

Depository Selection Mechanisms: Proposed New Model for Selection of Tangible Publications



Revised February 10, 2006

In September 2005, GPO issued three related documents on new models for selection of tangible and online titles. The Federal depository library community was asked to review the documents and share their comments. GPO is now releasing revised briefing papers that incorporate feedback received during the comment period. No changes were made to Depository Selection: History and Current Practice. The original papers and a summary of the comments are available at http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/selection/index.html. The revised documents are available at:

- Depository Selection: History and Current Practice
http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/selection/history_revised.pdf
- Depository Selection Mechanisms: New Model for Selection of Online Titles
http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/selection/electronic_revised.pdf
- Depository Selection Mechanisms: New Model for Selection of Tangible Publications

GPO has begun work on documents that will address both the proposals for the online and tangible models in more detail. These more detailed papers will be released prior to the Spring Depository Library Council Meeting to be held in Seattle, April 2-5, 2006.

SUMMARY

GPO currently manages distribution of tangible publications through the use of the Automated Depository Distribution System (ADDS), commonly known as the “Lighted Bin” system, utilizing information from the Depository Distribution Information System (DDIS), GPO’s legacy system used to manage item number information. However, GPO plans to migrate all processes off its legacy mainframe systems by the end of 2007. This provides an opportunity for business process re-engineering, and GPO believes that a new system can be developed to support a more flexible model for tangible distribution to Federal depository libraries. To accomplish this, GPO needs to look to the future to develop requirements for the new selection and distribution system.

Objectives for creating the new system would be to:

- give libraries greater control over selection and receipt of tangible materials,
- reduce distribution of unwanted tangible titles, thereby reducing printing and postage costs for GPO and saving processing and five year retention of unwanted titles at libraries,
- enable GPO to offer depository libraries flexible services, more comparable to book dealer best practices, and
- obtain automated and other feedback to inform GPO’s distribution decisions and libraries’ selection decisions.

Titles distributed in tangible format will continue to require a mechanism for selection and distribution. Therefore, GPO is proposing a new model for the selection and distribution of titles made available in tangible format. This proposal, if accepted, will be used to develop technical requirements for the new system to support tangible distribution to FDLP libraries.

All publications received in tangible format by selective depository libraries will continue to be subject to the legally mandated five-year retention requirement.

PROPOSED NEW MODEL

GPO envisions a tiered selection mechanism for the new system to support tangible distribution. This would provide for distribution of tangible titles in four categories, based on libraries' prioritization of items selected. The first category would be for the small number of high profile titles identified by GPO that would be distributed to all libraries. For the remaining three categories, libraries would designate items as "selected items," "review items," or "non-selected items," based on local needs. As part of the implementation, GPO would review existing tangible items and establish unique items for any existing Superintendent of Documents (SuDoc) class stem that currently shares an item number with another SuDoc class stem. Depository libraries will be able to change item designations to "selected" or "review" at least twice a year while continuing to be able to drop item numbers (i.e., change the designation to "non-selected") at any time.

HIGH PROFILE TITLES

As always, there will continue to be a few high profile titles each year that would be distributed to all libraries. These are generally titles that GPO believes will be of high interest to the public and therefore in demand in depository libraries. GPO would ship these to all libraries as soon as possible, regardless of the selection profile. An example of a title in this category would be the 9/11 Commission Report. There would be a mechanism for libraries to provide GPO with feedback on their agreement or disagreement on whether a given title belonged in this category. That feedback would help inform future GPO decisions on whether a new title belongs in this category. Publications received by selective depository libraries in this category would be subject to the five-year retention rule.

SELECTED ITEMS

When a title is a "must have" for a particular library's collection, the corresponding item would be designated as "selected." As soon as such a publication became available, GPO would immediately ship the title to all libraries that have designated the corresponding item as selected. The libraries receiving these titles as selected items would be expected to retain the publication for five years, as is current practice. The new distribution system will have much stronger quality control than the lighted bin system, greatly reducing the number of selected titles not received by libraries. A library that designated an item as selected and did not receive that item would have a suitable period to claim the publication. Selected item numbers would be much like selected item numbers in the current model and like a standing order with a book dealer. There would also be a feedback mechanism for a library to report unwanted items received under selected item numbers, and that would enable GPO to review item numbers and adjust them to allow for greater specificity in future shipments.

Those titles that are already limited distribution to regionals and one library in each state without a regional, specifically the *Serial Set* and the *Bound Congressional Record*, will continue to carry

the same restrictions. Likewise, some titles will only be available in tangible form for certain types of libraries. Supreme Court Slip Opinions are currently only available in tangible format to regionals and law libraries. GPO expects some titles to be made available only to other types of libraries as the Essential Titles list is updated.

REVIEW ITEMS

When an item number includes titles a library may or may not want, this item number would be designated as “review.” When a publication that a library has designated as review becomes available, GPO would send that library a notification, along with a link to an electronic file. The library would have a specified time period to review the electronic file and decide whether to receive that publication in tangible format. If the library chooses to receive the publication in tangible format, the library would notify GPO as soon as possible within that period, and GPO would ship the title. Additionally, libraries would have a specified period to claim titles that they requested and did not receive. After the period for review and claims, remaining copies would be offered to libraries that did not select the title in advance. Receipt of “review” titles would be delayed in comparison to “selected” items, but there would be no unwanted items for processing and five-year retention. Libraries would be expected to retain any “review” title received in tangible format for five years, as in the current practice. The new system would provide GPO with automatic feedback based on titles requested or not requested. Over time GPO should be able to use this feedback to make better decisions on the number of copies to ride for FDLDP distribution.

NON-SELECTED ITEMS

Non-selected item numbers would be similar to item numbers not selected in the current model. However, libraries would have the opportunity to request a copy of a non-selected title if there are copies remaining after distribution to libraries that designate the item as selected or review. Libraries would receive a weekly listing of all available non-selected titles and could review this offer list for titles they wish to request. The new system would maintain a waiting list that libraries would use to request non-selected titles. Receipt would be delayed, but libraries would not have unwanted publications for processing and five-year retention. Unclaimed copies would be offered on a “first come, first served” basis to libraries that otherwise would not select the item number. Requests could be filled after the period for review and claims by libraries selecting the title as a review item number, or as soon as leftover copies became available. The new system would supply GPO with automatic feedback based on library requests. Tangible copies received through this mechanism would be subject to five-year retention, just as tangible copies received under one of the other designations.

IMPLEMENTATION

If adopted, GPO will implement the new model for tangible selection in phases. The first phase will focus on identification or development of a computer system with the required specifications. Establishment of unique item numbers for SuDoc class stems sharing item numbers with other SuDoc class stems will occur simultaneously with identification or development of a computer system. After the computer system has been put into place, GPO will provide a mechanism for depository libraries to review item numbers and make appropriate item number designations, based on local needs. For libraries that do not respond during the initial designation period, GPO will use the libraries’ existing selection profiles to designate items as selected or non-selected, and those libraries will not have any designated review items until the next selection update cycle.