program as one of the most cost-effective in the Government, specifically noting that GPO's CD-ROM products are among the least expensive for users.

World Wide Web Services. Our resources and staff are also increasingly involved in assisting agencies with World Wide Web and Internet services. Electronic processing work performed by our staff resulted in the databases available on GPO Access--congressional databases, the *Federal Register*, the *Code of Federal Regulations*, approximately 70 databases in all. For the World Wide Web, we provide database development services, mounting on our servers, database maintenance, access based on agency needs, promotion of the service, training, and user support. *GPO Access* features a unique service in making most databases available not only in ASCII format but in Portable Document Format (PDF), which provides a searchable database that exactly replicates the printed product. For Government information users for whom authenticity is critical, the PDF feature is an essential feature.

Expert Publishing Services for Federal Agencies. GPO's Digital Information Technology Support Group (DITS Group), a unit of our Printing Procurement Department, provides expert publishing services to support the increase in electronic publishing submissions from Federal agencies.

The DITS Group provides unique value-added services designed to reduce costs and ensure the timeliness of publishing products. The services include one-on-one desktop publishing (DTP) consultation for correct file creation techniques; customer outreach by way of on-site digital publishing seminars; researching industry trends in digital publishing and disseminating pertinent information to agency editor/writers, printing personnel, project designers, publishers and information management personnel; and creating official publications and forms designed to make digital publishing more consistent, cost effective, and customer friendly.

To facilitate the use of digital publishing, the DITS Group has staffed the compilation of draft publication No. 300.6 through Printing Industries of America, Inc. (PIA) and Defense Automated Printing Service (DAPS) personnel. The document has been widely praised. Portions of this publication have been adapted by the DAPS as an internal policy for file creation. In addition, the PIA has stated a belief that this document will be widely adopted as a Government standard by individual agencies which use digital design techniques.

Our customer outreach programs have gone nationwide and received universal acclaim from attending agencies. During its two-year existence, the DITS Group has consulted with hundreds of individual designers about specific GPO jobs. The Group has also worked closely with industry and has presented information at industry seminars. The group has been responsive to suggestions from industry regarding better, faster, and cheaper ways to write technical specifications for electronic publishing and printing applications.

The New *Commerce Business Daily*. GPO's unique ability to bring together a wide variety of development, technological, procurement, dissemination, and support capabilities in a combined package of services has recently resulted in an historic alliance with the Department of Commerce to partner in fulfilling their vision for a new *Commerce Business Daily* (CBD). The CBD is a critically important listing of Government contract and subcontracting opportunities, small business and other set-asides, foreign business leads, special notices, changes in foreign government standards, and sales of surplus Government property. This new joint project has succeeded in making CBD information freely accessible in real-time over the Internet while preserving the printed version for those who still need to receive daily issues in that form.

The new CBD has made it easier and more timely for agencies to electronically submit notices for inclusion in CBD, significantly reduced the cost per notice for these submissions (from \$18.00 to \$5.00), allowed for the continuation of a billing and reporting process for these charges, provided support to both agencies and users of the CBD, reduced the time necessary to typeset and compose the printed version, and enhanced the delivery of the final copy to the printing contractor for the production of the daily printed issues. It has also enabled commercial value-added providers who offer CBD products to receive the daily CBD information much faster, in an enhanced format, and at a 20 percent reduction in cost.

The new CBD was made possible by utilizing the knowledge and experience of a number of GPO organizations to put together a proposal that fully met all of the criteria in the Commerce Department's statement of need. Following a thorough analysis of this proposal and other proposals from organizations in Government and the private sector, our proposal was selected as the best submitted in all phases. As a result, the alliance was signed on August 27, 1996. The new CBD process went operational on December 2, 1996, approximately three months from the beginning of the project.

The Internet-based component of this new process, known as [CBDNet](#), has been extraordinarily well received by the participating agencies and the user community. In fact, in an unusual development, [CBDNet](#) was awarded an Association for Federal Information Resources Management (AFFIRM) Leadership Award while still in its testing phase.

RELATED SERVICES FOR FEDERAL AGENCIES

In addition to procuring printing for Federal agencies, GPO produces work in our central office plant and regional printing plant in Denver. A large portion of the agency work produced inplant is associated with the *Federal Register*, and includes the *List of Sections Affected* and the *Code of Federal Regulations*. Other work includes U.S. passports, postal cards, the U.S. Budget, and other jobs that are performed by GPO due to concerns for cost, timeliness, and control over sensitive Government information.

The continued need for GPO's regional printing plants has declined. Accordingly, we have closed plants in Chicago, Seattle, San Francisco, and New York, and previously a separate printing and reproduction facility at the Washington, DC, Navy Yard was consolidated with GPO's central office facility. A facility in Alaska, transferred from the GSA, has also been closed. The remaining plant in Denver continues to satisfy regional production and security printing needs.

Our Customer Service Department works directly with Federal agencies to ensure that their printing and information product needs are met. Technical assistance to agencies provided by our staff often achieves significant savings for agencies. We work closely with the Interagency Council on Printing and Publications Services and the Federal Publishers Committee. These organizations, representing Federal printing and publishing officers from throughout the Government, serve as valuable forums for listening to the ideas and concerns of our customer agencies. In addition, our departmental account representatives are involved in hundreds of meetings with customer agencies and commercial contractors each year.

Our Typography and Design Division provides graphic design, illustration, consultation, photographic, video, and quality control services, such as press sheet and bindery inspections, to customer agencies. This unit provides state-of-the-art computerized graphic design and composition services to support agency printing requirements.

We sell blank paper supplies to Federal agencies in the Washington metropolitan area, passing on significant savings through savings we achieve in bulk purchases. Under the guidance of the JCP and also working in cooperation with the Environmental Protection Agency and the Federal Environmental Executive, this program has been instrumental in advancing the Government's utilization of recycled paper and related materials. We also have successfully implemented the provisions of the Vegetable Ink Printing Act of 1994, which requires all Federal lithographic printing to be performed utilizing inks containing vegetable-based oils in specified percentages. Our printing procurement contracts contain standard provisions for the utilization of recycled paper and vegetable-based inks in Federal jobs.

Our Institute for Federal Printing and Publishing coordinates the development and delivery of educational courses for GPO's customer agencies, including courses on publications development, technology, and working effectively with GPO. Significant course offerings include "Introduction to Full-Text Coding for Electronic Manuscript Using SGML," "CD-ROM Publication," and "Working with GPO To Get The Best From Desktop Publishing." Since its inception several years ago, Institute courses have been attended by hundreds of customer agency employees.

GPO AND INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

The information dissemination programs of GPO's Superintendent of Documents include the distribution of publications to approximately 1,400 Federal depository libraries nationwide, cataloging and indexing, distribution to recipients designated by law, and distribution to foreign libraries designated by the Library of Congress which in turn agree to send copies of their official publications to the Library. These programs are funded by an annual appropriation.

The Superintendent of Documents also operates a nationwide sales program funded entirely by sales revenues. This program, the Government's single largest information dissemination network, operates 24 bookstores in major metropolitan areas around the U.S. as well as an extensive order service equipped to receive mail, phone, fax, and Internet-based orders for publications nationwide and worldwide. The Superintendent of Documents also distributes publications for Federal agencies which reimburse us for this comprehensive warehousing and dissemination service. Altogether, we distribute about 100 million copies of Government publications per year through these programs (not including information made available online).



Integrated Processing System. With the approval of the JCP, we have awarded a major contract for an Integrated Processing System (IPS) for the Superintendent of Documents' sales program. The contract, awarded to Northrop Grumman, is to provide a modified off-the-shelf integrated computer system for the processing of all customer orders for Federal publications through the sales program. Development of the modifications will take place over the next few months and implementation of the system will begin in June 1997.

IPS will replace approximately 20 computer systems currently being used throughout the sales program. It will link together different functions and establish a central customer database, allowing us to use customer and product information more efficiently. With IPS, customer information will be entered once into the system and all subsequent transactions--whether orders, refunds, credit card or deposit account invoicing--will be attached to the customer's central data record. IPS will also provide real time, rather than delayed, inventory counts which will reduce available stock counts instantaneously as orders are being processed. IPS will prove to be a valuable tool in helping GPO provide first-rate customer service by improving order processing, delivery times, and overall efficiency.

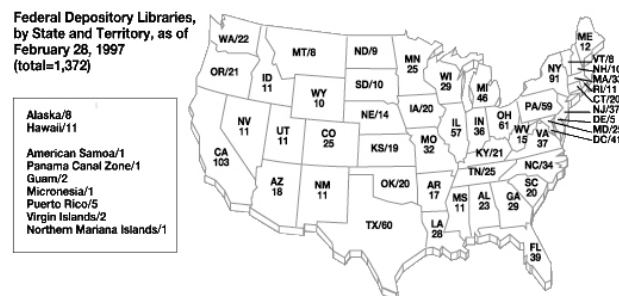
GPO Access. The revolution in information technology has made access to congressional and other Federal information through GPO more universal. *GPO Access* provides free access to more than 70 Federal databases, including the *Congressional Record*, the *Federal Register*, the *Commerce Business Daily*, Supreme Court opinions, congressional bills and reports, and other publications, as well as Government Information Locator Service (GILS) records for a growing number of Federal agencies. The first online service of its kind established by Congress, *GPO Access* allows users to locate a wide variety of electronic products available via the Internet and to order Government publications online. *GPO Access* is the only Government online service providing access to a wide range of information from all three branches of the Federal Government, and the only service providing *official* access to this important Government information.

Currently, between 2.5 million and 3 million documents are retrieved from *GPO Access* every month. During peak usage periods there are about 15,000 GPO Access sessions per hour. Some of the databases we prepare for GPO Access, such as the Congressional Record and congressional bills databases, are also downloaded by the Library of Congress for its THOMAS information service, further expanding the availability of important Government information.

GPO Access has drawn praise from a variety of sources, including the library community (which gave *GPO Access* the 1995 James Madison Award), the Federal technology community, the legal community, and others. In December 1996, in a guest column in Roll Call, representatives of the Congressional Accountability Project and the Heritage Foundation together called *GPO Access* “an enormous success.” In January 1997, OMB Watch released a report on Government Information Locator Services which noted that “*GPO Access* has become the largest single location for GILS services and records in the Federal Government,” and that “GPO should be seen as an example to agencies that are struggling with their GILS implementation.”

THE FEDERAL DEPOSITORY LIBRARY PROGRAM

Under chapter 19 of Title 44, GPO disseminates Federal publications to approximately 1,400 public, academic, law, and Federal agency libraries around the Nation designated as depositories. There is one depository library in nearly every congressional district.



are required by law to pay for the production and distribution of those copies sent to the depositories. In return for receiving Government information products at no cost, the libraries must make them available to the public without charge and provide appropriate assistance to users.

The majority of the depository libraries are selective depositories which tailor their Government publications acquisitions to local needs, choosing from among 7,000 organizational and series categories. Fifty-three libraries, or roughly one per State (depending on size and resources, some States have no regionals while others have more than one), are regional depositories that receive every publication distributed by the FDLP. They are required to retain permanently every Government publication they receive.

The FDLP is not a library program; e.g., it does not function like the Library of Congress, although one small component, the Cataloging and Indexing Program, carries out a library-related function pursuant to law. The majority of the FDLP, however, is dedicated to the dissemination of publications and information products to the public through depository libraries. The FDLP's mission is fundamentally to make sure that the mandate of the law to provide the public with comprehensive, equitable access to Government information is carried out in partnership with depository libraries.

Users. In the 1995 Biennial Survey of Depository Libraries, we collected updated estimates on the number of users from virtually every depository library. The responses yielded an estimate that *750,000 to 950,000 persons use FDLP information each month*. This number is increasing. A 1989 study estimated a minimum of 670,000 depository users per month in academic and public libraries.

Workload. In FY 1996, nearly 16.4 million copies of about 57,000 titles were distributed to depository libraries in paper and microfiche. In addition, we distributed 639 titles in tangible electronic formats, mostly CD-ROM. All *GPO Access* services are available to depository users. Our locator services point to an additional 971 agency titles, and there are 1,148 *Monthly Catalog* records hot-linked to agency Internet sites.

Library Participation. There are now 1,372 depository libraries, including the 53 regionals. Of these, 55 percent are academic libraries, making the FDLP a major component of the Nation's education and research programs. Another 20 percent are public libraries, 11 percent are law school libraries, 6 percent are State libraries, 5 percent are Federal agency libraries, and the remaining 3 percent are special libraries.

All Federal depositories are now expected to offer public users access to computer work stations with a graphical user interface, CD-ROM capability, Internet connections, and the ability to access Government information via the World Wide Web. Although most depository libraries are acquiring the requisite computers and skills, there are still some depositories which cannot fully handle all electronic Government information offerings. In 1995, nearly 25 percent of the depository libraries lacked Internet access for public patrons.

CONTINUING JUSTIFICATION FOR THE FDLP

The FDLP continues to be needed even if Federal agencies are putting information on the Internet. The FDLP, funded out of the legislative branch appropriations, is the means by which Congress asserts its historical role in keeping the American public informed about the activities of the Government.

Depository libraries, located in virtually every congressional district, have developed skills and collections based on the needs of their local constituents. This affords the public a local setting in which they can use Government information at no charge, regardless of whether they own or can operate a computer, and be assisted by trained Government information professionals.

As authorized by P.L. 103-40, GPO creates a variety of electronic “Pathway” locator services, which enable users to identify and connect to agency electronic resources. Since these activities are funded by the FDLP appropriation, the locator services sponsored by the FDLP may be used at no cost by the public. Within our suite of locator services, the *Monthly Catalog* on the Web is unique in how it locates both physical items in depository libraries and agency products on the Internet.

The FDLP is the vehicle which provides permanent public access to Government information. Copies of physical items are permanently held for public use in the regional depository libraries. GPO, acting in partnership with other Program stakeholders, including the National Archives and Records Administration and libraries which elect to participate, is leading an effort to ensure that agency Internet products are permanently retained and made accessible to the public.

It will be many years, if ever, before all Government information is available electronically. In the meantime, it is essential to have a single program which is charged with acquiring and distributing the vast array of printed products which the Government produces. Neither libraries nor the public would be well served by having to contact scores of individual agencies for the information which they need.

FUGITIVE DOCUMENTS

Many publications produced by the Government fail to be included in the FDLP. Documents that belong in the Program, but which are excluded, are known as *fugitive documents*. Their absence from depository library collections impairs effective public access to Government information.

While many studies of the fugitive document problem have been conducted, the exact number of publications that are not in the FDLP has been difficult to isolate. Sometimes administrative errors are made by GPO in document selection and distribution. Most commonly, however, documents become fugitives from the Program due to their production outside of GPO, such as in agency printing plants. There is also a growing number of fugitive documents due to increased agency use of electronic systems to produce and disseminate their own documents.

We recently made an estimate of the number of fugitive publications today. In FY 1996, nearly 57,000 unique titles were included in the FDLP, including some 14,000 Department of Energy (DOE) reports. *We estimate that about 50 percent, or 55,000, of the tangible Government information products which are in the scope of the FDLP are not being distributed through the Program.* This number coincidentally approximates the estimated 40 percent of printing and reproduction expenses that are currently by-passing GPO. These publications are primarily those of a scientific and technical nature which are not printed through GPO and the originating agency did not provide copies for depository distribution as required by Title 44.

Most of the missing publications were provided to the National Technical Information Service (NTIS) of the Commerce Department, and we derived the number of 55,000 in the following manner. In FY 1996, NTIS took in about 160,000 scientific, technical, and business-related titles, most but not all of which were published by the Government. NTIS’s intake included about 20,000 from DOE, 30,000 from the Defense Technical Information Center (DTIC), 6,000 from NASA, and 3,000 to 4,000 from the Commerce Department, as well as so-called “legacy collections” extending over a number of years, such as 10,000 titles from the now-defunct Bureau of Mines.

Based on our experience with DOE, we estimate that about 70 percent, or 112,000 of NTIS’s total intake belongs in the FDLP. Compared with the 57,000 titles in the FDLP in FY 1996, this leaves about 55,000 fugitive titles which should have been provided to GPO by the publishing agencies, had they fully complied with Title 44 requirements.

Fugitive documents defeat the purpose of the FDLP and undermine the public’s ability to access information critical to their lives. Historically, the FDLP has relied heavily on the ability of the Program to automatically obtain material

as it is produced or procured through GPO. With the growing emphasis on electronic dissemination, and decreasing compliance with statutory requirements for agencies to use GPO, identifying and obtaining information for the FDLP is becoming increasingly difficult.

FDLP COMPLIANCE ISSUES

Under chapter 19 of Title 44, the requirements for depository distribution of Government information are provided for in two basic ways. When an agency uses GPO for production or procurement of a publication (defined in section 1901 as “informational matter which is published as an individual document at Government expense, or as required by law”), GPO ensures that distribution is made through our own processes. If a publication is produced elsewhere than GPO, the publishing agency is required to supply the requisite number of copies to GPO, at its own expense, for dissemination to depositories.

GPO is confronted with two kinds of compliance issues today. The first concerns efforts by agencies to evade the requirements of Title 44 with print publications. With increasing frequency, a number of Federal agencies are seeking new methods of printing information gathered at public expense. These methods do not involve GPO and, as a result, they impede or prevent effective public access to critical Government information. I have reported previously to Congress on several such instances, including such publications as *Big Emerging Markets*, *U.S. Export Administration Regulations*, and *U.S. Industrial Outlook*. Other efforts are ongoing by agencies that often involve allowing third parties to copyright the information or impose copyright-like restrictions on it. The result is that the information does not get produced or procured through GPO, and the agencies do not provide copies to GPO for distribution to depositories.

The second compliance issue involves publications in electronic formats. Several agencies have taken the position that Title 44 does not apply to Government information in electronic formats. OMB’s Circular No. A-130, “Management of Federal Information Resources,” requires agencies to cooperate with GPO for print publications, but only “encourages” cooperation for publications in electronic formats and provides agencies with a rationale for exempting electronic information products from the FDLP based on cost. We believe otherwise: that the spirit and intent of the law since the Program’s founding in 1813 has been to make information produced at taxpayer expense available to the public through depository libraries regardless of format. In a 1990 opinion, GPO’s General Counsel stated, “[i]t is our opinion that Congress did not intend to carve a distinction based upon the technology employed to disseminate the Government publication and that Title 44 U.S.C. Sec. 1903 governs regardless of whether the publication is in the traditional ink-on-paper format or some new medium.” Congress itself created GPO Access in large part to provide for online dissemination of Government information to depositories. While we make every effort to work closely with agencies to ensure the inclusion of their information products in the FDLP in all formats, the continuing agency practice of not providing electronic products to the FDLP is creating gaps in information availability to the public.

Journal of the National Cancer Institute. Creating copyrights for information gathered at public expense precludes that information from being included in the FDLP. As Chairman Warner recently reported in the Congressional Record, for many years the National Cancer Institute (NCI) procured its *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* (JNCI), major publication devoted to cancer research, through GPO and it was distributed to depository libraries.

In January 1997, however, the NCI notified GPO that it had signed a Cooperative Research and Development Agreement (CRDA) with Oxford University Press, under which “the name of the publication will be retained, and Oxford will assume all responsibility for printing the Journal and will hold copyright to the Journal’s content.” According to the letter received by GPO, the JNCI “has been privatized, and effective January 1, 1997, ownership of the Journal will be transferred from the National Cancer Institute to Oxford University Press-USA, Inc.” The letter also stated that “[b]ecause the Journal is no longer a publication of the U.S. Government, copies of the Journal and JNCI Monographs will not be provided to the Depository Library Program nor will sales copies be available

at the GPO bookstore.” At the time of this notification, GPO was receiving 827 copies of each issue of JNCI for distribution to depository libraries. We have no further information on the terms and conditions of the CRDA between NCI and Oxford University Press because the NCI’s legal counsel has informed us that the details of the CRDA are not public information.

NTIS *Order Now* CD-ROM. NTIS recently converted its printed sales catalog to a quarterly CD ROM subscription called *Order Now*. NTIS did not procure this product through GPO. Although NTIS makes this catalog available online on a no-fee basis to depository libraries, the online product does not include the two years’ worth of abstracts and indexes available on the CD-ROM. This makes the CD-ROM more complete and useful than either the online or former printed products. NTIS expressed a willingness to make the CD-ROM available as a benefit to the public and as a promotional tool for their sales program, provided GPO pays the retrieval software licensing fees. After due consideration, it was decided that the Superintendent of Documents could not pay these fees, and that since the CD-ROM was not procured through GPO, NTIS was obligated to provide copies to the FDLP under section 1903 of Title 44.

In a letter to the Staff Director of the JCP concerning this matter, NTIS made the statement that “[a]t no time did we consider this to be a question of compliance with Title 44,” apparently based on the fact that the publication in question is electronic rather than print. However, without the NTIS *Order Now* CD-ROM, it will be more expensive for depository libraries to locate and purchase scientific and technical documents. More broadly, such attempts to evade the requirements of Title 44 represent a serious challenge to free public access to Government information through the FDLP.

TRANSITIONING THE FDLP TO A MORE ELECTRONIC BASIS

In spite of the executive branch contention that electronic information products are not required to be included in the FDLP, Congress has encouraged us to transition the Program to a more electronic basis. Section 210 of the Legislative Branch Appropriations Act for FY 1996 required GPO to conduct a study to identify measures necessary for a successful transition to a more electronic FDLP. In response to direction from Congress for broad consultation on the study, GPO formed a group comprising representatives from GPO, the JCP, the Senate and House Appropriations Committees, the Senate Rules and Administration Committee, the House Oversight Committee, the House Government Reform and Oversight Committee, OMB, the Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress, the National Archives and Records Administration, federal publishing agencies, the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, the depository library community, and others. The final report, titled *Study to Identify Measures Necessary for a Successful Transition to a More Electronic Federal Depository Library Program*, was submitted to Congress, including the JCP, in June 1996.

Study Conclusions. Two major conclusions emerged from the study. The first was strong support for retaining the authority for a broad-based public information program in the legislative branch. Nearly all of the participants felt that this model has served the public well. High value was placed on the presence of the FDLP in every congressional district to directly serve the public in local library settings.

There was also strong support for having a single entity in the Superintendent of Documents to coordinate library-related information dissemination activities. The depository library community has consistently affirmed the utility and cost-effectiveness of a “one stop shopping” approach to acquiring Government information. The study participants agreed that it is not only possible but desirable to increase the dissemination of electronic information to depository libraries within the overall structure of current law and program operations, and that having a central entity to assist libraries and the public in accessing electronic Government information in a distributed environment is more vital now than ever.

Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan included in the final Study Report proposes a gradual transition during the period FY 1996-FY 2001. The Strategic Plan builds on the strengths of the existing program and will move the FDLP toward a significantly greater electronic information dissemination and access program. The Plan reflects the views and advice of the library community, Federal publishing agencies, and users of Government information.

Under the Strategic Plan, the FDLP will provide official Government information products in a variety of formats to depository libraries. Incorporating electronic Government information into the FDLP will augment the traditional distribution of tangible products with connections to Government electronic information services such as Internet sites. Electronic information will be accessible to the public directly or through depository libraries from a system of Government electronic information services administered by GPO, other Government agencies, or institutions acting as agents for the Government. The FDLP will identify and connect users to electronic information services of other agencies or, when appropriate, obtain electronic source files from agencies for mounting on GPO Access. Tangible Government information products will be distributed to libraries, including CD-ROMs, diskettes, paper, or microfiche, as appropriate to the needs of users and intended usage.

The FDLP will ensure that electronic Government information products are maintained for permanent public access, in the same spirit in which regional depositories provide permanent access to print products. This requires the development of a system which includes all of the institutional program stakeholders: information-producing agencies, GPO, depository libraries, and the National Archives and Records Administration. Effective public use of Government information, especially in the less-structured environment of the Internet, also depends on the ability of users to identify and locate the desired information. Through continuation of its cataloging services, and the development of Pathway information locator services, the FDLP will meet this need.

Assessment of Standards. The FDLP Study also concluded that the use of electronic Government information products can be enhanced by the greater utilization of standards in the creation and dissemination of information. To accomplish this, we need to know the range of formats Federal agencies currently use in the creation and dissemination of information and to assess the de facto or actual standards that are in use for each major type of data. We also need to identify areas where there is no standardization, or such limited standardization that the effect is virtually the same. Finally, we need to evaluate standards utilized by private sector and other non governmental publishers.

GPO proposed an Assessment of Standards for Creation and Dissemination of Electronic Government Information through a joint effort with the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS). This information will provide the basis for an assessment, in consultation with the depository library community, of the usefulness and cost-effectiveness of various electronic formats for depository library dissemination or access. It will also be the basis for a dialog with NARA, NCLIS, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), and others with an interest in establishing and promulgating Government-wide standards for information creation and dissemination. The NCLIS agreed to this approach and recently an interagency agreement was signed for the conduct of this study, at a cost of \$200,000, to be paid out of appropriated funds. The project has been approved by the JCP.

STATUS OF PROGRESS TOWARD FDLP STUDY GOALS

In the Study report, we said that by the end of FY 1998 (assuming funding at or near the FY 1996 level), we would provide about 50 percent of FDLP information electronically by: pointing to agency services, mounting files on GPO Access, distributing tangible electronic products, scanning agency print products for mounting on GPO Access, ensuring that all depositories are capable of providing the public with electronic access, and achieving a product mix of 50 percent electronic, 30 percent paper, and 20 percent microfiche. To date, the status of progress toward these goals is as follows:

- *Pointing to products accessible via agency electronic information services:* We are enabling users to locate and connect to agency electronic services through our Pathway services. Pathway "Browse Titles" is the current

awareness tool, and the Monthly Catalog on the Web provides a complete description and subject access. We will continue developing these efforts through funding from the FDLP and the Cataloging and Indexing Program.

- *Processing and mounting agency-provided electronic source files on GPO Access:* We are currently exploring options to use the electronic image files provided by DOE. The DOE reports account for about one-third of all the titles in the FDLP, and the solution to this problem may give us access to other products never before in the FDLP.
- *Distributing tangible electronic products, e.g., CD-ROM:* Distribution of CD-ROM is expected to continue to increase, although some agencies, such as the U.S. Geological Survey, are moving from producing CD-ROM to on-demand CD-ROM publishing of customized products. We are exploring options to keep such information in the FDLP when there is no production run to ride for copies, and the information is not available via the Internet.
- *Scanning agency print products for mounting on GPO Access or disseminating in tangible format as text or image files:* Since Congress agreed that the 5-7 year transition was appropriate, the speed of our transition is now closely aligned with what the publishing agencies are doing. We see the FDLP evolving, so as agencies move to electronic publishing, the FDLP can incorporate those products into the Program. In addition, we have determined that, due to the expense involved, scanning is generally only appropriate as a last resort to obtain an electronic version of a product. We are focusing our efforts upon obtaining electronic source data files from the originating agency, since most print products are now created electronically.
- *Having all depository libraries capable of serving the public with electronic Government information products:* Since the beginning of FY 1997, all depositories have been expected to be able to offer users the ability to access, search, view, download and, to some extent, print information located on the Internet. This may be done by providing the user with direct access to a computer work station, or by conducting mediated searches at the user's request. However, there are some libraries that still do not meet these minimum expectations.
- *Achieving a depository product mix of about 50 percent electronic, 30 percent paper, and 20 percent microfiche:* GPO Access is the online information delivery vehicle for the FDLP. In FY 1996, depository libraries received about 1.7 million copies per month of tangible products; e.g., paper or microfiche. By way of comparison, documents downloaded from GPO Access over the same period averaged 2.4 million per month. Although these figures are not entirely comparable, since many GPO Access users do not utilize it through depository libraries, they indicate that we have begun to achieve our goal.

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Mr. Chairman, GPO today provides a comprehensive, cost-effective range of information processing, reproduction, procurement, and dissemination services designed both to assist Congress and Federal agencies in managing the life-cycle of their information products, and to ensure that the public has comprehensive, economical, and equitable access to Government information which is increasingly valuable to American citizens and taxpayers in the Information Age. Our continuing migration to electronic technologies, as well as the ability of our skilled and innovative staff, are already facilitating the re-engineering of information products and processes to satisfy the changing information requirements of the Government and the public. More than a century ago, Congress in its wisdom designed a system in GPO for keeping America informed. That system continues to serve a vital purpose today, and we look forward to working under congressional oversight and guidance to improve the performance of our operations and programs.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the JCP, we appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today as you conduct this important oversight hearing. This concludes my prepared statement and I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.