

Questions and Answers



Q & A from the New Documents Librarians Open Forum At the Fall 2007 Federal Depository Library Conference

What is Council? Why do they get to sit up on the stage and get first dibs on asking questions?

The 15-member Depository Library Council to the Public Printer counsels the Public Printer on future trends, innovation, and new concepts in libraries and information dissemination, particularly as they relate to the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP).

Council meetings are organized as a discussion between GPO managers and the Council as a group, with audience participation as time permits. During both the spring and fall meetings, numerous educational programs are presented by GPO and other Federal agency staff and by depository librarians. These offer practical information on a wide variety of topics.

You can learn more about the Council through the FDLP Desktop at <http://www.fdlp.gov/>.

What do conference sessions have to do with my library's workflow? What is the best way to get info from these conferences?

The best way for you to get the most from the conference is to attend the educational sessions that deal with topics that impact your library, and to meet and talk with your colleagues from similar types of libraries.

Also take advantage of the opportunity to talk with the GPO staff, who will be happy to discuss any depository issues with you.

How do I keep the program from going up in flames in my library? How do I plan for the appropriate amount of time to spend on depository matters? What resources are needed to go to the administration for support?

Support from your library administration is essential in running a successful depository operation. The "Important for Library Administrators" sections at the end of each chapter in the new Federal Depository Library Handbook (collected in Appendix B) outline the essential requirements of the program, while the "Did You Realize That You Don't Have To...?" sections in each chapter may put to rest some misconceptions. <http://www.fdlp.gov/handbook/index.html>

The Stay With the Program page at http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/staywiththeprogram.html provides links to Web pages that detail reasons to continue participation in the Federal Depository Library Program. We are currently working on an update to this Web page.

And don't forget, GPO staff and your regional depository librarian can offer advice and support.

How can I find people who are in similar situations to my own? (Don't want to duplicate effort. Networking desired.)

Your regional depository coordinator can be of immense help to you, so that should always be your first contact. If there is a local documents group in your area, go to the meetings and get to know your colleagues from other institutions. Ask your administration for support in attending national meetings, such as the Federal Depository Library Conference, and join national documents groups such as ALA's Government Documents Round Table (GODORT).

A discussion list for documents librarians, GOVDOC-L, is maintained by and for the depository members. You may want to subscribe to this list at: <http://govdoc-l.org/> where you'll be able to ask depository coordinators across the country for input.

Where can we find regulations for processing depository materials?

The online "Federal Depository Library Handbook" was released in January 2008. The Handbook is available online at: <http://www.fdlp.gov/handbook/index.html> and will not be distributed to libraries in a tangible format.

With its publication, "Instructions to Depository Libraries" and "Federal Depository Library Manual" (including its four supplements) are superseded. Effective January, 2008, depository staff need to refer to the Handbook for Federal depository library requirements as well as guidance on depository operations and practices. The Handbook also explains the sections in Title 44 United States Code that cover the Federal Depository Library Program.

What is AskGPO and how can it help me?

Ask GPO is our Customer Relationship Management and online help system. It's your first point of contact with GPO and has three basic components. These include a Knowledgebase that contains previously asked questions with answers, Ask A Question feature that allows you to submit new questions, and the My Account area with specific information for each end-user of the system.

To get to AskGPO, go to the FDLP Desktop at <<http://www.fdlp.gov/>> and click on Help.

What is FDLP.gov?

In the fall of 2007, the FDLP Desktop moved to a new domain: fdlp.gov. The new Desktop is designed to be an online interactive community. Interactive elements are accessed through individual user accounts.

Your password enables you to:

- Subscribe to FDLP Express and get only the news you want right to your inbox.
- Order promotional Items to showcase your status as a Federal depository library.
- Register (or unregister) for FDLP events and conferences online.
- Weed and enhance your collections through the Needs & Offers service.
- Share events and news from your library.
- Stay informed of community events with our event calendar.
- Create and customize your individual profile and enhance your community outreach. Your profile features include private messaging, buddy list, registered events, and Needs & Offers ads.

The previous version of the FDLP Desktop will remain available at <http://www.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/index.html> until content migration to the new site is complete.

How does the new FDLP Desktop affect links?

LSCM staff are conducting a comprehensive analysis of the information disseminated on the FDLP Desktop in order to ensure that it is current and presented appropriately for the Web in a way that meets our community's expectations. We are launching features as they are completed so that our community can take advantage of them and provide feedback on making the site as useful as possible. Due to the size of the site and scope of the redesign, we are maintaining dual sites during the migration and creating redirects to migrated content.

How do we get FDLP logins and passwords for the present coordinator? We can't find the information sent to the former coordinator.

Send the new coordinator information and your depository library number together with your request to AskGPO at <<http://gpo.custhelp.com/cgi-bin/gpo.cfg/php/enduser/ask.php>>. Choose category "Federal Depository Libraries" and subcategory "Depository Management > Passwords." GPO staff must first verify the status of the new designated coordinator as we may only distribute logins and passwords to designated coordinators.

Does the external password still work? Is it needed?

The GPO-assigned external password is not currently used for any application. It is being held in reserve for possible future use.

I changed the FDLP Directory and nothing happened.

Under our former process, the depository library directory database was updated once a month. Now that the directory has migrated to the new FDLP Desktop, <<http://catalog.gpo.gov/fdlpdir/login.jsp>>, your library's record is updated in real time when you input the changes.

Are there any tools for getting started with cataloging?

Information on GPO cataloging policies is available in the GPO Cataloging Guidelines at <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/cip/gpocatgu.pdf>.

See also entries in the AskGPO Knowledgebase. Go to the FDLP Desktop <<http://www.fdlp.gov/>>, click on Help, Knowledgebase, and choose category "Federal Depository Libraries," subcategory "Cataloging," and enter "cataloging" in the search box.

The ALA GODORT Cataloging Committee has created a Toolbox for Processing and Cataloging Federal Government Documents at <<http://www2.lib.udel.edu/godort/cataloging/toolbox.htm>>.

How do I add to and take things off my library's item number list?

Changes to a library's selection profile are made by inputting item numbers using the Amendment of Item Selections procedure at <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/tools/amendment.html>.

You can de-select items in your depository library's profile at any time, and this impacts distribution immediately. You can add items only once a year during the Item Selection Update Cycle which usually occurs in June and July.

How can I get an expanded version of my item list with agency names, etc., so I don't have to cross-reference?

A list of each depository library's selections, showing item number, SuDoc class, and agency, together with other information, is available from the Documents Data Miner 2 at <<http://govdoc.wichita.edu/ddm2/gdocframes.asp>>. Click on Depository Selection & Directory, enter your depository number, and click on Submit. On the next screen, click on the depository number, and when the selection page appears, click on Submit, and your list will appear.

If there is no shipping list in a box, what is the most efficient way to find shipping lists?

Copies of shipping lists are available from the Shipping Lister service on the FDLP Desktop at: <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/tools/sl/slister.html>.

If the list that you need is not yet available, contact your regional depository librarian.

For a list of the most recent shipping lists, go to <<http://www.fdlp.gov/>> and see Shipping Lists This Week, on the right.

How do I claim a missing item?

To file a claim for material from a GPO-issued shipping list, complete the Web Claim form <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/tools/webclaim.html>.

Microfiche claims must be made through the appropriate microfiche contractor and claims for USGS maps must be sent to USGS.

If you are claiming an item that has not appeared on a shipping list, please use the AskGPO service <<http://gpo.custhelp.com/cgi-bin/gpo.cfg/php/enduser/ask.php>>.

For complete claiming information, see the new Handbook, Chapter 6, Technical Services, Claiming Missing Publications in Depository Shipments. <<http://www.fdlp.gov/handbook/index.html>>

Why do class numbers change and what should we do about the changes?

SuDocs classification numbers change for many reasons, including insufficient information on the publishing agency's original print order form, changes in a publishing agency's organization, and human error, i.e., typos on shipping lists, microfiche headers, or cataloging records.

Class changes are reported in the Administrative Notes Technical Supplement which is distributed to depositories in paper and is online at <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/pubs/techsup/>. In addition, a cumulative compilation of changes is maintained in an Excel file which can be accessed from the FDLP Desktop at <<http://www.fdlp.gov/>> (see information under "WEBTechNotes Intermediate Solution).

Depository staff should change numbers on tangible materials. If the library does not subscribe to an online cataloging record service, which will include corrections to previously issued records, then its OPAC and shelflist records should be changed individually.

Is there a list of universities that use the SuDocs class for pre-76 documents?

Not that we are aware of. Check with your regional librarian or GOVDOC-L <<http://govdoc-l.org>> for suggestions.

How is staff training managed in libraries with integrated collections? How about training non-documents librarians?

The new Handbook contains many suggestions for training staff in chapter 10, Staffing, under Training Opportunities.
<<http://www.fdlp.gov/handbook/index.html>>

How can I find someone to collaborate with on training a Spanish-speaking population?

The listserv for documents librarians, GOVDOC-L, at <<http://govdoc-l.org>>, serves as an excellent forum for information exchange among documents librarians.

Are there any tools to help me build and maintain a solid collection of government documents?

See the Federal Depository Library Handbook, Chapter 5: Depository Collections, and Appendix A: Suggested Core Collections. Also see Essential Titles for Public Use in Tangible Format <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/pubs/estitles.html>. And remember that you are not alone: consult with your regional coordinator, review the State Plan if there is one, and network with nearby depositories to learn their collection strengths and weaknesses.

What is the process for weeding items that we didn't select or that are duplicates?

Duplicates and items that are not in your item selection profile should be offered to the regional or be placed on statewide discard lists. Publications of value should be offered on the national Needs and Offers list <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/tools/needs_of/index.html>. Your depository should be led by the policies and procedures detailed in any applicable State Plan.

For more complete information, see the new Handbook, Chapter 5, Depository Collections, Discards by Selective Depositories.
<<http://www.fdlp.gov/handbook/index.html>>

How can I downsize the print collection?

Depository librarians are permitted to substitute electronic versions as the sole “copy” for some tangible FDLP publications provided the electronic version is complete, official, and permanently accessible. These conditions are outlined in FDLP Guidelines on Substituting Electronic for Tangible Versions of Depository Publications <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/coll-dev/subguide.html>.

In addition, Tips to Effectively Transition to a More Online Federal Depository Collection is located on the FDLP Desktop in the “Online Migration” section of the Collection Development Web page at:

<http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/coll-dev/index.html>.

Don’t forget about removing superseded publications, using the guidelines from the Handbook, Chapter 5, Depository Collections, under Managing Your Depository Collection <<http://www.fdlp.gov/handbook/index.html>>. See also the Superseded List at <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/pubs/suplist/>.

Sessions at Federal Depository Library Conferences and Council meetings have covered this topic. For example, see You Can Do It: Successful Stories about Government Documents Collection Reviews, presented by Kathy Wu (University of Rochester) in the fall 2007 conference proceedings at <<http://www.fdlp.gov/file-repository/2007/index.php>>.

GPO encourages depository libraries to perform a zero-based review of item selections on a regular basis.

For additional guidance, contact your regional depository coordinator, or request advice from AskGPO at <<http://gpo.custhelp.com/cgi-bin/gpo.cfg/php/enduser/ask.php>>, using category “Federal Depository Libraries” and subcategory “depository Management.”

We want to make our collection more electronic, but have heard that it can be difficult because one must select print or other tangible and EL from some individual item numbers.

There is not necessarily a one-to-one correlation between a title and its format, and a library cannot be sure that there will be no tangible materials in a specific item number. In classes for General Publications, and even in some series, the publishing agency may issue some titles in tangible form only, and others only online.

You may want to select electronic only (EL) item numbers where available. And if you are actively selecting electronic items, review the **New Electronic Titles** list where new EL only publications are listed.

Do we need to retain a print copy that an electronic copy is substituting for if we've had it for fewer than 5 years?

A depository is permitted to replace tangible versions with electronic equivalents provided the electronic version is complete, official, and permanently accessible. Retention of substituted materials must follow retention rules for the given depository. For example, a selective depository may substitute materials if held less than 5 years, must offer the tangible products to the Regional, and must receive permission from the Regional to dispose of the tangible material.

For more complete information, see the new Handbook, Chapter 5, Depository Collections, Discards by Selective Depositories.
<<http://www.fdlp.gov/handbook/index.html>>

How should we go about integrating depository material into the general collection? How can we best merge state and Federal documents?

Ask your regional depository coordinator to put you in touch with libraries in your area that have gone through this process. You may also consult with GPO staff through AskGPO <<http://gpo.custhelp.com/cgi-bin/gpo.cfg/php/enduser/ask.php>>.

What resources are best for finding older materials? Where can I purchase items missing from the collection?

Ask your regional depository coordinator for suggestions on book vendors. The regional depository might also be able to supply a reproduction.

Check the U.S. Government Bookstore at <<http://bookstore.gpo.gov/>> to see if the items you are looking for are for sale by the Superintendent of Documents.

Other possible sources include the Needs and Offers List and the issuing Federal agency.