

GPO has begun to create separate item numbers for the online only (EL) format of U.S. Congressional Committee publications known as “Y 4s”, or those listed as “Hearings, Prints, Miscellaneous Publications” in the List of Classes. This does not apply to Committee Rules or Calendars or other Congressional publications. Separate item numbers are already available for paper (P) and microfiche (MF). These changes to the item numbers do not affect SuDocs classification stems. All changes will be announced in WebTech Notes and Administrative Notes Technical Supplement.

For example:

Select Committee on Intelligence (Senate)

Y 4.IN 8/19: Hearings, Prints, and Miscellaneous Publications
(P) ESSENTIAL TITLE 1009-B-07

Y 4.IN 8/19: Hearings, Prints, and Miscellaneous Publications
(MF) ESSENTIAL TITLE 1009-C-07

Will now include:

Y 4.IN 8/19: Hearings, Prints, and Miscellaneous Publications
(EL) ESSENTIAL TITLE 1009-D-07

GPO sees two significant potential impacts on libraries from this procedure

1. Selective libraries may opt to drop from their item selection profile tangible Hearings, Prints, & Miscellaneous Publications. This may affect a state or region’s access to these types of publications in the future. Libraries are reminded that they may not claim a print or microfiche format if they do not select it. Alternatively, libraries that do not normally select these publications may choose to acquire them for their electronic collection.

2. Selective libraries may opt to assess their existing tangible Hearings, Prints, & Miscellaneous Publications collections and request official substitution to withdraw tangible versions in favor of providing access through the electronic versions. This will also affect a state or region’s access to these publications.

New cataloging policy and impact

- It is the policy of GPO to create separate cataloging records for each individual format of a publication. The single record approach is no longer being used.

- As a result, libraries getting their catalog records directly from GPO that do not select the new EL formats of the Hearings, Prints, & Miscellaneous Publications will no longer receive the PURL or URL in their catalog records. If a library wishes to have PURLs in their catalog records, they will likely need to modify their tangible format records by adding an 856/PURL field to the record. For more information, see the article entitled [“Separate Record Cataloging Policy”](#)

- GPO continues to distribute hearings and prints from earlier Congresses as they become available and will process these incoming publications using the separate record cataloging approach and assign new item numbers.

What it means for item selection profiles

- If your library currently selects either a P or MF format (or both P and MF if a regional depository library), a new item number for the EL format will automatically be added to your item selection profile. If you do not want to select the EL format, you must deselect those item numbers.
 - Selectives may select one tangible format in addition to the electronic format.
 - You may deselect any unwanted item numbers at any time. Drops become effective within 2 or 3 business days.
 - Additions to your item selection profile may be made during the next Item Selection Update Cycle in mid-year 2009. Adds will take effect on October 1, 2009.
 - If your library wants to rely only on the electronic format, it may drop the P or MF format, however it should have copy cataloging procedures for the EL format in place prior to the drop, and/or have commercial vendor services arranged for EL records, if applicable. Otherwise a gap may occur in collections between when tangible distribution ceases and electronic access begins. (Note: regional depository libraries must select at least one tangible format.)
 - Libraries that purchase cataloging records from commercial vendors may wish to contact their vendor to arrange for the addition or deselection of these new EL item numbers from their batch loads.
 - It is not sufficient to just select an EL item number and not provide access to individual publications through your catalog or Web site. Libraries that choose to provide electronic only access to Hearings, Prints, & Miscellaneous publications should plan on promoting the electronic collection through their catalogs and/or Web pages.

Caveats on dropping a tangible format item number in favor of an online only (EL) format

- Some Committees do not issue electronic equivalents of their Hearings, Prints, & Miscellaneous Publications. A separate item number for the online only format will not be created for these publications.
- Some Hearings, Prints, & Miscellaneous Publications are incomplete online. The Congressional Committee determines if the publication is disseminated online. Online and tangible formats do not necessarily have a one to one correlation; there are tangible versions of Hearings, Prints, & Miscellaneous Publications that have no online equivalent. If a library needs to provide access to all Hearings, Prints, & Miscellaneous Publications for a particular Congressional Committee, selecting the EL item number will merely supplement existing collections, but cannot replace it.
- If you choose to deselect an item number associated with the paper format, deselection takes approximately 2-3 days. Deselection of microfiche typically takes a bit longer, approximately 1-2 weeks, as we work to notify the microfiche contractors and they make

changes to their records.

Substitution considerations

- Selective depository libraries may officially substitute publications when the EL version is complete, official, and permanently accessible.
- Because online electronic Hearings, Prints, Miscellaneous Publications is not a complete “series”, libraries must verify the completeness of each individual Hearing, Print, & Miscellaneous Publication in the electronic format before substituting them. GPO suggests you compare the full-text of each publication you have identified for potential substitution by identifying them on GPO Access or in the Catalog of U.S. Government Publications. Compare the pagination of PDF versions and examine the electronic file to determine if all images, tables, and other graphics are included. If the electronic version is incomplete, it cannot be used for official substitution.
- The superseding instructions must be followed. Libraries must ask for permission from their regional library to substitute Hearings, Prints, Miscellaneous Publications that have not been superseded per the Superseded List (very few are ever updated, revised or corrected).
- Regionals may not substitute P or MF with EL formats.
- Depository libraries should consider patron characteristics, usage patterns, community needs, research requirements, and the library’s collection development policy when determining which format of these Congressional publications best meets the U.S. Government information needs of the library users. Libraries may select one tangible format in addition to the electronic format if they so choose.

If changes are made to the House and/or Senate committee structures with the 111th Congress, GPO will make corresponding revisions in the List of Classes.

Related information

- Considerations in Selecting Online Publications, [Administrative Notes](#) . July 15, 2003, Vol. 24, No. 9.
- [Separate Record Cataloging Policy](#)
- [Federal Depository Library Handbook](#)
- [Substituting Electronic for Tangible Versions of Depository Publications](#)

Additional reference information

Costello, Barbara. “Moving in the right direction: Developments in the online availability of full-text Congressional committee hearing transcripts.” *Government Information Quarterly* 25 (2008): 104-117.

New Item Number Procedure for Selected Congressional Publications

Tuesday, 25 November 2008 - Last Updated Sunday, 18 January 2009
