New Model for the Selection of Tangible Publications: Summary of Public Comments

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Introduction

As part of its ongoing planning efforts, GPO's Information Dissemination (Superintendent of Documents) organization has undertaken a review of the item number system used by libraries in the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) to select tangible and electronic titles. As the number of electronic publications disseminated continues to grow, GPO raised questions about the continued utility of item numbers in its initial planning statement on the National Bibliography. In response to a request from the Depository Library Council, GPO conducted a review of the current item number system and examined possible alternatives.

As a result of this review, GPO released three briefing papers, *Depository Selection: History and Current Practice*, which provides background information for the other two papers, *Depository Selection Mechanisms: New Model for the Selection of Online Titles* and *Depository Selection Mechanisms: New Model for the Selection of Tangible Publications*, and solicited comments from the depository library community.

Below is a summary of comments GPO received between September 22 and October 31, 2005 on the model for selection of tangible publications. GPO received 30 comments on the tangible selection model and 38 comments that focused on both proposals. GPO asked the depository library community to respond to several questions about the selection of tangible publications to assist in the development of this model. Responses to those questions are also summarized. Several comments requested clarification on aspects of the selection model. Those questions and GPO's response are listed in a frequently asked questions section.

Summary of Comments

The majority of comments GPO received found the proposed model to be a workable solution to selection of tangible publications. While several comments noted there would be set-up work for both GPO and the depositories, the flexibility of the model, allowing depositories to determine their own priorities, was popular. GPO was encouraged to continue breaking out SuDoc numbers that share the same item number in order to increase the granularity of selection. GPO also received several comments suggesting additional priority levels, including an option to select only tangible versions of serial publications and an "online plus" option that would package tangible titles that are not currently available online together.

A few of the comments questioned the names GPO gave to the priority levels. Of primary concern was the placement of high interest publications, such as the 9/11 Commission report, as priority 4 instead of placing them at the top of the priorities list. The only other major concerns

focused on implementation and centered on the receipt of bibliographic records and ensuring that all depositories have the same opportunities to acquire priority 2 and 3 publications. There was also confusion over the retention of publications a depository selects under priority 2 and 3.

The majority of questions GPO received concerned the implementation of the model, which cannot be addressed at this time. GPO will consider all these questions and comments as we move forward with this process.

Summary of Responses to Questions Posed in the Briefing Paper

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1. Does the Depository Library Community agree with these assumptions? If not, what changes are necessary?
Most of the responses GPO received agreed with the assumptions in the paper. Sample responses are included below.
- The proposed tiered selection mechanism appears to have many merits. Except for those titles that are distributed to only regionals, this proposal would afford <u>all</u> depositories the opportunity to obtain non-selected publications at frequent intervals through some form of notification. In addition, depositories would be able to make their selections of titles more "granular" and probably reduce the number of items on their selection list. This would be a plus when shelf space in most libraries is at a premium and staff shortages are common.
- The only assumption with which I disagree is that "the nature of tangible publications is different from the nature of online publications and therefore requires a different selection and distribution mechanism."

2. Are there other categories that should be consider?
The majority of responses GPO received did not recommend other categories. Some mentioned items that are sub-categories of the categories outlined in the paper. Other suggestions of additional categories included "ephemera," "dated materials," and "print on demand." Sample responses are included below.
- What other categories of tangibles exist besides the ones listed in the proposal? Maps are included if they are considered "print". I am also assuming that kits and/or artifacts are considered "print".
- Other categories that appear to need further consideration are ephemera (e.g. bookmarks) and dated materials (e.g. flyers advertising events that will be over before we receive the flyer). Many of these come in the "general publications" item numbers, which I'm assuming will continue to exist, and it seems that there ought to be some way to separate the ephemera and dated publications from the more substantial publications in those item numbers.
- Is there a possibility of a "print on demand" category for documents that would fall into Tier 2 or 3 that are exhausted?

3. Should the update cycle for tangible titles continue to be annual or on a more frequent schedule?
GPO received a range of responses to this question, with once or twice a year being the most common response. Most felt that GPO should continue to allow depository libraries to drop item

numbers at any time. Several suggested that the update cycle for tangible items should be the same as the update cycle for online items. Sample responses are included below.

- It should continue on an annual basis. The proposed tiered selection mechanism will require that depositories make collection development decisions more frequently and on a routine basis. Drops should continue to be allowed at any time. Adds, however, should be allowed once a year. In a year a depository can assess which tangibles they keep having to select from priorities 2-4 or deselect from priority 1. This proposed mechanism would be additional work for the depositories, if they want to keep up with new releases.
- In the best of all possible worlds I'd like to be able to update item numbers twice a year. It is difficult to assess a large selection profile all in one go. Have the opportunity to change and update twice a year would allow focus on specific parts of the collection. Back to that more active collection management potential.
- With respect to the frequency of item cycle updates, the Roundtable supports a twice-a-year cycle for adding items if that is feasible for GPO staff. We should continue to be able to drop items at will.

4. What is the minimum time required to allow depositories to review the electronic files and decide whether to request tangible copies?
GPO received recommendations ranging from 2 weeks to 90 days, with 30-60 days being the most frequent. There were concerns about the burden of reviewing electronic files and about ensuring that depositories have equal opportunities to request and receive copies. Smaller libraries raised concerns that infrequent receipt of shipments could interfere with their ability to respond promptly. Some felt that the review period should be the same for all categories to minimize complexity. Sample responses are included below.

- A period of at least 90 days for such review is recommended so the task does not become too much of a burden, and reviews could be on a periodic (e.g., quarterly) schedule if necessary. Making it clear to all before distribution as to which titles will be available online will result in more informed decision making and may result in fewer items being selected for tangible distribution.
- Priority One Titles - 60 days, if GPO continues to put multiple shipping lists in depository boxes. 30 days if titles are shipped out as soon as GPO processes them. Small-scale selectives (<20%) can go for weeks without receiving a box under the current system, so a 30-day claim period will not work for them.
- I would say not less then 30 days and probably not more than 45, this would allow for people that are not available/away to have the time to check the titles.
- A thirty-day period may be sufficient for reviewing titles; if the period is too long people will not be encouraged to make timely selections. I would hope that the publication would be sent out as soon as the decision is made by the individual library.

5. What is the minimum time period for libraries to submit claims for priority one or for priority two tiles that were requested but not received?
GPO received recommendations ranging from 14 to 90 days, with 30 to 60 days being the most common. Delay of mail receipts was raised as an issue, and shipment tracking capabilities were recommended. There was a concern that west coast libraries would be at a disadvantage due to the extra time required to ship to them. Sample responses are included below.

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- The claims period for Priority One items in the depository's profile and Priority Two items requested but not received could be made shorter, such as 30 days, but this would

need to be announced as a change from the current 60-day claiming period. It is desirable to have claim periods be a consistent length throughout the depository system. The period for review of materials should also be consistent across the system. This will minimize the complexity of a tiered system.

- Our mail processing is delayed, requiring at least 30 days in transit. Consequently, we need at least 90 days to process claims. A shipment-tracking feature will help determine non-receipt of a title much more quickly.
- The minimum time to submit claims for priority one items and request priority 2 titles should be 2-3 weeks. These could occur simultaneously, but the requests for priority 2 titles should occur only after priority one claims have been filled.

6. Are there other requirements of a new tangible selection and distribution system that GPO should be considering?

GPO received numerous implementation questions in response to this question. Several asked about receipt of bibliographic records. Concern was raised about item numbers being granular enough to ensure receipt of only wanted titles. A concern was raised about establishing procedures for filling requests when supplies are low. Sample responses are included below.

- Bibliographic records - if librarians are able to add non-selected priority two and three items, is GPO going to make the corresponding bibliographic records available for download. Is GPO going to set up a way to either push or allow depository libraries to download bibliographic records with the new systems being set up at GPO for free? It is not known if the librarians and Documents Data Miner are still going to make records available through their service, and sometimes they do not have records. It may become cost prohibitive to request the 2nd and 3rd priority titles if the cost of acquiring OCLC records for these items becomes to high.
- Priority 2 and 3 items - Are there going to be procedures in place to see who "deserves" to get an item when stock is getting low? Or is this going to occur on a "first-come-first-served basis"? Or does GPO hope to better maintain stock through the new system so that all depository libraries are able to get what they need?
- It is currently difficult to truly filter the number of titles received on deposit when many item number selections have more than one title assigned to them. These item numbers are not "granular" enough or assigned on a one-on-one basis to specific titles. From the description in the proposal, it appears that the tiered selection mechanism will be using the item numbers for determining the priority of the tangible titles. This means that depositories will still be receiving some titles they would rather not receive.

Frequently Asked Questions

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1. Are we still going to be able to drop item numbers any time of the year like we can currently?

Depositories will continue to be able to drop item numbers from their selection profiles at any time.

2. Regarding the Priority One items, GPO mentioned that some titles would be made available only to certain types of libraries (like only law libraries get tangible slip opinions) as the Essential Titles list is updated. Are depository libraries as a community going to determine which libraries get these specific titles?
GPO develops the Essential Titles list in consultation with the community.

3. Will the new systems being set up at GPO provide a way to either push or allow depository libraries to download bibliographic records?
Providing bibliographic/authority record export and distribution is a high priority. GPO is currently developing a requirements document for record export to depository libraries.

4.Are there going to be procedures in place to see who "deserves" to get an item when stock is getting low? Or is this going to occur on a "first-come-first-served basis"? Or does GPO hope to better maintain stock through the new system so that all depository libraries are able to get what they need?
GPO expects to fulfill all priority 1 and priority 2 selections. GPO continues to use ID 71 in determining which publications are distributed to the depository libraries in a tangible format. GPO envisions that feedback provided in the new system will enable us to make more accurate decisions when ordering stock for the FDLP.

5. Will publications selected as priority 2 and 3 be subject to five-year retention?
All tangible titles distributed to depository libraries by GPO will continue to fall under the statutory mandate for five year retention and weeding of those materials will continue to be through the needs and offers process. Since we cannot remove the requirement for five-year retention without a statutory change, we are seeking to provide participating libraries with greater selectivity.

6. Are the tangible publications derived only from the Essential Titles list?
No, GPO continues to use ID 71 in determining which publications are distributed to the depository libraries in a tangible format. For more information see,
http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/pubs/policies/id71_06-21-05.pdf

7. Can the new model work with our bibliographic records vendors?
GPO will continue to share selection profile information with vendors.

8. Other categories that appear to need further consideration are ephemera (e.g. bookmarks) and dated materials (e.g. flyers advertising events that will be over before we receive the flyer). Many of these come in the "general publications" item numbers, which I'm assuming will continue to exist, and it seems that there ought to be some way to separate the ephemera and dated publications from the more substantial publications in those item numbers.
GPO recognizes that many libraries do not routinely collect bookmarks and ephemeral material. To assist depositories in managing these resources, GPO created "Ephemera" classes and item numbers for all Cabinet-level agencies, as well as National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Environmental Protection Agency, Library of Congress, Consumer Product Safety Commission, Federal Trade Commission, National Endowment for the Arts, and National Endowment for the Humanities. For more information see,
http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/pubs/adnotes/ad02_031505.html#7

9. Would item numbers continue to be tied to individual titles?
GPO makes every effort to create a one-to-one relationship between SuDoc numbers and item numbers for serial titles. As part of the implementation plan for the tangible selection model, GPO will review all items numbers that are shared by more than one SuDoc stem and determine if they can be broken out into separate item numbers for easier selection.

10. Is there a possibility of a "print on demand" category for documents that would fall into Tier 2 or 3 that are exhausted?
GPO expects to fulfill all priority 1 and priority 2 selections. The point of priority 3 is to make effective use of any copies printed for priority 2 selections that were "left over" after libraries reviewed their priority 2 selections and declined titles. We would not print additional copies merely to make them available as part of priority 3.

11. Would we be allowed to receive all of the documents we currently receive as priority one items?
Yes, GPO assumes each depository library will determine which item numbers to select as priority one. Therefore, a selective depository will be able to designate all their tangible selections as priority one. Titles that are currently only available for selection by regionals will continue to only be available to regionals.

12. Is this policy only for tangible products that do not have an electronic equivalent? Perhaps that should be an assumption.
The proposed model for selection of tangible publications will include publications available in both tangible and online formats as well as tangible products that do not have electronic equivalents.

13. Will GPO continue to catalog separately the online and tangible versions of a title? And will the online access and the item number for the online version be included in the catalog record for the tangible format?
GPO plans to begin creating separate bibliographic records for titles available in multiple formats. The item number for online selection will be included in the record for the online version, while the tangible item number will be included in the record for the tangible version. The bibliographic records will be linked using linking fields.

14. How will this system work with the current regional/selective model of administration? Will GPO seek changes in Title 44 to permit regionals greater selectivity or will the structure remain the same?
GPO has no plans to make changes to the current system of regional and selective depositories.

15. What type of information will be provided to aid selectives in their decisions about priority two and three titles?
We anticipate providing a link to the full document, usually as a PDF file.

16. Will notification be online, through paper lists, through cards - like the old days- or some other way?
GPO envisions all notifications being electronic.

17. Will SuDoc stems remain the same for tangible as well as electronic so a search by SuDoc will retrieve everything in the same category?
Tangible and online versions of the same title will continue to have the same SuDoc number.