U.S. Government Printing Office

Style Manual

An official guide to the form and style of Federal Government printing

2008

Production and Distribution Notes

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The GPO STYLE MANUAL will be distributed to libraries in the Federal Depository Library Program. To find a depository library near you, please go to the Federal depository library directory at http://catalog.gpo.gov/fdlpdir/public.jsp.

The electronic text of this publication is available for public use free of charge at http://www.gpoaccess.gov/stylemanual/index.html.

Use of ISBN Prefix

THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE STYLE MANUAL
IS PUBLISHED UNDER THE DIRECTION AND AUTHORITY OF

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Robert C. Tapella

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EXTRACT FROM THE PUBLIC PRINTING LAW

(TITLE 44, U.S.C.)

§ 1105. Form and style of work for departments

The Public Printer shall determine the form and style in which the printing or binding ordered by a department is executed, and the material and the size of type used, having proper regard to economy, workmanship, and the purposes for which the work is needed.

(Pub. L. 90–620, Oct. 22, 1968, 82 Stat. 1261.)

Historical and Revision Notes

Based on 44 U.S. Code, 1964 ed., § 216 (Jan. 12, 1895, ch. 23, § 51, 28 Stat. 608).

About This Manual

By act of Congress the Public Printer is authorized to determine the form and style of Government printing. The GPO STYLE MANUAL is the product of many years of public printing experience, and its rules are based on principles of good usage and custom in the printing trade.

Editors and writers whose disciplines have taught them aspects of style different from rules followed in this MANUAL will appreciate the difficulty of establishing a single standard. The GPO STYLE MANUAL has served Federal printers since 1894, and with this 30th edition, the traditions of printing and graphic arts are carried forward in the 21st century.

Essentially, the GPO STYLE MANUAL is a standardization device designed to achieve uniform word and type treatment, and it aims for economy of word use. Such rules as are laid down for the submission of copy to GPO point to the most economical manner for the preparation and typesetting of manuscript. Following such rules eliminates additional chargeable processing by GPO.

It should be remembered that the GPO STYLE MANUAL is primarily a GPO printer's stylebook. Easy rules of grammar cannot be prescribed, for it is assumed that editors are versed in correct expression. Likewise, decisions on design and makeup are best determined by the individual publisher to meet the needs of the intended audience. As a printer's book, this MANUAL necessarily uses terms that are obvious to those skilled in the graphic arts.

Users of the GPO STYLE MANUAL should consider it as a general guide. Its rules cannot be regarded as rigid, for the printed word assumes many shapes and variations in type presentation. An effort has been made to provide complete coverage of those elements that enter into the translation of manuscript into type.

The GPO Style Board made significant revisions to update this edition of the GPO STYLE MANUAL. The changes include redesigning the format to make it more modern and easier to read; replacing "What is *GPO Access*?" with "GPO's Online Initiatives"; removing the atomic weights column from the Chemical Symbols table; expanding and updating time zone abbreviations;

listing additional entries to the Post Office abbreviations; extensively reviewing the capitalization chapter to remove outdated entries and include new ones; realigning the abbreviations lists to create a new list of technical abbreviations and initialisms; updating old and adding new tables to the Useful Tables chapter; expanding military titles; creating new sample pages for the Reports and Hearings chapter; providing many URLs as references; and including many suggestions by users.

Comments and suggestions from users of the GPO STYLE MANUAL are invited. All such correspondence should be addressed as follows:

<div align="center">

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For the purposes of the GPO STYLE MANUAL, printed examples throughout are to be considered the same as the printed rules.

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GPO's Online Initiatives

Printing continues to serve an important purpose in the Federal Government. Congressional documents, official reports, pamphlets, books, regulations and statutes, passports, tax and census forms, statistical data, and more—in printed form these documents represent a major avenue of communication and information transaction between the Government and the public. In the 21st century, the Government Printing Office (GPO) is committed to providing printed information products for Congress, Federal agencies, and the courts as efficiently, creatively, and cost-effectively as the most modern technology will allow.

With the advent of the electronic information age, GPO has also assumed the responsibility for providing public access to the online versions of most of the official documents it prints, as well as—to the greatest extent possible—the online versions of Government publications that are not printed but are otherwise made available on other Federal Web sites. GPO recognizes that a Federal author today often begins the content creation process at a personal computer, and frequently publishes the final document on the Web, without creating a print version that will make its way to a user's hands or a library's shelves. Many Government publications are now born digital and published to the Web, with few if any copies printed for traditional public access via bookstores or libraries.

To accommodate this transition in Federal publishing strategies while preserving the core responsibility for ensuring public access to Government publications, in 1993 Congress enacted Public Law 103–40, the Government Printing Office Electronic Information Access Enhancement Act, which required GPO to establish online access to key Government publications and provide a system of storage to ensure permanent public access to the information they contain. Since then, the number of publications featured by the resulting Web site, *GPO Access*, at www.gpoaccess.gov, has grown exponentially, as has its use by the public. A decade later the National Archives and Records Administration formally recognized GPO as an affiliated archive for the digital content on the *GPO Access* site.

 To meet continued public demand for online access to Government publications, provide for an increased range of search and retrieval options, and

ensure the preservation of official Government information content in the 21st century, in 2004 GPO embarked on the construction of a more comprehensive online capability, called GPO's Federal Digital System, or FDsys. Scheduled to become available for public use in late 2008, the new system will serve as GPO's digital platform for the production, storage, and dissemination of official Government publications for the years to come.

GPO Access

Opened to the public in 1994, the *GPO Access* Web site was GPO's entrance into the digital age. *GPO Access* provides free electronic access to a wealth of important information products produced by the Federal Government. The information provided is the official published version, and information retrieved from *GPO Access* can be used without restriction unless specifically noted. This free service is funded through annual appropriations provided to GPO's Federal Depository Library Program.

Under the *GPO Access* legislation, the Superintendent of Documents, under the direction of the Public Printer, is required to: (1) Maintain an electronic directory of Federal electronic information; (2) provide a system of online access to the Congressional Record, the Federal Register, and other appropriate publications as determined by the Superintendent of Documents; (3) operate an electronic storage facility for Federal electronic information; and (4) maintain the Federal Bulletin Board, which was then already in existence.

GPO Access services

GPO Access services are designed to meet the needs of a variety of users. *GPO Access* consists of content and links, including official, full-text information from the three branches of the Federal Government. Databases are updated based on their print equivalent and generally date back to 1994.

Users can find information on the Federal Depository Library Program, which provides no-fee public access to publications disseminated by GPO, regardless of format. *GPO Access* enables users to locate a depository library in their area.

Users may also locate and order publications available for sale through GPO's Publication and Information Sales Program. Orders may be placed online securely through the U.S. Government Bookstore at http://bookstore.gpo.gov.

Ben's Guide to the U.S. Government provides learning tools for K–12 students, parents, and educators. The site provides age-specific explanations about how the Federal Government works, explains the use of the primary source materials available on *GPO Access*, and explains GPO's role in the Federal Government.

Users needing assistance with *GPO Access* or other dissemination services may direct inquiries to the GPO Contact Center specialists available by email (contactcenter@gpo.gov), telephone (1–866–512–1800), or fax (202–512–2104).

Authentication of digital documents

The increasing use of electronic documents poses a special challenge in verifying authenticity, because digital technology makes such documents easy to alter or copy in unauthorized or illegitimate ways.

To help meet this challenge, GPO has implemented digital signatures on certain electronic documents in *GPO Access* that not only establish GPO as the trusted information disseminator, but also provide the assurance that an electronic document has not been altered since GPO disseminated it.

In early 2008, GPO authenticated the first-ever online Federal budget by digital signature. The visible digital signatures on online PDF documents serve the same purpose as handwritten signatures or traditional wax seals on printed documents. The digital signature verifies document integrity and authenticity for online Federal documents, disseminated by GPO, at no cost to the customer.

GPO's Federal Digital System (FDsys)

A critical part of GPO's mission of *Keeping America Informed* is ensuring permanent access to published Government documents. GPO is developing a

comprehensive digital content system capable of managing all known Federal Government documents within the scope of GPO's Federal Depository Library Program and other information dissemination programs. GPO's Federal Digital System (FDsys) is an integrated content management system which incorporates state-of-the-art technology for document authentication and digital preservation. FDsys supports GPO's transformation from a print-based environment to a content-based environment, in which digital content is created, submitted, preserved, authenticated, managed, and delivered upon request. The design of FDsys is based on the Reference Model for an Open Archival Information System (OAIS) (ISO 14721:2003), which describes a generalized structure for storing, preserving, and providing access to digital content over time.

FDsys will automate content life-cycle processes and make it easier to deliver digital content in formats suited to customers' needs. FDsys will allow Federal content creators to submit content for preservation, authentication, and delivery to users. Content entered into the system will be cataloged according to GPO and library standards, and will be available on the World Wide Web for searching and viewing, downloading and printing, as document masters for conventional and on-demand printing, or by other dissemination methods. Content may include text and associated graphics, video, audio, and other forms that emerge.

FDsys capabilities will be deployed in a series of releases. An internal proof-of-concept release of FDsys was completed in September 2007 to support the last stage of testing. FDsys is scheduled to become available to agencies and the public in early 2009, beginning a process of incremental releases. Each release will add functionality to the previous one. The first public release will provide FDsys core capabilities, including such foundational elements as system infrastructure and security, and a digital repository that conforms to the OAIS reference model and enables the management of content and metadata. This release will replace the familiar Wide Area Information Server (WAIS)-based *GPO Access*, in use since 1994, with enhanced search and retrieval functionality.

For a comprehensive discussion of system capabilities by release, see the FDsys documentation at http://www.gpo.gov/projects/fdsys_documents.htm.

Information

The rules of grammar, spelling, punctuation, and related matters, as stated in this MANUAL, will serve well when preparing documents for electronic dissemination. Most of the documents currently available via *GPO Access* are derived from databases used in the printing of Government publications. However, as electronic dissemination of Government information continues to grow, the rules as stated in this MANUAL will continue to be the GPO's standard for all document preparation, electronic or otherwise.