

SOUTHEAST REGION GUIDELINES FOR MANAGEMENT AND DISPOSITION OF FEDERAL DEPOSITORY LIBRARY COLLECTIONS

Background

In November 2009, deans and directors from ASERL member institutions that serve as regional or selective Federal Depository Libraries affirmed that the federal documents collections in the Southeast Region are valuable assets for the holding library and the state where each collection is located. They also acknowledged that these collections are an asset to the Southeast Region and agreed to plan collectively for management of federal documents held by ASERL libraries, in collaboration with other Federal Depository Libraries in the area.

A Discussion Draft was prepared and adopted unanimously by ASERL library deans and directors at the ASERL Spring Membership Meeting in Atlanta, Georgia in April 2010. The document was broadly distributed in order to obtain comments and suggestions. An online survey was conducted, followed by Summit Meeting in Atlanta in August 2010 to review the survey results and other comments. Open issues that required further discussion were identified. The resulting recommendations were reviewed by the ASERL Deans' FDLP Task Force, which agreed on appropriate resolution of the open issues. These revisions were then accepted at the ASERL Fall Membership Meeting in Durham, North Carolina in November 2010.

An Implementation Plan was developed to describe the common set of collection management and disposition policies and procedures, as well as documented best practices, that were developed through this process. The Implementation Plan was approved unanimously at the ASERL Meeting on April 27, 2011. At the request of the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO), some modifications to the Implementation Plan were initiated and approved in concept at the ASERL Spring Membership Meeting in Charleston, SC, on April 12, 2012.

Some aspects of the plan have already been implemented. Others are still in the early stages of implementation. Full implementation is likely to take several years. ASERL will issue periodic reports on the progress and document any changes in these guidelines that are identified during the implementation process.

Establishing Comprehensive FDLP Collections in the Region

A major goal of the Implementation Plan is to ensure that the region includes at least two complete cataloged sets of print publications and maps distributed as part of the Federal Depository Library Program and, to the extent possible, its predecessor programs. **This does not imply that there will only be two Regional Depository Libraries in the Southeast Region.** Rather, it means that among the Regional and Selective Depository Libraries in the southeast there will be collaboration to take responsibility for cataloging and inventorying a portion of the collection and for retrospectively acquiring the items necessary to make that portion as complete as possible within the limitations of available content and resources. This is a major effort that will require many years.

Centers of Excellence

The mechanism for developing two comprehensive distributed federal document collections in the Southeast Region is through Centers of Excellence for specific federal agencies, formats or topics. The libraries that agree to serve as Centers will catalog and inventory their holdings and conduct research to identify other publications that are missing from their Center of Excellence collections. The Centers commit to obtaining the missing items, if possible, in order to establish a comprehensive collection of

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publications from these agencies. Currently 30 Federal Depository Libraries in the Southeast Region have agreed to become Centers of Excellence for specific agencies or subagencies. In several instances Centers of Excellence have been identified by format¹ or by subject matter². A master list documenting the commitments, both tentative and final, is being maintained by ASERL.³

Disposition of Federal Documents

The Implementation Plan identifies common disposition procedures that apply to Selective Depository Libraries in the region and may also be used by Regional Depository Libraries disposing of duplicate and superseded copies. The ASERL Documents Disposition Database has been developed by the University of Florida to implement these common procedures. The Database handles publications being discarded (Offers Lists) as well as the capability to accept a list of needed documents (Needs Lists) and then match those needs to new offers as they are submitted.⁴

ASERL Deans' FDLP Steering Committee

The ASERL FDLP Steering Committee provides long-term oversight and governance for this initiative, as well as leading the effort to identify Centers of Excellence necessary to establish two comprehensive FDL collections in the region.

1. Governance

The Steering Committee includes library deans and directors from Regional and Selective Depository Libraries in the Southeast Region, with the assistance of ASERL Executive Director John Burger. It meets as needed, but at least annually, to ensure the program is functioning as intended. The members of the Steering Committee are:

- Julia Rholes, University of Mississippi (Chair)
- Terry Birdwhistell, University of Kentucky
- Larry Boyer, East Carolina University
- Sylverna Ford, University of Memphis
- Lance Query, Tulane University
- Judy Russell, University of Florida
- Kay Wall, Clemson University

Although two of the thirteen Regional Depository Libraries in the Southeast Region are not ASERL members, they have been, and will continue to be, consulted so that the major decisions remain consensus decisions. Similarly, Selective Depository Libraries that are not ASERL members will continue to have an opportunity to influence the guidance that is promulgated since it directly affects the management of their depository collections.

Additionally, the ASERL FDLP Steering Committee works closely with the ASERL Collaborative Federal Depository Program Steering Committee, and if that committee ceases to exist, will establish an advisory committee consisting of documents coordinators from both Regional and Selective Depository Libraries in the southeast to review proposed changes in policy and procedure.

2. Support for Implementation

Deans and Directors of the Regional and Selective Depository Libraries in the Southeast Region already make a substantial investment to support their participation in the Federal Depository Library Program.

¹ The University of Georgia has agreed to serve as a Center of Excellence for maps, regardless of the publishing agency.

² Florida International University has agreed to serve as a Center of Excellence for federal documents relating to the Everglades, regardless of the publishing agency.

³ The master list of Centers of Excellence is available at <http://www.aserl.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/FDLP-Directory-Southeast-Libraries.xls>.

⁴ A recorded demonstration and a LibGuide that describes the capability of the software are available at <http://www.aserl.org/aserls-documents-disposition-database/>.

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Full participation in this initiative, particularly for the libraries that agree to serve as Centers of Excellence, will require additional resources, particularly for cataloging and inventorying portions of the local documents collection. This will be a strategic investment in improved public access through better management of the individual collections and, perhaps more importantly, through collective and collaborative management of federal documents collections in the Southeast Region.

Every Federal Depository Library in the Southeast Region can support this initiative and contribute to the development of the comprehensive collections for the southeast by implementing these guidelines. Every Regional Depository Library in the southeast and every ASERL member library that is a Selective Depository Library is **expected** to identify one or more agencies or topics for which it can serve as a Center of Excellence. Other Selective Depository Libraries in the Southeast Region are **strongly encouraged** to consider serving as a Center of Excellence for some agency or topic that is relevant to their constituencies.

3. Next Steps

ASERL has already identified the need to review existing State Plans for states in the Southeast Region and adjust them, if necessary, so they do not conflict with this Implementation Plan. As State Plans are developed in states such as Florida that do not currently have them, the Steering Committee recommends that those State Plans be written to avoid conflict with the guidelines from this Implementation Plan. The Implementation Plan is expected to be a vital document that will evolve with experience. Consequently, State Plans should consider incorporating these guidelines by reference, rather than by inclusion, so the State Plans will not need to be revised as the Implementation Plan changes.

There is agreement within ASERL that the best means of providing broad public access to these important collections is through online access to digital and digitized collections. Establishing and sustaining such access is a high priority for ASERL members. Consequently, ASERL intends to develop and implement a plan to address how Federal Depository Libraries in the Southeast Region can support or participate in initiatives to create a comprehensive digital collection of federal documents in the public domain. This will complement efforts to manage the tangible collections held by depository libraries in the Southeast Region.

4. Comments and Questions

Comments and questions can be sent to Julia Rholes (jrholes@olemiss.edu), Judy Russell (jcrussell@ufl.edu) or John Burger (jburger@aserl.org).