

JURISDOCS

Spring 1998

ISSN 0162-3079

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Volume 20, Issue 2



Government Documents
Special Interest Section

Letter from the Chair

by Paul Arrigo

Washburn University of Topeka
School of Law Library

Dear fellow GOVDOC SIS members,

There are several items that the two new committees are working on. The Publications Review Committee is in the process of creating a new GOVDOC SIS brochure. A proposal has been submitted to the Publications Review Committee concerning digitizing the State Bibliographies. Hayes Butler at Rutgers University has volunteered his institution to scan the documents and make them available on the Internet. This would allow GOVDOC SIS to distribute the State Bibliographies at a significantly lower cost, which may result in lower revenues for the GOVDOC SIS budget line. The price has yet to be determined. I would like to have a vote of the entire membership of GOVDOC SIS through the mail, since the State Bibliographies generate a significant amount of money for the SIS.

The Grants Committee has not had one application for a travel grant for this year yet. There are several proposals to perhaps use the funds for the officers of GOVDOC SIS to attend meetings or open up the grant to librarians or library school students who are not members of AALL. Awarding a grant to library school students may help in recruiting future SIS members.

The strategic plan is still in hibernation. I have not had a chance to start working on it yet. The Strategic Planning Committee consists of the two past Chairs: Kay Schlueter and David Gay, and the current GOVDOC SIS officers. I have received approximately 30 responses to the member needs survey. If you have not filled out the survey it is still accessible at: <http://lawlib.wuacc.edu/washlaw/doclaw/govdocsis.html>. It is also accessible on the GOVDOC SIS homepage at <http://www.aallnet.org/sis/gd/>. I hope to be getting on top of this as soon as possible.

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(Letter from the Chair, cont)

I would like to welcome the new Superintendent of Documents, Francis J. Buckley Jr. I think he will make a great Superintendent of Documents, since he is the first one with a depository library background. I am looking forward to the Annual Meeting when we will meet him. He is scheduled to participate in a program called "My Dinner with GPO". Francis and I will be sitting down to dinner discussing his vision for the depository program and how law libraries contribute to that program.

That's all for now. I look forward to seeing you all at the Annual Meeting in Anaheim. Perhaps after the meeting we can all say, similar to John Elway after the Super Bowl, I'm going to Disney Land as opposed to Disney World ☺

www.aallnet.org/sis/gd/

From the Editor

Sharon Blackburn
Texas Tech University
School of Law Library

Deadline for submissions for
next issue: **May 23, 1998.**

Whew! It's been an interesting but frantic winter, and I hope this issue reaches you by the first day of spring, or only a little thereafter. I had hoped to write an article for this issue about my experiences compiling the GPO self study. I haven't heard the results of my efforts from GPO, and, even though no news is good news, I decided to wait until I can give you the full self study story. Still, we have an action-packed issue for you: a timely recap of the fall depository conference by DLC member Mary Alice Baish (to refresh your memory in time for the spring conference), Greta Boeringer's thought-provoking article on public access rights to government information in depository libraries, an excellent discussion of "permanent paper" and its implications for federal information by Chris Anglim, and, once again, Mary Alice Baish's always informative "D.C. Insider." Let me know if you find this issue useful, and also if you have suggestions for future articles. I promise, I won't make you write an article unless you want to ☺

JURISDOCS (ISSN 0162-3079) is the triannual publication of the Government Documents Special Interest Section of the American Association of Law Libraries. Subscriptions are available through membership in AALL and in the GOVDOC SIS or through the AALL special subscription plan. The Government Documents Special Interest Section as a matter of policy does not print advertising in JURISDOCS.

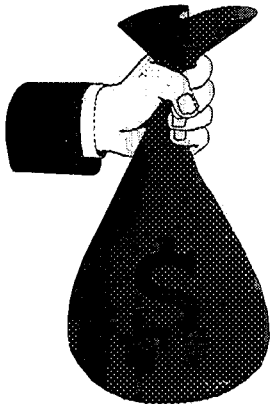
Materials for publication may be submitted to the editor. The editor reserves the right to reject materials submitted for publication. The only exception to this rule is letters submitted for the "Letters to the Editor" column by current GOVDOC SIS members. This exception provides members an open forum within which to express their opinions. All of the opinions expressed in JURISDOCS represent only those of the individual authors and do not represent those of the GOVDOC SIS or AALL.

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Two Grants Awarded by SIS to FDLC Meeting

by W. David Gay

Young Law Library, Leflar Law Center
University of Arkansas, Fayetteville



\$400 grants were awarded to Jackie Wright, Director of the Arkansas Supreme Court Library in Little Rock, Arkansas, and to Earlolyn "Lynn" Smith, Access Services and Documents/Reference Librarian at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri. The purpose of these grants is to assist financially members of the SIS and their documents support staff to attend documents-related meetings, conferences (with the exception of the AALL annual meeting), and continuing education programs. Both recipients will attend the Federal Depository Library Council / Annual Depository Library Conference in Washington, D.C., in April.

SIS E-Mail List Now a Listserv

by Marianne Mason

Indiana University, Bloomington, Law Library

Our Network supervisor has made it possible so that the GOVDOC SIS E-Mail list has transformed into the *gdsis* listserv. Persons who were included in the old e-mail list were automatically subscribed to *gdsis*.

Now, anyone interested in GOVDOC SIS may subscribe:

- ① send a message to: *majordomo@polecat.law.edu*
- ② leave the subject line blank.
- ③ type **SUBSCRIBE gdsis** in the message area.
SUBSCRIBE must be in all caps

New subscribers will receive two messages. The first simply indicates that their subscription attempt has been successful. The second is a brief "Welcome" that describes who sponsors the GOVDOC SIS Listserv and how to unsubscribe.

If you have any questions about the new *gdsis*, please contact me at masonm@law.indiana.edu

Fall Depository Meeting Recap

by Mary Alice Baish

Assistant Washington Affairs
Representative

The more than one hundred librarians who attended the Fall 1997 meetings of the Depository Library Council in Clearwater, Florida, including over a dozen law librarians, enjoyed a lovely beach side location and delightfully warm weather that contrasted sharply with the cold temperatures and snow we experienced during last year's Fall Meeting in Salt



Lake City. I've attended Council meetings as an observer since 1991 and have always been awed by the level of serious discussion and plain old hard work performed by Council members. This was my first official Council meeting and believe me, that bit about long hours and hard work is true. What makes it rewarding, however, is that, while the quality of debate becomes quite intense at times, it's also softened by the camaraderie among Council members.

During the first morning's GPO Update, Public Printer Michael DiMario introduced new Superintendent of Documents (SuDocs) Francis Buckley and praised him for possessing the right combination of knowledge, experience and skills that are necessary to promote public access and the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) with Congress and federal policy makers. Among other news, DiMario announced that the FY 1998 GPO appropriations act mandates that \$1.5 million be taken from the revolving fund to pay for a management audit to be contracted out by the General Accounting Office (GAO). The Office of SuDocs is one of the four programs to be evaluated as part of that study.

While the three and a half days of DLC meetings are chock full of interesting and important programs, many of them are scheduled during Council's work sessions, a real drawback if you're on Council. We tried to have a Council representative assigned to attend some of the presentations of particular interest to us, such as: the progress of the joint GPO and NCLIS (National Commission on Libraries and Information Science) study and the SuDocs efforts to enlist libraries in partnership programs for the dissemination and permanent public access of agency electronic information. The most recent partnerships include the University of North Texas taking

responsibility for the electronic records of the now-defunct Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations; a pilot project with OCLC to provide electronic access to the ERIC collection; and a similar pilot project to make available the Department of Energy's OSTI reports.

New Council members join right into the fray of drafting recommendations, and these sessions are indeed grueling, full of debate, drafting, re-drafting, and re-re-drafting before the final word smithing makes them presentable as "draft" recommendations. Even at that, final wording follows even more scrutiny and discussion via the DLC's closed listserv. Council's nine recommendations, available on our newly-updated Web site at www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/dpos/council/dlc.html, include one on allowing FDLPS to select the Serial Set in dual formats--CD-ROM (when it's developed) and either paper or microfiche and one recommending that GPO provide Supreme Court opinions in PDF and tagged ASCII file formats.

Council also drafts commendations, and former Council member Susan Dow was formally commended for her creativity and hard work in designing and implementing the DLC's homepage. Be sure to take a look at it, bookmark it, and check for regular updates. We have been working on a list of draft "Guidelines for Government

Information in the Electronic Environment and Depository Libraries" that will be posted shortly to the Web site.



Advance word is that the Fall 1998 DLC meeting will take place in San Diego, California. Hope to see many of you there, especially if we

don't meet here in April while the cherry blossoms hopefully are at their peak! ☺

Whose Law Is It Anyway?

by Greta Boeringer

Pace University Law Library

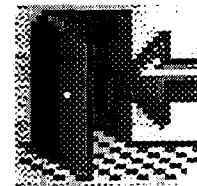
A friend of mine in law school could read Latin. One day I asked him to translate the school motto engraved over the door. With a wry smile he said dramatically, "Justice to those who can afford it."

According to the American Association of Law Libraries Code of Ethics, law librarians have a duty actively to promote free and effective access to legal information. This ethical duty is enhanced for those of us working in Federal depository libraries who also have a duty to make those Federal Government materials available to the public. Today it is more common and lucrative to restrict access to our libraries and ask patrons to pay for the privilege of using the materials housed there. Many reasons are given for these policies, including lack of space, especially for patron seating, security concerns, and effective deployment of limited human and technical resources. Now that these policies are entrenched in our libraries, it is time to step back and take a look at whether they are consistent with our obligations as Federal depositories and with our obligations as law librarians.

My own perspective on restrictive access policies has been profoundly affected by my personal history, which I will disclose. I am first and foremost a law librarian. I am dedicated to my profession, profoundly proud of it, and perhaps a bit idealistic about it. I served as a depository library inspector for the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) for four years at the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO). I believe democracy can exist only where there is an informed citizenry, and the FDLP contributes to that goal by ensuring free and open access to Federal Government information for all. I later worked at the Law Library of Congress. Every day those busy reference librarians refer patrons to depository libraries nationwide and they need to KNOW that the patron can get through the doors of those libraries. Today I work at Pace University School of Law Library, a private institution that has closed access to the community, except for depository patrons, giving me an understanding of what motivates such a decision.

During my tenure at GPO, I heard some people disparage law libraries. Some insiders and outsiders said that they were inaccessible, that they were not contributing to the FDLP, and that they were exploiting it. Law libraries are expensive for GPO to maintain because they select the most expensive titles in paper, even though their overall selection rates may be quite low.

In my own experience, some of the best depositories are law libraries. Law libraries tend to be small; they are sometimes well staffed and sufficiently well-funded to perform depository work well. Law libraries lead in comprehensive cataloging of government documents. Law libraries often have better technology in caring for microforms and are the first to embrace online resources effectively. But even I had to admit it is not always easy to get inside a law library depository. What is the point of a perfectly run depository operation if no one outside of the law school can use it?



I read the "Legislative Histories of the Laws Affecting the U.S. Government Printing Office as Codified in Title 44 of the U.S. Code" that gave academic law libraries the special privilege to become depositories. It was distributed to depositories in microfiche under SuDocs classification number GP 1.2:L 52. I became aware of an unpublished congressional hearing conducted in 1977, a year before 44 U.S.C. 1916 was passed. It is not part of the CIS unpublished hearing collection so I contacted the speakers to obtain their testimony. The speakers were Margaret A. Leary, then Assistant Director of the University of Michigan Law Library; Jane L. Hammond, then Law Librarian of the Cornell University Law Library; Kenneth Pye, Chancellor of Duke University and formerly Dean of the law school; and the new Superintendent of Documents, Francis J. Buckley, Jr., formerly the regional librarian at Detroit Public Library. Buckley's comments were published in *Documents to the People*, vol. 5 at page 163 (1977). The others are available from the author. Examining their testimony and other documentation from the *Congressional Record*, I have concluded that law libraries have a special privilege based on the resources they contain and the special expertise of law librarians. When depository patrons are denied access to our non-depository resources, or their access to our expert assistance is limited, the depository contract is effectively annulled.

My concern arises from my dedication to and my belief in law librarianship. I am convinced that law libraries have a pivotal role to play in maintaining democracy in the United States through educating and informing, not just our students, but the electorate, particularly when law libraries voluntarily embrace depository requirements. I am holding law libraries to a higher standard than other depositories when I say that those depository patrons

researching the Federal law should have access to all our resources, even commercial resources such as the Federal Reporter, law reviews, or commercial loose-leaf publications. This higher standard is implicit especially in the congressional testimony and in the special privilege we have under 44 U.S.C. 1916. The special privilege of becoming the third designated depository in a congressional district was conferred on law libraries because the law library collection provides depth and meaning to Federal Government information. Access to those resources for constituents motivated lawmakers to change the law.

Law libraries unwilling to open their entire collections to depository patrons must look carefully at the "Instructions to Depository Libraries," Chapter 7, B. Reference



Service, which states in part that "Depositories are located in libraries so that members of the general public will have access to reference tools, knowledgeable

librarians and other library resources." Strictly allowing access only to materials received through the FDLP does not meet this requirement. The "Instructions" also state that "Competent ready reference service, indexes and other tools to locate Government information in the collection, need to be available to all depository patrons." This requirement in the law library setting would obviously include CIS indexes and any CD-ROM version of the *Monthly Catalog*. But why not also include the USCCAN, CCH *Congressional Index*, and similar

resources? Since the index to the U.S.C. was written by West (this caused copyright problems on the CD, if you recall), why not let patrons use the U.S.C.A. too? Most of a law library is a tool for locating Federal Government information.

Many of the motives law libraries have for initiating restrictive access policies are the same reasons that make them less effective depositories. Lack of space, security problems, and limited staff are the grounds a library may choose not to become a depository or to withdraw from the program. Many law libraries have considered withdrawal from the FDLP, but so far none has done so. The benefits of the FDLP generally have outweighed the problems for most law libraries. There is status in being a Federal depository library, but no status flows from doing the job poorly. If you cannot open your doors, withdraw from the program.

I am not suggesting that all academic law libraries drop out of the FDLP. Those that are willing and able to serve the public, as they are now doing, should continue. Those who realize they can no longer serve the public, for whatever reason, should withdraw, leaving only open law library depositories in the FDLP. Law library depositories would earn the respect of both the depository and library community and the public for doing the right thing and doing it well. When the Law Library of Congress or any public library makes a referral to a law library depository, they must be assured that the patron will find what they should find in any good law library depository: **access** ✪



If you are interested in learning more about the topic of law libraries and public access,

- 1) AALL has set up a list serv to discuss access issues in Federal Depository Law Libraries: fdap@aall.wuacc.edu. Subscribe by emailing listproc@aall.wuacc.edu with nothing in the subject line and *subscribe fdap your name* as the message.
- 2) The program "Law Libraries and the Federal Depository Library Program: Balancing the Interests" will be offered at the Annual Meeting in Anaheim, California, in 1998 that will touch on these issues.

D.C. Insider

by Mary Alice Baish

AALL's Assistant Washington Affairs
Representative

Washington Headlines

Title 44, the never ending story:

In December, the Inter-Association Working Group on Government Information Policy sent a revised *Federal Information Access Act of 1997* to Sen. John Warner (R-VA), Chair of the Senate Rules and Administration Committee. The revision reflects changes identified by IAWG during monthly meetings held since June. Proposed changes include:

- ★ clarifying definitions
- ★ strengthening provisions for compliance and enforcement
- ★ adding GILS to the responsibilities of the Superintendent of Documents
- ★ providing a transition period to ensure permanent public access of online electronic information

The draft bill, along with other IAWG documents, is on the web at:
<http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/IAWG>.

Title 44 Updates at ALA:

Eric Peterson, Staff Director of the Joint Committee on Printing, and Kennie Gill, Minority Staff Director and Chief Counsel of the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration, made three separate presentations during the ALA Midwinter meetings in New Orleans to discuss Congressional efforts to revise Title 44. One particularly useful meeting involved an open Q & A session before a packed audience. Peterson and Gill discussed the designation of depository libraries, the task of providing permanent public access to online government information, and agency compliance issues.

Waitin' and Wishin' and Hopin' and Prayin':

We have not seen a draft bill from JCP since last spring when hearings were held on the first draft proposal. JCP staff promise to post it to the Senate Rules and Administration Committee's homepage at: <http://www.access.gpo.gov/congress/senate/senate16.html>

If You've Got the Money, Honey, We'll Stay Online:

The House Appropriations Legislative Subcommittee held hearings for the Library of Congress and GPO the first week of February. LC requested an overall increase of 6.5% over FY 1998 to continue the development of the National Digital Library and to maintain other LC programs.

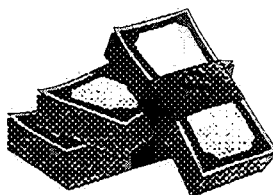
As part of the request, LC has earmarked \$6.7 million to fund fully the Law Library of Congress. In a February 16 letter to Chairman James T. Walsh of the Subcommittee, Robert Oakley, on behalf of AALL, supported the full funding. He explained that the Law Library needs to hire eight FTEs to maintain effective levels of research and reference services. Additional funding would also support the Global Legal Information Network (GLIN), a cooperative international project

developed by the Law Library in which nations contribute the full, authoritative text of statutes, regulations, and related material.

GPO offered a slightly increased budget over FY 1998, asking for \$30.2 million for the SuDoc's Salaries and Expenses, which funds the FDLP.

Will That Be Paper or Plastic?:

Bob Oakley also addressed the serious cutbacks to the distribution of the print *Serial Set* and bound *Congressional Record* in his February 16 letter to Chairman Walsh. Oakley pointed out that Congress's substitution of the CD-ROM format rather than paper was a substitution of a rather unstable format for one of much more permanent value. Oakley specifically referred to an article published in the February 16, 1998, *U.S. News & World Report*, "Whoops, There Goes Another CD-ROM," which points out that documents produced on acid-free paper have a storage life of **five hundred years**, compared to CD-ROMs that have an unreliable and drastically shorter storage life of between five and fifty years. AALL will continue to advocate that GPO develop less expensive means to produce the print *Serial Set* and bound



Congressional Record and that GPO keep distributing them to selective depositories, not just to the regional or one library in every state.

Federal Agency Record Retention Schedules

The National Archives and Records Administration has developed the "Agency Records Disposition Online Resource (ARDOR)" located at: <http://ardor.nara.gov>. Although not intended to become a comprehensive database for all agencies or all records, nor guaranteed as the authoritative resource for retention information, ARDOR will assist agencies in tracking the life cycle of records and provide users with a helpful finding tool.

NAIL to the Chief:

NARA is developing a nationwide, integrated online information delivery system, the NARA Archival Information Locator (NAIL). NAIL will provide a catalog of all archival holdings as well as links to digital collection of the agency's most popular and important documents, photographs, and sound recordings. The prototype is available at: <http://www.nara.gov/nara/nail.html>.

Report Celebrates Depository Libraries:

In *State of the First Amendment*, a report issued by the Freedom Forum, copyright lawyer and Georgetown University adjunct professor Donna Demac strongly affirms the role depository libraries play in the dissemination of government information.

GPO Access on the GO!:

The *Biennial Report to Congress on the Status of GPO Access*, released at the end of 1997, records the phenomenal growth of use of Access between January 1996 and October 1997. During this time, searches on GPO Access increased by a whopping 1178%, and actual document retrievals increased significantly by 319%. GPO Access now includes over 70 databases ☼



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Permanent Paper Policy and the Federal Government in the Internet Age (Part I of II)

by Chris Anglim

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The papers used for most documents and publications since the mid-nineteenth century have been highly acidic. This acid greatly accelerates their deterioration and remains a leading threat to our documentary heritage, leading to a monumental preservation dilemma. The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), for example, houses approximately 3¼ billion documents, many of which are on impermanent (usually acidic) paper and are subject to deterioration. This deterioration threatens to erode our national memory, depriving ourselves and our descendants of vitally important information and insights. In the past, the cost of acid-free papers was generally prohibitive. Recently, the pursuit of inexpensive papermaking techniques has resulted in an increasing replacement of acidic pulps with more economical alkaline pulps. Acid-free, alkaline paper was developed in the 1960s when synthetic sizing chemicals and fillers were first introduced as possible substitute ingredients in the paper making process. The alkaline process also extends paper life by many decades. Alkaline paper, due to its different chemistry and physical properties, may have a life of 300-400 years.

It is important to keep the distinctions among four types of papers in mind:

Acidic paper. In use for books, other publications, and documents since the mid-nineteenth century, acidic paper may become embrittled in as little as 30 to 40 years. The acid becomes an "enemy within" which attacks the molecular structure of paper and causes its breakdown

Alkaline paper. Paper that will last for at least one-hundred years under normal use and storage conditions. Alkaline paper grades are groundwood-free with a minimum pH of 7 and an alkaline reserve of 2% or more.

Generic paper. Paper without a specified pH or alkaline reserve. Longevity of generic paper varies and is uncertain. Many last for 50 to 100 years.

Permanent paper. Paper that will last for

several hundred years without significant deterioration under normal use and storage conditions. Permanent paper grades are groundwood-free with a pH of 7.5 or above, an alkaline reserve of 2% or more, and other strength or performance properties that guarantee the use and retention of records generated on this paper for a maximum period of time.

The Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) is well into a multi-year transition to a mixed media environment. The FDLP now includes tangible Government information products disseminated to depository libraries and online databases and locator services provided via the Internet from GPO Access. The program is intended to create a FDLP which ensures that the public has equitable, no-fee, dependable, local public access to Government information products through a centrally managed, statutorily authorized network of geographically-dispersed depository libraries. The question is: what impact does increased FDLP commitment to the Internet have on the program's commitment to ensuring that documents are printed on "permanent paper?"

On October 12, 1990, President Bush signed a Congressional Joint Resolution on permanent papers. Public Law 101-423, *A Joint Resolution to Establish a National Policy on Permanent Papers*. This resolution, which the National Archives vigorously supported, made it national policy to use acid-free permanent paper for federal records, books, and other publications having enduring value. The measure also recommended that American Publishers and state and local governments voluntarily use acid-free permanent paper.

The Joint Resolution further recommended that Federal agencies require the use of acid-free permanent paper for publications of enduring value produced by the Government Printing Office or by Federal grant or contract, using the specifications for such paper established by the Joint Committee on Printing, and that agencies require the use of archival quality acid-free

papers for permanently valuable Federal records and confer with NARA on the requirements for paper quality.

In order to achieve the goal of paper that is both acid-free and permanent, however, NARA sought to resolve two major issues: the issue of standards and the federal government mandated use of recycled paper.

NARA sought to develop applicable standards for such paper that met the preservation qualities demanded by archival repositories. The distinction between alkaline and permanent papers became a crucial issue. What is "acid-free" paper is quite straightforward: it is paper with a neutral or alkaline pH. What is "permanent," though, is difficult to determine. Paper may last, but how durable is it in repeated use? Will it tear or break? Durability is thus a key virtue in any so-called "permanent" paper, at least from an archival point of view.

Nationally recognized standards became developed for permanent paper. Considerable progress has been made toward producing alkaline papers with recycled content. However, the existing technology does not yet

accommodate production in sufficient quantities at reasonable cost of papers containing significant percentages of post-consumer waste and meeting other

requirements of the Executive Order, while still meeting appropriate standards of alkalinity and permanence. In the long term, the two goals—use of recycled paper and use of permanent paper—are not mutually exclusive. However, research is still at an early stage, and while progress continues, agencies must be able to specify the use of alkaline permanent paper

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a regulation which complicated the picture. Executive Order 12873, "Federal Recycling, Acquisition, and Use of Environmentally Preferable Products and Services," section 504, and EPA's Recovered Materials Advisory Notice (60 Fed. Reg. 21386) established minimum percentages for recovered waste and post-consumer waste for printing and writing papers. Although many permanent and alkaline papers contain a significant percentage of recycled material, most do not meet the percentages specified by the Executive Order and EPA's guidance. However, sections 502(2) and 504(1) of the Executive Order authorized agencies to select papers that do not meet content percentages when available items fail to meet reasonable performance standards

This regulation required the federal government to purchase paper for writing and publication that contained at least 50% recycled stock. The National Archives was concerned that such paper might not have the physical characteristics needed for permanence; that is, modifications taking place during the recycling process may produce chemical and physical changes that will affect the long-term durability of the resulting paper. Recycling is a worthy goal, but archivists must ensure that we do not repeat the mistake made during World War II: adopting a paper for reasons, however admirable, that unwittingly undermine our ability to ensure that the information recorded on this paper will remain indefinitely.

One solution, proposed by the paper industry, is thickening recycled paper in order to offset any loss in durability. Unfortunately, most archivists, librarians, and others would find additional thickness in documents and publications a problem because of the additional storage costs that they would incur.

The EPA regulations enabled a federal agency to exclude recycled papers if they did not meet reasonable performance standards. Few agencies, though, had the incentive or the expertise to develop such standards on their own. Fortunately, there had been considerable work on guidelines and standards for permanent papers in printed materials, and work continued on standards for permanent papers in other applications.

NARA intended to work with interested parties—the Library of Congress, standards organizations, the Government Printing Office, the paper industry itself, other users, the General Services Administration, and members of the archival profession as a whole—to develop comprehensive standards for acid-free, permanent papers for many uses: bond, ledger, and manifold papers; carbon-copy and carbonless papers; index card stock; computer paper; and xerographic copier paper. Once these standards are prepared, and then adopted by the Joint Committee on Printing, the General Services Administration's Federal Supply Service can apply appropriate specifications for the procurement of truly permanent papers, as required by federal agencies.

The Joint Resolution required the Archivist of the United States, together with the Librarian of Congress and the Public Printer, to "monitor the federal government's

In the long term, the two goals—use of recycled paper and use of permanent paper—are not mutually exclusive.

progress in implementing the national policy" on permanent paper, and to report to Congress at the end of 1991, 1993, and 1995. NARA was seen as having a confirming involvement in the campaign for the use of permanent paper.

Another issue, however, is determining which documents must be created on acid-free permanent paper. Some of these applications are clear (e.g., documents that establish an agency's policies). Other documents, not thought of as permanently valuable at first, later are found to contain important—and permanently valuable—information. It may make sense, then, to require acid-free permanent paper for all federal records (excepting, perhaps, the many bulky "housekeeping" records like travel forms and routine personnel actions that are clearly destined for disposal). Calculating the cost/benefit ratio between what it will cost to preserve truly permanent records and what it would cost to mandate the use of acid-free paper for all records will be an interesting exercise, particularly as the paper industry itself adjusts to the new demand for acid-free paper.

Changes within the paper industry made it economically feasible to require such paper for at least correspondence and publications, and perhaps even for other categories of documents. Measured against what it costs to conserve, treat, and duplicate impermanent papers, changing entirely to acid-free permanent papers of a durable nature might already be cost-effective. The principle we have learned in health care functions here as well: it is less costly to prevent than to treat. All archivists need to redouble their efforts to care for deteriorating documents, but it is a smart investment to prevent future deterioration.

NARA was involved as these two issues developed. Since what happens at the federal level often affects developments elsewhere in the United States, NARA agreed to share its experience, research, and recommendations within the broader archival community, as well as within the federal government. NARA's preservation efforts make an enormous contribution to national and international efforts to achieve the goals the agency has set, and NARA will share this knowledge and experience with the entire archival profession.

On September 8, 1995, the National Archives and Records Administration issued NARA Bulletin No. 95-7, on the subject of procurement of writing, copying, and printing papers for Federal records—a guide for implementation of P L. 101-423, the permanent paper law

that was passed in 1990. Such a guide was certainly needed, because there were many hidden obstacles on the road to consistent and economical implementation of a permanent paper policy. The bulletin advised agencies to procure permanent and alkaline paper grades routinely to create all Federal records. This recommendation complied with Public Law (Pub.L.) 101-423, Executive Order (E.O.) 12873, and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) guidance.

The cost and availability of paper for Federal records was a major concern of the Federal government. In recent years, the cost of permanent paper was two to four times more than generic paper, and the cost of alkaline paper was one-third more than generic paper. However, a recent survey showed only a 5% difference between comparable permanent, alkaline, and generic xerographic paper grades with the permanent paper grade costing the least. Agencies should, on a continuing basis, check and compare prices. If, at a given time, there is a significant cost difference between permanent, alkaline, and generic paper grades, NARA will work with agencies to identify specific series of permanently valuable records that can be created on permanent paper without excessive cost.

The NARA Bulletin dictated that agency heads should direct records officers and officials who administer procurement, printing, and supply distribution jointly to develop policy and procedures to procure and use permanent and alkaline papers for both permanent and temporary Federal records.

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Because it is difficult to distinguish between permanent, alkaline, and generic papers, or to determine at the moment of creation how long a document will be maintained, agencies may choose to stock only one type of paper grade in individual office units (or agency-wide) for routine use in photocopiers, laser printers, telefacsimile equipment, etc.

The Bulletin recommended permanent paper for routine use in office units that create and file a high proportion of long-term and permanent records and recommended alkaline paper for routine use throughout agencies for all documents.

The Bulletin stressed that publications intended for long-term use in a paper format by many recipients, such as those that are placed in multiple Federal, State, and local government depositories' core collections in libraries and offices, should be created on permanent or alkaline paper. Generic paper, however, was viewed as suitable for mass publications such as press releases and telephone directories; however, if the record set of a publication has long-term value, a filecopy should be created by (1) photocopying onto alkaline or permanent paper, (2) maintaining an electronic version, or (3) creating a microform version from the paper or from Computer Output Microform (COM).



In the Internet Age, the depository program is moving increasingly toward electronic access and away from paper. As the case involving the *Congressional Record* and the *US Congressional Serial Set* signifies, paper remains a format of choice and, therefore, permanent paper will remain an important issue for preservationists.

In 1997, House Report 104-657 directed the GPO to develop CD-ROM versions of the permanent or bound edition of the *Congressional Record* and those parts of the *U.S. Congressional Serial Set* for which suitable electronic data have been made available, beginning with the 105th Congress, for distribution to depository libraries. Under the Report's direction, no paper copies of the bound *Record* were to be distributed in the FDLP. The Report also directed that paper copies of the *Serial Set* are to be distributed only to regional depository libraries and one depository in each state that has no regional depository.

The FDLP drafted plans to achieve this directive and submitted them to the staff of the Joint Committee on Printing for review. Representatives of FDLP informed the Subcommittee of several serious concerns within the depository library community about the discontinuation of the paper format bound *Record*, and the limitation on the distribution of paper copies of the *Serial Set*, in the FDLP. Depository librarians saw these documents as essential reference resources and as core documents of our democracy which should, at a minimum, be preserved in paper format for the free use of the public in every State. There were also legitimate questions about the permanency of the CD-ROM format, from an archival media standpoint, as well as issues concerning computer hardware and software obsolescence ☹

Next issue: The Present and Future Prospects of Permanent Paper for Federal Publications



E4, *My Dinner with GPO*, Monday July 13, 1998, 3:15 P.M. - 5:15 p.m.

When you're in Anaheim this summer, be sure to drop by for a scintillating afternoon tête-à-tête between an experienced government documents librarian and a representative from GPO. As they tip their hats to *My Dinner with Andre*, our speakers will discuss recent and

expected changes to the Federal Depository Library Program as a result of the revision of Title 44, U.S.Code. *My Dinner with GPO* will also explore how technological changes affect law libraries, depository status, our ability to serve patrons, and many other topics.