

GPO Issues Electronic Transition Plan

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The Government Printing Office (GPO) released the long awaited ["Electronic Federal Depository Library Program: Transition Plan, FY 1996 - FY 1998."](#) The Plan was requested by Congress through the Legislative Branch Appropriations Act of 1996 and has been included in the GPO FY 1997 appropriations request. A hearing on these appropriations will be held in the House on February 21. ARL and others in the library and federal sectors have been asked to comment on the Plan's impact on users and libraries. As noted by GPO, there are several "key assumptions" in the plan:

- "Nearly all of the information provided through the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) will be in electronic format by the end of FY 1998."
- GPO will convert selected publications from paper into electronic format.
- "The responsibility for ensuring long-term access to electronic information will shift from the depository libraries to the Superintendent of Documents (SOD). Connection to electronic access services operated under the authority of the SOD replace the geographically-dispersed collections of books and microfiche."
- In providing this long-term access to information, the SOD "assumes such costs as data preparation for mounting, maintenance, storage, and ongoing costs to minimize deterioration and assure technological currency."
- The transition plan assumes continued full funding of the FDLP in the next several years. The shift away from paper and microfiche products will fund the new electronically-based services.
- GPO intends to provide "technology grants" to selected depositories to assist with the transition to an electronically-based program. This is to "ensure reasonable public access and proximity to at least one electronically-capable depository in every Congressional district."
- Funds currently devoted to the depository library inspection program will be redesignated to FDLP support services.

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