

# **Collection Development and Maintenance Policy**

## **U. S. Department of Transportation Library**

May 2004

### **I. BACKGROUND**

The Department of Transportation (DOT) Library serves as the central library for DOT Headquarters units in the Washington, D. C. area. It is open to contractors, companies, researchers and the general public.

The primary mission of the Library is to assist DOT HQ employees in the performance of their administrative, operational and research duties by providing books, periodicals, indexes, technical reports, manuals, and other library materials in electronic, hard copy and microform formats that deal with land/marine based transportation topics.

### **II. SELECTION**

The ultimate responsibility for the adequacy and quality of selection, within budgetary limits, rests with the DOT Library. The law and reference staffs have the primary responsibility for the review of materials. Purchase requests (PRs) are submitted to the Supervisory Librarian, who verifies that the requests fall within this policy and the budget allotment for each collection area. The PRs making this cut are forwarded to the Library Program Manager for final decision.

DOT HQ employees (engineers, technicians and attorneys) are encouraged to make recommendations for purchase since they have specialized knowledge of subjects being regulated or studied. Guidance is also sought from advisory groups, including the Law Library Advisory Group (LLAG), before changes are made in the selection policy.

Continuing efforts are made to identify and select materials in subject areas which support DOT's primary missions. Changes in the Department's operational programs may affect the scope of the collection.

#### **A. CORE SUBJECT AREAS**

Emphasis is given to updating the core collections that support DOT's regulatory interests. Core areas are defined on a regular basis to ensure that new DOT areas are added and that out of date areas are dropped.

Table 1. Current Core Subject Areas

Administrative Law	International Aviation
Automotive Safety	Legislative Histories
Civil Engineering	Maritime Transportation
Congressional Documents	Mass Transit
Data Warehousing	Pipelines
Federal Courts	Ports and Harbors
Hazardous Materials	Railroads
Highways and Bridges	Ships and Shipbuilding
Intermodal Shipping	Transportation Research
Trucks and Trucking	

**B. ELECTRONIC ACCESS**

The collection consists of hard copy, microfiche/film, CD-ROM, and digital formats. Preference is given to materials available electronically, specifically those on the World Wide Web, because many of these formats can be easily accessed from or downloaded to an employee's desktop PC. In addition to employee convenience, web access saves DOT Library shelving space and provides 24/7 accessibility to the Library user. New CD-ROM purchases are discouraged due to the staff time and equipment required to maintain them in the Library.

**C. EXCLUSIONS**

In general the following categories are not covered by this selection process:

- Materials not to be owned by the DOT Library.
- Items to be retained permanently by employees in their offices.
- Dictionaries, secretarial guides and manuals for office use.
- Textbooks for classroom use.
- Training material.
- Videos and films.
- Office correspondence and files.
- Draft reports and working papers.
- Reprints of journal articles.
- Fiction.
- Children's literature, except materials prepared by DOT agencies.

### III. ACQUISITION METHODS

The DOT Library acquires materials in the following ways:

- Purchase: blanket purchase agreements, deposit accounts, direct orders, and GPO/Information Services orders.
- Internal distribution of DOT publications.
- Gifts from DOT offices, employees and publishers.

DOT Library follows appropriate Federal procurement regulations, Departmental directives, and guidelines in all of its transactions. GSA and other government contracts, .e.g. FEDLINK, are utilized wherever possible, to obtain the goods or services in the most cost effective manor.

#### A. REFERENCE COLLECTION

In addition to specialized core reference materials, materials of a general reference nature, e.g., biographical and business directories, dictionaries, etc., are needed to answer general reference questions from the DOT Library's clients. The reference librarians compile and review on a regular basis lists of general and core technical reference materials. They also indicate how frequently the materials should be replaced.

#### B. LAW COLLECTION

Almost half of the DOT Library is devoted to legal materials, e.g. state codes, Federal Register, legislative histories, agency decisions and opinions, Code of Federal Regulations, US Code, and other items needed by staff attorneys and DOT HQ employees.

Materials for the law collection are reviewed and recommended by the Law Librarian. Recommendations from staff attorneys of the General Counsel and Chief Counsel's offices of the operating administrations are encouraged. The Library Program Manager, Supervisory and the Law Librarians meet regularly with the Law Library Advisory Group to discuss acquisitions as well as other law-related matters.

### IV. DESELECTION and DISPOSITION GUIDELINES

As part of regular DOT Library collection development and maintenance procedures, library staff members regularly deselect materials from the collection. These materials are either out-of-date, superseded, or in poor condition and are directly discarded.

Additionally, in 2003 the library began a collection right-sizing project stimulated by the need to fit into the new DOT Headquarters Building by 2006. A phased plan was designed to remove items that were deemed non-essential. Criteria include currency and duplicate holdings of other large research libraries. This process includes the review of

professional journals and books in key fields such as civil engineering, marine engineering/shipping, regional planning, state DOT publications, environmental studies, etc.

Deselected materials are placed in the library’s Surplus Materials Room for a one week period. The room is open during library hours and items are changed regularly. General information notices are posted to the library’s web page and the DOT Intranet. It is the patron’s responsibility to review the materials and to make arrangements to remove the items. The library does not supply bags, boxes, etc. In addition, the library does not hold any materials to be picked up at a later time or date.

To provide other libraries or scholarly institutions an opportunity to develop their historical transportation collections, explanatory e-mails will be sent to professional library listservs. Other than cost of shipment, materials will be offered without charge. Because these materials are government property, requests from individuals, collectors, or profit-making organizations can not honored.

Libraries are given fourteen (14) days to respond to the notice of interest. If more than one library indicates interest in the same item, the library making the earliest request will be given the item.

Table 2. Retention Guidelines

<b>Publication Type</b>	<b>Number of Copies</b>	<b>Retention</b>
DOT Official publication	1 copy	Permanent retention
DOT (& sponsored) technical reports	1 copy	Permanent retention
Statistical and other serial publications	1 copy	10 years (or less if on BTS, GPO Access or FirstGov)
Monographs in series, e.g. TRB	1 copy	20 years
Monographs	1 copy	According to the Deselection Guidelines
Periodicals	1 copy	10 years for core subjects; 1 to 5 years for non-core subjects (less if available electronically from Ebsco, Lexis/Nexis, or Westlaw)