



ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEASTERN RESEARCH LIBRARIES

Program Update

ASERL Collaborative Federal Depository Program

July 2008

Overview

In late Fall 2006, members of the Association of Southeastern Research Libraries (ASERL) unanimously authorized the creation of a new ASERL program to explore options for cooperative services and collection analysis for Federal government publications to improve public access to those collections within member institutions. To ensure members of the community are aware of program direction, the Program Steering Committee (see below) will provide periodic updates regarding program activities to Federal Depository Library liaisons and other interested persons.

The premises that undergird the ASERL program are:

- To operate within the boundaries of U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO) guidelines and instructions as well as Title 44, Chapter 19, of the United States Code, especially Sections 1911 and 1912;
- To examine creating "centers of excellence" that would ensure multiple, complete retrospective collections of Federal publications by agency, in addition to the existing Regional depository collections; these "centers" would also be supported by subject matter experts who are able to provide sophisticated, in-depth reference services in the areas of their specialization;
- To develop outreach activities to improve public knowledge of how to access Federal government information;
- To improve identification and preservation of those collections;
- To provide rapid delivery of materials via ILL from the "centers of excellence" to users throughout the region ; and
- To make participation by any Federal Regional Depository in the ten ASERL states entirely voluntary.

Activity Highlights

- The Steering Committee met for the first time via conference call on June 18, 2007. The group determined there was a need for additional information among

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documents librarians and other members of the community about the program and began drafting a Program Backgrounder and web pages for the program.

- The group also began actively recruiting interested librarians from the Southeast and other parts of the country to subscribe to the aserl_selectives listserv as a means of remaining current on program activities. This process continues today – see below for information on how to subscribe to this listserv.
- Members of the Steering Committee have solicited feedback to ensure the program can meet the needs of all members of the community. Committee members continue to participate in conversations with leaders from around the country to explain the basic concept of the ASERL program and to reduce misconceptions.
- The Steering Committee conducted a survey in early 2008 to identify the size and nature of Federal Regional depository collections within the ten ASERL states as a first step in testing the feasibility of the “centers of excellence” concept. This initial, limited test-bed project will serve as a hypothetical experiment to determine how such a process might be implemented if ASERL Regional libraries agreed to do so.
- Preliminary Steering Committee discussions indicate that the process for the test-bed effort will likely include:
 1. Inventorying the FW, Y 3.W89/2, and ED collections at each ASERL Regional.
 2. Identifying any unique titles in these stems held by ASERL Regionals.
 3. Soliciting from ASERL Selective depositories copies of any unique titles found in order to transfer them to the appropriate “center of excellence.”
 4. If a copy of the unique title is not available from a Selective within ASERL, the ASERL Regional which does hold the unique title will be asked to create a surrogate copy to send to the appropriate “center of excellence.”
 5. Each “center” will be expected to catalog in OCLC all titles held in their area of “excellence.” However, the lack of detailed cataloging information for pre-1976 federal documents is proving to be a significant barrier to our collection analysis activities.
- The Steering Committee will also be working to identify subject matter experts from within the community who could provide enhanced services to patrons at each “center of excellence.”
- In June 2007, ASERL supported GPO’s draft “Guidelines for Establishing Shared Regional Depository Libraries” via a letter to Acting Superintendent of Documents Richard Davis. Several ASERL libraries also submitted letters of support to GPO as well.
- In Spring 2008 ASERL also commented on GPO’s study of challenges facing Regionals. Copies of these letters are available via the ASERL website.
- Members of the Program’s Steering Committee offered a program overview session on October 14, 2007, in conjunction with GPO’s 2007 Depository Library Conference. Periodic updates have also been provided via the ASERL-Regionals and ASERL_Selectives listservs.

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- Updates were provided to ASERL directors at their Fall Membership Meeting in late November 2007, and the Spring Membership Meeting in April 2008.

Future Activities

- Regional Depositories will be asked to complete a survey to describe their commercial products that support access to their federal depository collections later this year.
- The Steering Committee hopes to provide another public update session in conjunction with the 2008 Fall DLC meeting in Washington, DC.
- The Steering Committee continues to explore options for procuring the cataloging data for the test-bed project portions of their collections (the FW, Y 3.W 89/2, and ED SuDoc classification stems.)

To Subscribe to the ASERL_Selectives listserv:

send an email to:

join-aserl_selectives@solinet.net

with a subject line of

subscribe aserl_selectives

Program Steering Committee

Current members of the Program Steering Committee are:

- Valerie Glenn, University of Alabama
- Laura Harper, University of Mississippi
- Sandra McAninch, University of Kentucky, *Chair*
- Marian Parker, Wake Forest University Law Library
- Judith Russell, University of Florida
- James Staub, Tennessee State Library and Archives
- William Sudduth, University of South Carolina
- David Vidor, Emory University
- John Burger, ASERL