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Letter from the Chair

To the Membership:

Kevin Fredette is the new editor of Jurisdocs. With the change in editors, Jurisdocs also has a change in format. I'm sure all of us appreciate its "new look". I would like to thank Bill Varga, last year's editor, for getting Jurisdocs on its feet again, and thanks also to Kevin agreeing to edit Jurisdocs beginning with this issue. Please don't hesitate to offer items for publication, or to volunteer to work on Jurisdocs. Kevin will need your help!

Sally Holterhoff, this year's Vice Chair/Chair Elect, is planning next year's convention programs. Two programs have been submitted for approval: one on legislative databases, and the other on government documents collections and automation. In addition, since the 1986 Annual Meeting will be held in Washington, D.C., many other convention programs will relate to government documents. Jurisdocs and the Gov Docs SIS column in the AALL Newsletter will keep you posted on program news.

The state bibliographies are going strong, but we still need bibliographies for half of the states. If you are interested, please contact me at the Law Library, Ohio Northern University, Ada, Ohio 45810, (419) 772-2251. If you want to purchase a bibliography, contact Chris Corcos, our new business manager, at Case Western Reserve Law Library.

Our SIS is what we members make it. Currently we have a healthy treasurey, well-crafted publications, and good convention programs. But we need your help to sustain our excellence. I would like to thank those who so generously contributed their time last year: Bill, Keith Buckley, Linda Fariss, Sally, Chris, Susan Tulis, and Eme House; and urge the rest of you to volunteer some of your time.

Thank you!

Lynn Foster

Letter from the Editor

I would like to begin by seconding Lynn Foster's commendation of Bill Varga for the work that he did in producing the three quality issues of volume 7 of Jurisdocs. The first issue of volume 8 is basically the "convention" issue, including the minutes of the annual business meeting and the Documents Action Committee meeting and a brief account of the convention program on United Nations documents. I have reprinted the full text of Sheila McGarr's talk on the depository inspection program, which was delivered at the "Directions For Federal Documents" program at the convention. This is a very detailed and frank account of the inspection process and it should be particularly valuable to GDSIS members who may be experiencing an inspection visit in the near future. Mary Anthony has contributed a fine review of a new checklist of state publications, State Government Research Checklist.

My goal this year is to see that Jurisdocs continues to be a useful and relevant newsletter for the librarian who works with documents in the law library setting. Accordingly, I strongly encourage any interested members to submit materials for inclusion in Jurisdocs. I would like to see Jurisdocs continue to contain a diverse range of materials, from one paragraph news notes to lengthy articles, so please send me anything you think will be of interest to the membership. The deadline for the second issue will be February 1. I look forward to hearing from you.

Kevin Fredette
Minutes of the Government Documents Special Interest Section Business Meeting, Wednesday, July 10, 1985

Presiding: Linda Fariss, Chair; Lynn Foster, Chair-Elect; Christine Corcos, Secretary-Treasurer.

Chair Linda Fariss called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m. She outlined the major topics to be covered at the meeting very briefly, then called for the Treasurer's Report. Chris Corcos reported that the section made $3940.00 during the 1984/85 fiscal year, making a grand total of $3762.98 in the Treasury. By far the largest moneymaker for the section is the bibliography series. For the first time this year the section also received some royalties from the photocopying and distribution of the Kansas state bibliography by Washburn University Law School Library.

Kevin Fredette announced the results of the election. Sally Holterhoff is the new Vice Chair/Chair Elect of the section and Cheryl Nyberg is the new secretary-treasurer.

Sally Holterhoff gave a report on the work of the Documents Action Committee, and introduced Don Fossedal, from the Government Printing Office, at the meeting.

There was no report from the Committee on Citation Reform and Revision.

Eme House announced the publication of new state bibliographies for five states: Connecticut, by Judith Anspach; Massachusetts, by Leo McAuliffe; New York, by Susan Dow; Pennsylvania, by Joel Fishman; and Wyoming by Nancy Greene. Linda announced that Eme is stepping down from the post of Business Manager for the Government Documents State Bibliography series and thanked Eme for all the work she has done on behalf of the section in handling the sale and distribution of state bibliographies for the past few years. Chris Corcos will be the new Business Manager for the series.

Linda called on Bill Varga, editor of Jurisdocs for his report. Bill announced that Jurisdocs had published three good issues this year and was now back on schedule. Linda thanked Bill for all the work he has done in making Jurisdocs a readable and useful newsletter for the section and announced that he is stepping down as Editor. She announced Kevin Fredette as the new editor. She also thanked Keith Buckley for acting as Business Manager of Jurisdocs.

Next, Linda called on Susan Tulis for the Depository Library Council update. Susan mentioned several changes in GPO policy including the fact that GPO appears to have made a commitment to making up shortages in depository shipments and not to send out fiche instead of paper for single issues of publications. Don Fossedal mentioned that there are some vacancies on the Depository Library Council and that several states and several types of libraries have never had representatives on the council.

Linda mentioned the programs which the section is sponsoring this year -- on International Documents, moderated by Tim Kearley; on Federal Documents, moderated by Lynn Foster; and on UN documents, moderated by Chris Corcos. Linda said it is unusual to have one SIS present three programs at a single convention. She mentioned that it is now time to think about next year's programs and requested suggestions from the floor.
Linda and Lynn next discussed the possibility of finding a commercial publisher to take over printing, distribution and sale of the state bibliography series for the section. They mentioned that they had approached Rothman about taking over this function since it publishes the AALL publications series but that any such change would have to be approved by AALL's Executive Board.

Law Library Journal has requested contributions to it "Questions and Answer's" column, and also names of volunteers to edit that column.

Committee sign-up sheets and sign-up sheets to obtain the new bibliographies were circulated at the meeting. Then Linda turned over the gavel to incoming Chair Lynn Foster. The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Corcos
Secretary/Treasurer
GD/SIS

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Documents Action Committee
1985 Meeting

The Documents Action Committee met Wednesday, July 10, in New York City. Members present were Sally Holterhoff (outgoing chair), David Batista (incoming chair), Lynn Foster (incoming SIS chair), Cheryl Nyberg, Kay Schlueter, Eme House, Martin Wisneski and Linda Fariss (outgoing) SIS chair). New committee members present were: Anne Sauter (Pace University Law Library) and Judith Harding (Boston College Law School Library). Others who will be joining the committee include Keith Buckley (Indiana University), Suzanne Ayer (Albany Law School Library), and Miriam Carrigg (Ohio State University).

One of the first items for discussion was whether the committee is serving a purpose and should continue to exist. Those present felt the group is valuable as a small, easily mobilized group already in place to respond to issues, to write to GPO or legislators, and to inform others. Consensus was that the group should continue.

The Coalition on Government Information, a new ALA group, was discussed and people expressed interest in DAC joining it. Further information will be forwarded to DAC members when it is received from ALA.

Volunteers were assigned various publications to be monitored for items relating to documents, such as developments with Superintendent of Documents, GPO, Joint Committee on Printing, the OMB Draft Circular on Federal Information Management, etc. If people find items of interest, they will call or write to the Chair, David Batista, who will forward them to Jurisdocs. Publications assigned were:


Susan Tulis, our AALL representative on Depository Library Council, will serve as our go-between with GPO. It was mentioned that perhaps a form letter could be devised to deal with individual problems and concerns.

New Chair David Batista agreed to contact those current members of DAC not present to see if they still wish to belong. Then he will construct and distribute a telephone tree for the committee, which members are asked to use to keep in touch during the coming year.

Members brought up the problem of documents which are mentioned in the news media as being released.
but without further identifying details, which are necessary for tracking them down. We agreed that if members obtain information on such popular documents, they will share their findings with others by sending them to Jurisdocs.

We have heard that many letters were received by the OMB in response to their draft circular on federal information. Some of these were written by our committee members. OMB was reportedly impressed by the response and may be adding language referring to the Depository Library program to the circular itself (previously, depositories were mentioned only in the accompanying analysis).

The Joint Committee on Printing has organized for the 99th Congress. We will be watching to see if they continue their efforts to revise the proposed printing and binding regulations. We were told by Anthony Zagami, JCP General Counsel, that the regulations or guidelines would be reconsidered this session, but that no time-table has been set. Another issue to be addressed will be the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Depository Library Access to Federal Automated Data Bases. Pilot projects have been proposed and the idea has wide support, but how these would be funded is unclear.

The Fall Depository Library Council meeting will be held in Washington, D.C. October 16-18, 1985. If you have questions or concerns you would like to have discussed at that meeting, please contact our Council rep, Susan Tulis.

Sally Holterhoff

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GDSIS Sponsors Program on United Nations Documents

The Government Documents Special Interest Section sponsored three programs during the 1985 AALL convention, one of which was a program on United Nations Documents from the reference librarian and the user's perspectives. Participants were Ellen Shaffer, Georgetown University Law Library; Jeannette Yackle, Harvard University International Legal Studies Program; and Martin Feinrider, Professor of Law, Nova University Law School. Christine Corcos, Case Western Reserve University Law Library, moderated the program.

Ms. Yackle introduced basic tools necessary to the collection of any library aspiring to give reference service in the field of United Nations documents. She stressed the importance of obtaining indexes and mentioned some titles that were particularly helpful including the Annual Bibliography of Population Law. She also discussed how to obtain translations of foreign treaties.

Ms. Shaffer concentrated on the problems of obtaining various UN documents indicating that standing orders are not necessarily the answer, since the UN has historically had distribution problems and materials are frequently delayed in the shipping department. She emphasized the need for patience and persistence when dealing with the United Nations Sales Section, and entertained the audience with her favorite "horror" stories concerning attempts to obtain particular documents or straighten out orders.

Professor Feinrider pointed out some of the problems that reference librarians have helped him solve by knowing where to find answers in UN
documents to be particularly helpful in researching. He discussed the interaction necessary between librarian and researcher when a subject is being explored and urged librarians to request help from researchers in the field if they have trouble locating information. UN documents are complex and confusing and librarians cannot be expected to know everything about them. By requesting aid from researchers who use the materials constantly librarians can add to their knowledge and give ever better reference service.

Ms. Yackle and Ms. Shaffer prepared and distributed a bibliography of relevant and useful United Nations materials; requests for copies of the bibliography should be directed to either of them.

Christine Corcos

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"What to do Before the Inspector Arrives"

Presented by Sheila McGarr to the GDSIS at the 1985 AALL Convention

As many of you are aware since I have inspected your libraries, I am a depository library inspector. In my role as a representative of the Superintendent of Documents, I examine depository libraries for compliance with Title 44, United States Code. I am especially concerned with the provisions of Section 1911 which state in part that "depository libraries shall make government publications available for the free use of the general public".1 A library must observe this stipulation in order to gain and thereby retain its depository designation.

To better understand the Inspection Program, I will briefly summarize its short history. Although section 1909 of Title 44 instructed the Superintendent of Documents to make "firsthand investigations of conditions for which need is indicated",2 depository libraries were infrequently visited. Instead, GPO relied on the Biennial Survey for data. By the early seventies, GPO, on advice from GODORT (Government Documents Round Table of the American Library Association) and the Depository Library Council to the Public Printer, concluded that depository Libraries needed systematic and formal inspection to insure the effectiveness of the Depository Library Program. Our job is to determine that libraries receiving government documents paid for by the taxpayers are fulfilling the not too onerous responsibility of making Government publications freely available to the public.

In 1974, the first full-time inspector was hired. A second was employed in 1976. By 1977, the Depository Library Council had developed standards to "provide an inspection tool for the Superintendent of Documents, a guide for education of documents librarians, and a tool for communication with library administrators".3 These, by now famous, Guidelines For The Depository Library System were distributed to all depositories and became the basis for the Inspection Report.

In the last eleven years, the inspection process has evolved from a cursory examination to an all-day comprehensive review. At first, inspections were unannounced and the inspector visited two or more libraries per day. With no advanced warning, our staff found interesting surprises, e.g. piles of unopened boxes, material in locked rooms, no one in charge of the collection, and so on. The earliest inspection form was a twelve question checklist and the results of the visit were not sent to the depository. Since 1978, we have been notifying the libraries of the
specific inspection date from 4-6 weeks in advance and request an appointment with the library director to summarize our overall evaluation and recommendations. Today, we examine only one library per day and rate each institution in seven categories. After the visit, the Inspection Report and recommendations are reviewed by the Superintendent of Documents then forwarded to the library director, Documents Librarian, and regional library.

The depository library inspectors have always been professional librarians. We help to identify areas of strength and weakness by rating the entire operation, not judging the documents librarian. We are fully aware that librarians and administrators cannot totally control their working environment.

After inspecting over 260 libraries in 3 1/2 years, I am very familiar with the challenges and difficulties facing most depository libraries.

Generally, libraries are inspected in chronological order by date of last inspection. Geography and climate are also considered. For instance, Minnesota would not be visited in January nor Alabama in July. The American Automobile Association tourbooks and the Rand McNally Road Atlas are invaluable since we must make our own hotel, airline, and rental car reservations. It is taking longer than expected to examine libraries that were visited prior to 1980 because there are only two of us "on the road".

I would like to explain briefly how the inspection itinerary is prepared. Once a portion of a state has been selected, the libraries are contacted by telephone. After we identify ourselves, there is usually 5 seconds of dead silence at the other end. We rundown the inspection routine to calm the documents librarian. The appointment is later reconfirmed by letter. The Regional Librarian is also notified of our trip and invited to accompany us because he or she can provide valuable insights about funding sources, cooperative networks, disposal guidelines, etc.

In the intervening 4-6 weeks before the inspection, the documents librarian is urged to review the Guidelines For The Depository Library System, the Instructions To Depository Libraries, and the Federal Depository Library Manual, plus collect whatever materials would be useful, e.g. procedures manual, collection development policy, annual reports, etc.

Before entering the library, we check outside the building for handicapped ramps and for the depository emblem on the front door. Not only is the depository decal the focal point of our entire marketing campaign but it also states for all to see that "public access to the government documents collection is guaranteed by public law". On April 17, 1978, Public Law 95-261 authorized the Public Printer to designate accredited law schools as depository libraries upon their request. You are no doubt aware that section 1916 of Title 44 exempts law schools only from that portion of section 1909 which relates to the location of the library. Law school depositories are expected to serve all members of the public not just their institution's clientele. Yet we have discovered various tactics which deny access: charging a fee for a pass to enter the library; enforcing a dress code; actively referring patrons to other depositories; closing the library to all non-students and faculty, etc. Often door guards and student workers are unaware of the legal responsibility to ensure free, unimpeded, public access to the depository collection. Misunderstandings are less apt to occur in institutions which openly promulgate their access policies.
through signs and leaflets.

After entering the library, we look for adequate signs, a floor plan, or directory to locate documents in the building without having to ask a staff member. Some libraries have installed creative signage while others fail to mention the depository collection in library handbooks, pathfinders, newsletters, or brochures. We inquire about special procedures for those without the appropriate library card to insure that a guard or access services office will not detain anyone who wishes to use Federal documents in the building.

After meeting the documents librarian, some time is spent answering GPO-related questions and becoming familiar with the library and the depository operation. A principal concern is who is in charge of the depository function. Is there a clear demarcation of duties? Is there one person reporting to the library administration on the Federal Documents Program? For example, if Technical Services processes the shipments, Circulation shelves and retrieves the pieces, and Reference provides access to the information, there should be one person, a professional librarian, coordinat ing the entire program.

The inspection follows the workflow of the library. Initial processing is examined first. Access includes not only physical entry to the building but also decent recordkeeping plus shelving the material in a timely manner and in an orderly fashion. The items DO NOT have to be filed in SuDocs classification order but ought to be arranged in a recognizable scheme such as Dewey, LC, or shelving Army Lawyer with law reviews, U.S. Reports with Federal material, etc.

Documents should be handled in a similar fashion as "regular" materials. Is there a shelflist or holdings record for the complete bibliographic control of all monographs, serials, microfiche, and maps? Have written criteria been formulated for determining which titles are fully cataloged, rebound, replaced, and security-plated to insure preservation and uniform decisions? It is always surprising to discover the lack of a specific collection development policy for Federal documents especially in view of the public service responsibilities of depositories. We strongly recommend the formulation of a procedures manual which specifies internal policies and practices as well as incorporates GPO's requirements found in the Instructions To Depository Libraries. Too often we meet a documents librarian groping for direction.

The library is expected to assure that the depository collection is used and not merely stored or placed in a remote location. If microfiche, periodicals, and maps are housed separately, we check whether there is a note on the shelflist. Since many libraries integrate some of their documents into the main book collection, we verify that the call number or location is noted on the Kardex or shelflist files to speed retrieval. If some material is in storage, have the appropriate shelflist notations been made and can the publications be retrieved promptly (preferably within 24 hours)?

There is a noticeable and encouraging trend to fully catalog more titles for the card catalog, online system, or COM fiche using the SuDocs classification system. Another approach to increase visibility and to relieve overcrowding is to selectively house material at the main university library or other local institution. Having visited both the University of Maine School of Law and the University of San Diego Law
Library, I am enthusiastic about their cooperative sharing of Government documents with other nearby libraries. Should a library adopt this method, a "Memorandum of Agreement" outlining the host library's responsibilities toward public access and retention should be signed and forwarded to GPO. A sample agreement can be found in Section 11 of the Federal Depository Library Manual.

As mentioned earlier, the primary role of the inspector is to insure that Title 44 is followed. Our secondary role is advisory. In that capacity, we urge documents librarians to evaluate the Item Selection Printouts and surveys regularly with the goal of building a quality collection not only to meet the informational needs of a library's primary clientele but also of the surrounding Congressional District. The "Suggested core collection: law library" in the Federal Depository Library Manual is a useful selection tool.

Weeding the collection of extraneous material after the five-year statutory retention requirement has been met is a chore which many depositories ignore. Setting up a weeding schedule, e.g. evaluating SuDocs numbers A-C during January-March of each odd-numbered calendar year is more comprehensive than weeding isolated overcrowded shelves. Color-coding the SuDocs number by calendar years plus marking colors on the publication prior to re-shelving can measure use plus aid the disposal process.

One of the most important categories in the Inspection Report is "Service to the Public". Whether institutions are publicly or privately funded definitely colors their perception of "the public". The privilege of depository status imparts more than custodial maintenance and an open door. Depository libraries are expected to provide skilled reference staff, research aids, and equipment. If the reference librarian cringes when someone asks for Federal materials or tells a patron to return another day or at another time, the remedy is to conduct an "in-service" seminar. The reference staff can then serve as auxiliary documents librarians to insure that Government information is an integral part of their search strategy and not an afterthought.

During our tour of the library, we check for supplementary commercial indexes and databases which have been purchased to facilitate use. Is the Publications Reference File and the five-year cumulative microfiche index to the Monthly Catalog near the Reference Desk if that is the only service point? We want to see all of the microfiche readers, reader/printers, and storage cabinets and when necessary recommend that more be purchased. Is interlibrary loan service provided or referrals made to other depositories or to a GPO bookstore?

Does the public even know that the library is a depository? GPO's marketing staff developed a campaign for publicizing depository libraries via television, radio, posters, bookmarks, and brochures to help you get started.

Bibliographic guides, book displays, and library newsletters are basic means to spotlight the collection. Consider using the campus radio station, local cable television, plus speaking before the Rotary or Chamber of Commerce on business tools, the Sierra Club on Environment, or law and education before the League of Women Voters. When reprinting your bookmarks and student handbooks, add a note about being a depository. Many of you, I am sure, have received urgent long-distance telephone calls from alumni who must have specific information located on the shelves between the
second and third window on the left and the book is tan. They think only your library can provide the answer. They have completed law school without ever finding out about the 1400 libraries in the depository network.

Contacting City Hall, the Planning Board, and County Government officials, plus informing the local office staff of your Congressman and State legislator to inform them of depository services available to their constituents are additional public awareness tactics. Conducting a workshop which includes faculty, non-depository librarians, and even campus branch librarians to teach them the nuances of locating Government information is another idea.

Have you talked with your boss lately about the depository program? Does the administration appreciate the monetary value of materials added to the collection in return for the obligation to provide public access? Are sufficient statistics maintained on the number of titles and pieces added and withdrawn from the collection to accurately reflect workload?

Maintaining statistics on the number of questions answered by documents, or not answered because material was lacking can validate that the increased needs of patrons require a larger staff, added space and equipment, etc. Counting the number of pieces circulated is a standard practice. Since so many Federal documents never leave the library, you may wish to count and mark documents and microfiche prior to reshelving. Since statistics gathering is a thorny issue, GPO is currently working with the Statistics Task Force of GODORT and the Depository Library Council to the Public Printer to investigate ways to gather meaningful statistics for the 1987 and subsequent Biennial Surveys.

After bombarding the documents librarians with questions such as the ones I have just enumerated, completing the Inspection Report is the next step. Each library is rated in seven categories: Depository Collection, Organization of the Depository Collection, Maintenance of the Depository Collection, Staffing, Space Standards, Service to the General Public, and Interlibrary Cooperation. Regional libraries are rated in an additional area. Each category is scored from 0 to 100 points with each question weighted. The point scores appear as small numbers in front of each possible answer. The hyphenated number which appears at the extreme right of each question keys it to the appropriate statement in the Guidelines For The Depository Library System. In face, in most cases, a declarative sentence in the Guidelines has merely been changed to an interrogative sentence for the Inspection Report.

Scores between 90-100 are rated Excellent; from 80-89 Good; from 70-79 Satisfactory; below 70 is Unsatisfactory (fails to meet the Guidelines). If a library earns Unsatisfactory ratings in three or more categories, which is rare, it is placed on probation. After a probationary period of six months, a re-inspection is scheduled. If significant improvement has been made in the deficient areas, the library is removed from probation. On the other side of the coin, if a library scores all Excellents, it receives a Certificate of Merit, suitable for framing, signed by the Public Printer and Superintendent of Documents.

At day's end, the inspector meets privately with the Library Director in an exit interview to provide an oral summary of the inspection findings. We inspectors use the scores as an objective skeleton.
Our narrative comments elaborate certain findings plus offer suggestions and possible strategies to strengthen the depository operation. After the written report has been submitted through GPO channels to the Superintendent of Documents and approved by him, as I mentioned earlier, copies of the report are sent to the library director, documents librarian, and the Regional.

From the beginning of the program in 1974, inspections were viewed by both GPO and the library community as a positive supportive experience. Each library is different. Its patron's needs and operating constraints are unique. However, every director of a depository library signed a contract entitled "Acceptance of Designation as a Depository Library for United States Government Publications".

The pertinent paragraph states in part "it is hereby agreed that this Library and its staff will abide by the law governing depository libraries and such regulations and instructions as have been or may be issued by the Superintendent of Documents in administering the law".

It is a fact that a library requests depository designation in its own self-interest. Precious acquisitions funds can be allocated elsewhere now that a source for free material has been found. It is unfortunate that many law library depositories are under the misapprehension that they are not required to comply with sections 1909 and 1911 of Title 44 which the Superintendent of Documents is entrusted with safeguarding. Many libraries which cannot or will not comply with the stipulation of being accessible to the public have voluntarily relinquished depository status.

To sum up, GPO oversees depository libraries through the inspection program which has also proven beneficial to GPO. Regularly scheduled examinations are cost-effective and valuable for this agency since continuing problems in a depository usually mean an increased investment of time and resources on GPO's part. An efficient and effective Depository System is in everyone's best interest. Our investigation offers the documents librarian a chance to exchange information, make suggestions for improvements at GPO, plus reinforce our mutual commitment to provide the American public with easy access to Federal Government information.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**


*United States Code*, Title 44, Sec. 1901-1916


News From The Joint Committee On
Printing

The Joint Committee on Printing held an open forum on June 26, 1985 to hear public comment on the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Depository Library Access to Federal Automated Data Bases (Y 4.P93/1: P96/2). This meeting was also intended to solicit suggestions for possible pilot projects to test the proposal to provide government publications in electronic format to depositories. The results of the forum will be printed by GPO and sent to depository libraries, attendees, and the Ad Hoc Committee early this fall. The Ad Hoc Committee will then review the statements and develop more specific criteria for pilot projects to investigate the feasibility of such access. Their recommendations will go to JCP, who will make the final decision about pilot projects and will seek funding for them.

In response to the Office of Management and Budget's draft circular on "Management of Federal Information Resources" (Federal Register, Vol. 50, No. 51, pp. 10733-47), the OMB received many letters from librarians and others, expressing concern about access. In partial response to their concern, JCP is working with GPO to develop guidelines for OMB to send to agencies to insure that their documents get into the depository program. These guidelines will possibly be issued as a separate OMB circular. A draft statement of the guidelines arrived at by JCP and GPO will be discussed at the Depository Library Council's Fall Meeting, October 16-18.

Sally Holterhoff

State Government Research Checklist
OCLC #4736514 ISSN 0190-6623
$16.00 Per Year
from Council of State Governments
States Information Center
P.O. Box 11910 Iron Works Pike
Lexington, Kentucky 40578

Yet another checklist of state publications! This one, State Government Research Checklist, is published by the Council of State Governments in Lexington, Kentucky.

Having been established in 1933 by the various states, the Council is now about fifty years old. It is a voluntary organization which is to serve the needs of the states. One of its functions is to act as "...a central clearinghouse for information and research; ...". The Council sees itself as "...an information provider..." and one of its roles as "...foster(ing) information exchange among state governments." To this end, the Council has developed, as one of its major administrative branches, the States Information Center. A subdivision of this Center is the Inquiry and Outreach Service. This is the unit which publishes the Research Checklist.

The Council began issuing the Checklist in February of 1979 and it now numbers into its 27th volume. It is published bimonthly, printed on newspaper stock and comes out in tabloid size. Each issue contains eleven to twelve pages. The front page carries a column "New From CSG". This is a very interesting roundup of happenings and developments from the Council. For anyone interested in the field of state government information sources it is a source of news not readily available elsewhere. Another regular feature is a review and update of Council publications. Some issues have book reviews of new titles in the
state/local government area published by other commercial publishers. News stories about the activities of various professional organizations active in the area of state documents and archives are also reported.

Lead articles in the two most recent issues are representative of the Checklist's news coverage. These representative articles were: "A Profile of the Nebraska Legislative Reference Library"; a discussion of the IDE (Interstate Documents Exchange) program of the CSG; and the "CSG To Collaborate with NAGARA To Revise Professional Reporting Standards For States' Archives and Records Managers". The NAGARA is the National Association of Government Archives and Record Administrators.

The major portion of each issue is devoted to a listing of the publications received by the Council. These are the materials available for loan directly from the States Information Center of the CSG. Each issue includes a Checklist Request Form to use when borrowing materials from the Council. According to this the loan period is for 30 days and there is a limit of 5 items per request. Materials which the Council does not have in their collection are marked with an asterisk. These are available directly from the source publishing the material. The names and addresses of these organizations and governmental agencies are listed at the end of the documents listing. This list of names and addresses is, in itself, useful directory type information.

The listing of the documents is by subject. These headings are in upper case letters. A quick check of some of those used indicate they are LC headings or slight modifications thereon. Each entry under the subject heading has its own unique identification number in addition to the standard bibliographical information as to issuing agency, title, author, number of pages, format and size. OCLC numbers are included in some of the citations.

The collection from which the Council loans documents is the one they have been developing since 1957 with the IDE (Interstate Documents Exchange) program. The CSG administers the program and "...serves as the central depository and lending agency for state government publications received through the program". From the beginning the participating state agencies were required to send copies of their materials to the CSG as well as all the other state agencies in the IDE program. This had resulted in a collection that now contains approximately 20,000 state documents.

The guidelines for participating state agencies have recently been changed. The Legislative Research Librarians (LRL) together with representatives from the Council and the National Conference of State Legislatures, the parent group of the LRL, agreed in 1983 to changes they felt would increase the states participation in the program.

A survey conducted by an LRL committee found that with the high cost of postage and the increasing cost associated with the publication of documents, many state agencies felt the cost of participation was too high. The result is state agencies are now only required to send two copies of each document to the Council and NCSL. There is now to be a greater exchange between the states of document checklists, bibliographies, etc. It is believed these new guidelines will
encourage greater involvement among the states in the IDE. Thus the total number of documents available for loan will increase.

A telephone conversation with Sue Stultz, librarian at the Council's Interstate Documents Exchange, clarified the position of the Council in regard to their loan policy. The administrators of the program view the constituent members of CSG as those to whom they have a primary responsibility. Thus, if your library is part of a state agency or department or one of its subdivisions your request will be regarded as coming from a member. Libraries without this connection should send in their loan requests on a standard ALA interlibrary loan request form. The Council will make every attempt to honor such a request.

In 1983 the States Information Center published the first annual index. It was for the six issues which comprise volume 24 of the Checklist. The index is arranged by subjects with only those unique identification number(s) of the appropriate document(s) listed. The ID number is composed of the volume number and issue number of the Checklist in which the document was listed as well as the document's bibliographic entry number. For example, 25-04-016 indicates this document was the 16th item listed in the 4th issue of volume 25 of the Checklist. It is then necessary to go back to that issue and see if you want to get that document.

The Checklist is an inexpensive purchase to add to the library's collection and it is surely worth every cent. The information is useful and not easy to come by in most law libraries or in one place. The listing of documents can be used in collection development, interlibrary loan and reference work. For any library with an interest in state materials this is a good addition to the collection.


Mary Anthony

CIS Annual/Legislative Histories of U.S. Public Laws

This new volume from the people at Congressional Information Service, Inc. (CIS) should be a very useful addition to the indexing sources that cover legislative history at the federal level. This index is the descendant of the two Annotated Directories that CIS produces in 1981 and 1982 to accompany the greatly appreciated (and sorely missed) microfiche "Legislative History Service." The Legislative Histories Annual will come to libraries as part of the annual shipment of the CIS Index/Abstract set.

The volume contains two kinds of coverage for public laws. For "major enactments," the entries include: 1) abstracts for all cited reports, hearings, prints, and documents; 2) citations to all relevant bills; 3) Congressional Record citations (dates and pages); 4) citations to related reports on similar subject matter by legislative committees which neither handle nor report any part of the enacted bills or by 'study' committees of the House and Senate" and to related oversight hearings, committee prints and documents. CIS has selected 32 of the 275 laws
passed in 1984 for this detailed treatment. Within the public law entry, the documents are listed in this order: 1) public law citation (including enacted bill citation); 2) committee reports; 3) bills; 4) debates; 5) hearings; 6) committee prints; 7) House or Senate documents; 8) miscellaneous (primarily citations to remarks by the President. The abstracts include SuDocs numbers for reports, hearings, committee prints and documents. A very useful feature of these legislative histories is the tracing of public laws through previous sessions of Congress. An excellent example of the value of this to the researcher can be seen in the compilation of fifteen years worth of citations in the entry for the Comprehensive Crime Control Act of 1984.

For the public laws that CIS does not consider "major enactments," a much briefer entry is provided. This is primarily a citations list, with no abstracts and no page citations to the Congressional Record. With the exception of related and companion bills, the materials cited (reports, hearings, etc.) are the same as those in the more comprehensive histories. SuDocs numbers are also provided, as is a more limited form of retrospective coverage. CIS does exclude certain categories of laws, such as "ceremonial, private, or housekeeping" statutes, but "coverage may be extended to any type of law when it contains a significant legislative 'rider' or when the context in which the enactment occurs suggest it might eventually become of interest to researchers."

The volume contains an index of subjects and names which leads one to the public law number, not the individual legislative documents. Access to particular documents is of course still available in CIS/Index. An index of bill numbers and an index of titles is also included. The volume also contains the "Revised Legislative History Citations" that have previously appeared in the CIS Abstracts volume.

Kevin Fredette

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