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Remarks

by Earl Lewter, Chief, Classification and Control Section

Good morning and welcome to the Federal Depository Conference. I'm Earl Lewter and I'm in charge of the Classification and Control Section in the Library Programs Service. I also started with GPO in 1973 and in 1976 began working in the classification section. There has been considerable change since then, especially working with an online system today. As was earlier mentioned, ACSIS has been up and running since October and the classifiers are now adjusting quite well. There are still glitches to be worked out, but keep in mind we're still in Phase I of ACSIS, and as Laurie mentioned there will be three phases.

Our main objectives in the Classification Section are to classify the titles for the paper shipping list and to classify the other documents that come in the area for the microfiche shipments. To meet these goals, we divided the classifiers into two groups and trained them. We have four classifiers working entirely on the paper shipping list and one classifier working on separates and the electronic titles. We also have four classifiers working on the incoming mail and preparing the titles for microfiche conversion.

Initially, the training on ACSIS slowed us down, but now we are just about at the point where we're classifying the titles for the paper shipping lists as they are being received in the door. To further help us meet this goal, we built an additional room in the Receiving Section where we will physically house four or five classifiers. We are shooting for May 1st to make this move. This will enable the classifiers to review the documents as they are being received and prepared for the shipping boxes and to remove any 'problem' publications. These 'problem' publications will be taken out of the box temporarily and sent upstairs to the Administrative Section for further evaluation. If the problem can be resolved in a timely manner it will be placed back in another box.

Since the beginning of ACSIS, quality control has taken top priority. All paper shipments, as well as titles being prepared for microfiche conversion, are being reviewed by management before they are released for shipment. In the first few months of ACSIS, it was important to check our old files to make sure duplicate Cutter numbers and other class duplication didn't occur. This was necessary because the older Monthly Catalog entries took considerable time to download into ACSIS. Laurie and I spend a great deal of time reviewing each classifier's records for consistency.

With all of these changes taking place, it was decided to suspend the Classification Hotline. We will still respond to inquiries received on the Library Inquiry Form by mail or by fax. Our fax number is 202-512-1196. Most of the responses will be through articles in Administrative Notes or on the Federal Bulletin Board.

The Classification Manual was completely revised and distributed to all libraries in February. As new policies and procedures are written, it will be updated. ACSIS is still relatively new and not perfected yet, but we are consciously working towards that goal.

For more information or any questions, I will be available this afternoon in the Information Exchange Sessions.

At this time I'd like to introduce our next speaker, Stevie Gray. By no means is he a stranger to the library community. He started with GPO in 1981 in the Micrographics Section. After holding other managerial positions in the Depository Distribution Division, he is back with us as Chief of the Micrographics and Acquisitions Section.