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The Status and Future of Government Documents

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The Status and Future of Government Documents in Libraries

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U.S. Documents (Titles) Received by Criss Library

	Paper	Microfiche	Combined
FY 1998-1999	5,594	8,294	13,388
FY 2000-2001	4,385	3,428	7,813
FY 2002-2003	3,208	3,213	6,421
FY 2004-2005	2,259	2,108	4,467
FY 2006-2007	2,069	2,165	4,234
FY 2008-2009	1,881	1,714	3,595

The decline leveled off, but the combined number is down 73% over the course of 11 years.

Electronic Documents (Titles) Cataloged at Criss Library

	U.S.	Nebraska	Combined
FY 2005-2006	1,340	479	1,819
FY 2006-2007	1,678	412	2,090
FY 2007-2008	1,664	424	2,088
FY 2008-2009	1,875	460	2,335

Government Documents Staffing at Criss Library

FY 1998-1999

1 FTE Librarian, 1 FTE Associate, 1 FTE Assistant
4 student workers (20 hours/week each)

FY 2009-2010

1 Librarian (Director of Collections & Gov't Docs)
1 Associate (2/3 Gov't Docs; 1/3 Reference Desk)
1 student worker (20 hours shared with Univ. Archives)

Staff devoted to Government Documents declined commensurately with the decline of physical receipts, and new responsibilities (service for microforms, periodicals, Reference Desk) added.

2007 Biennial Survey of Depository Libraries: In the last five years, has your library's depository staffing:

Increased	62 libraries	6%
Decreased	355 libraries	29%
Stayed the same	775 libraries	64%

(Question 17, page 18)

Questions for Depository Libraries

If we continue to think that access to government information is important to our community, how do we assist or make that happen?

Can we rely on the general Internet and its search engines, or do we need to create a more customized gateway?

What, if any, responsibility do we bear in relation to archival concerns for electronic government documents?

Questions for Depository Libraries

How do we maintain a critical mass of expertise and experience in working with government information resources?

Do we need to be a depository library to accomplish what we should do for our community?

2007 Biennial Survey of Depository Libraries: Identify the depository collection formats (tangible and electronic) that are preferred by your library's patrons:

Collect primarily tangible items	151	13%
Collect primarily electronic items (Internet-accessible)	75	6%
Collect a mixture of tangible and electronic items (Internet-accessible)	968	81%

(Question 3A, Page 7)

2007 Biennial Survey of Depository Libraries: Indicate the number of Access Derivatives (PDF files) your library systematically downloads, stores, and makes accessible to the general public from local servers:

Files	0	1-500	501-5000	5001+
Libraries	1006	160	28	5