

Remarks to Depository Library Council

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It is wonderful to once again have the opportunity to update our partners in the depository community on some of the many activities taking place at GPO concerning our information dissemination programs. We are working hard in many areas to develop a structure that can meet the challenges of the rapidly changing government information environment and deliver the best possible services to our partners and customers.

More and more it seems, technology is presenting the possibility to create once and utilize the result to serve multiple purposes. This opportunity to functionally leverage requires careful thought, but it is vital to the future of our information dissemination programs. In addition to letting you know where we are on other efforts, I hope to touch on a number of these areas this morning.

Sixteen personnel from GPO are in Williamsburg, Virginia this week beginning their participation in an executive fellows program designed to better prepare them to help the organization move into the future. Five of the participants are key members of the Information Dissemination/Superintendent of Documents organization well known to you. They are Vicki Barber, Ric Davis, Tad Downing, Laurie Hall, and Karen Sieger. Hopefully, you will understand and forgive their absence at the conference, as they work with experts and other participants from throughout government to learn the latest techniques to help us better serve you.

GPO Access continues its popularity and there is a handout available that should provide you with a number of details. I would like to touch on just a few of the most important.

There are some key changes to the *GPO Access* User Support Team that were put in place to better serve our partners and users. New hours allow you to have access to their services from 7:00 am to 9:00 pm EST. The new eService Center is available on *GPO Access*. As a result of this availability, questions previously answered are not only available to support representatives, but to users as well through an online knowledge base.

We believe that an interim replacement for the WAIS platform for *GPO Access* has been identified and can be implemented in a reasonable timeframe. This will allow for the completion of the mirror site at Pueblo, which will be set up based on the new platform. Data will be migrated to the mirror site in fully tagged and digitally signed form. A group is hard at work on the final analysis of the product and how it might be made available in the near future. Preliminary tests with some of our most popular products such as the Federal Register have been extremely encouraging.

I hope you will take the time to help us with both of these important efforts. During our open forum being held this afternoon in Salon C at 3:30 p.m., demonstrations of the eService Center knowledge base and a version of Federal Register created for testing with the new interim search platform will be provided. Each will be followed by a chance to provide feedback on what you like and what could be done to improve it for you.

The ongoing effort to utilize Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) to aid in the process of securing the chain of custody for the electronic publishing of government information and its subsequent use to authenticate electronic documents is progressing. Work to establish GPO as a certificate authority tied into the Federal Bridge Certificate Authority is progressing, as are efforts for the use of PKI in the legislative and regulatory publishing process. Once these efforts have been completed, the Chief Information Officer's organization will be leading an effort to digitally sign all of the documents made available through GPO Servers.

At the same time, staff is meeting with vendors to examine the possibilities inherent in digital watermarking technologies. One focus of this examination is to learn how this technology might be employed to provide for authentication even after a printed copy of one of these authenticated files has been made.

Information Dissemination staff are also working on pilot efforts to examine possible uses for other technologies. One such example is a team working to establish a LOCKSS (Lots of Copies Keep Stuff Safe) cache at GPO. Initially, this will be the typical configuration of journal material found on other LOCKSS caches, but the effort will be examining the possibilities for safeguarding and making available other materials through this method.

Another team is setting up a test of Digital Object Identifiers (DOI) to examine their possible use in our programs. One of the enticing aspects of DOI is the ability to provide options, such as a persistent address for the official electronic version, copies in collections at depository libraries, or the ability to purchase a printed copy for personal use.

A great deal of effort is being expended to return the Sales Program to a point where it is recovering its costs. You have already heard of the closings of our bookstores around the country as our customer's transition to online purchasing. Another effort has been the reduction of staff. The recent GPO-wide buyout program provided for the departure of more than 100 staff in Documents Sales Service.

This action will result in millions of dollars in savings for the Sales Program, but the ways that we do business and the technological infrastructure must be improved as well. An effort to identify and procure the services of a consultant to help us with this process is nearing completion. The consultant will have 60 days to examine the sales operation and deliver recommendations for improvement, including a new generation of systems to facilitate the operation of the program and to act as the online face to our customers.

As this effort is taking place, procedural changes in the way publications are acquired and made available are well under way. After examinations of how others in this business successfully operate, it became clear that one of the biggest risks was buying and storing costly inventory that

might not sell. We are rapidly moving to take advantage of advances in print on demand technology to provide for just-in-time inventory needs and the ability to broaden our offerings without risk, or true on demand. In this scenario, a copy is not printed until it has been ordered. Traditional purchasing and storage methods will still be employed for titles that due to either their construct or contents would pose unreasonable challenges to an on demand process.

Whenever possible, however, high quality on demand processes will be employed to continue availability with less risk. This should enable titles to remain in the program indefinitely, without going out of print.

On demand printing may also serve other program needs, such as those of the FDLP. The possibilities of allowance accounts were discussed at the Regional Depository Conference over the past few days that would allow for libraries to acquire printed copies through what has been set up for on demand printing for the Sales Program. It is unclear just how this would be set up, but we will continue to examine the possibilities.

One big organizational adjustment to result from these acquisition changes has been the ability to consolidate and reduce our storage and distribution operations. Sheila McGarr has been leading a fast-paced and successful consolidation of our warehouse operations in Laurel, Maryland. The result of this consolidation will be savings of hundreds of thousands of dollars per year as the operation reduces from two buildings to one, effectively cutting our leased space in half.

A similar examination of the depository distribution function will soon take place in an effort to better serve our library partners. This effort will focus on how to most effectively store and distribute the materials being sent to depository libraries in light of the changes in the program and in the operations of our partner libraries. Your feedback will play an important role in this effort.

In speaking of the importance of feedback, as I close I want to remind you to take every opportunity to let us know your ideas. Many of the positive changes taking place in Information Dissemination came about through suggestions from our library partners. I thank you for your time and I look forward to talking with you during the conference.