Law libraries and the future of public access to born-digital government information

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Article begins on next page

Rebecca Kunkel**

As government publications have shifted from print to electronic, mechanisms for guaranteeing the public’s right to access government information have not kept pace. Because legal resources are among the publications most at risk of loss, law libraries should participate in efforts to ensure that born-digital government information remains freely available to all.

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Introduction

§1 Web publishing has profoundly changed how the government disseminates information, including legal information. Many observers assume that the shift toward electronic publishing has improved access to government information. However, whether web publishing infrastructure sufficiently ensures that government information remains available over the long term is an open question. Link rot within electronic legal citations already undermines the ability of legal researchers to verify the sources on which courts’ reasoning is based.1 But another imminent threat looms over the long-term availability of the very sources that make up the law, which are increasingly likely to be born digital and published exclusively on the web.

§2 This article discusses how changes in government publishing and distribution are likely to impact the long-term availability of this born-digital legal information. In paragraphs 3 through 14, I discuss how electronic publishing has altered the roles of the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) and Government

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* © Rebecca Kunkel, 2017. I thank Caroline Young and Judith Simms for their helpful comments on an earlier draft of this article.

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Publishing Office (GPO). This discussion provides a baseline for understanding how electronic-only publishing falls short of the long-term guarantees of access traditionally afforded by depository libraries. Paragraphs 15 through 29 look at how the general trend toward web publishing has impacted a particular category of legal information, administrative decisions. I focus on administrative decisions because agencies have broad discretion over whether and how to publish their decisions. This section presents the methodology for gathering information about this group of publications and then summarizes conclusions about the level of preservation risk to each publication. Paragraphs 30 through 35 conclude with a discussion of how law libraries can take more active roles in preserving government information, both by participating in GPO’s existing preservation efforts and by independently building collections of born-digital documents.

**Digital Publishing and Public Access: Origins of the Problem**

\(^{\text{93}}\) For many years, the FDLP was the principal way that the public accessed government information.\(^{\text{2}}\) Most of the current program’s legal requirements were set out in the Depository Library Act of 1962.\(^{\text{3}}\) At that time, the primary concern was that the public had access to physical copies of publications located in libraries geographically dispersed throughout the country. To do this, the FDLP distributes free copies of documents to member libraries. In exchange, libraries in the program are required to make the documents accessible to the public.\(^{\text{4}}\) The one regional depository library designated per state must maintain in perpetuity all documents distributed through the program.\(^{\text{5}}\) Other libraries, designated as selective depositories, receive only those documents determined to be relevant to their local community of users.\(^{\text{6}}\) Although selective libraries are only required to keep documents in their collections for five years, they may not discard documents received through the program without first offering those items to other depositories.\(^{\text{7}}\)

\(^{\text{94}}\) Although this basic framework was meant to ensure public access, it also helps to preserve the documents in depository collections. Geographic dispersal of libraries limits how far members of the public have to travel to get to a depository, but it also makes sure that a threat to one library’s collection does not endanger all copies of a document. Requirements that libraries maintain documents received from the program ensure that copies of documents remain available over time.

\(^{\text{95}}\) As more government information is published online, researchers can rely on the FDLP less and less to preserve the information that the federal government produces. Relatively early on, GPO decided to conflate “distribution” of links to

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5. Id.
6. See id. § 1904.
7. Id. § 1912.
web-based resources with distribution of the resources themselves. When a depository selects a web-based electronic product, it receives a catalog record with links to the item, if it receives anything at all. This method of “distributing” web-based documents means that unless libraries take additional steps to harvest electronic content from the web, the only copies of the document remain with the agency.

6 Web publishing is a powerful way of giving the public access to information, at least initially. However, when information is born digital and available exclusively from a webpage, it seriously complicates the issue of preservation, consequently threatening the public’s ability to access information over time. The authenticity of digital items is an ongoing concern, due “to the ease with which alterations can be made.” In addition to the physical vulnerability of whatever medium the digital files are stored on, keepers of digital collections must guard against other issues unique to digital formats, including data corruption and hardware or software obsolescence.

7 Compounding the technical challenges of dealing with digital formats, the distribution of links to web-based resources rather than actual files means that much of the government information published on the web tends to remain under the control of a single entity—whether that entity is GPO or another agency. Centralization renders information more vulnerable to the whims of the individual agency and its members, and may result in intentional removal or alteration based on changes in policy or budget cuts.

8 GPO, to its credit, has made digital preservation a greater priority in recent years. Many of its own digital publications are hosted in its repository system, Federal Digital System (FDSys), which complies with the Open Archival Information System (OAIS) standard. The OAIS standard “is a conceptual framework for an archival system dedicated to preserving and maintaining access to digital information over the long term. It describes the environment in which an archive resides, the functional components of the archive itself, and the information infrastructure supporting the archive’s processes.” Compliance with this standard is widely

8. See James A. Jacobs et al., Government Information in the Digital Age: The Once and Future Federal Depository Library Program, 31 J. ACAD. LIBRARIANSHIP 198, 200 (2005) (noting that according to the strategic plan adopted by the agency in 2004, GPO failed to distinguish between depositing digital items with libraries and providing access to those items on a centralized government server).

9. R. Eric Petersen, Jennifer E. Manning & Christina M. Bailey, Cong. Research Serv., R42457, Federal Depository Library Program: Issues for Congress 13 (2012), https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R42457.pdf (“Unlike tangible collections, digital government information is not provided to depository libraries, but is provided through the Internet by GPO and its content partners to depository libraries and directly to users with Internet access.”).


11. Id. at 11.


15. OCLC/RLG WORKING GROUP ON PRESERVATION METADATA, PRESERVATION METADATA AND THE OAIS INFORMATION MODEL: A METADATA FRAMEWORK TO SUPPORT THE PRESERVATION OF DIGITAL
“viewed as vital to a functioning trusted digital repository,”¹⁶ such that documents hosted in FDSys may be regarded as relatively secure.

§9 In addition to what is contained in FDSys, GPO’s electronic collection includes copies of web-based documents and websites produced by other federal agencies. Barnum describes the measures undertaken for digital preservation of electronic items in GPO’s Catalog of Government Publications (CGP):

Where possible, GPO obtains a documented commitment from publishing agencies that electronic publications will be available on the originating site permanently, and that GPO is given the files to manage in the event that the agency cannot honor that commitment. Where a documented agreement isn’t possible, GPO harvests a copy of the publication for its own archive. These publications are retained, updated as needed, and served up to users only when the agency version is no longer available. The archived information may be managed on in-house servers at GPO, on servers operated by FDLP partners which agree to maintain and migrate archival publications, or on vendor-operated servers.¹⁷

§10 Archiving takes place when the item is cataloged.¹⁸ This raises the question of whether GPO’s archives reflect information added to the resource subsequent to when the catalog record was created. This concern may be relatively limited when a catalog record points to a single, discrete document such as a PDF. However, items are frequently cataloged at a much more general level—for example, a landing page with multiple links to volumes of a continuing resource. Catalog records may also point to databases that can contain hundreds of discrete documents, which are likely to be changed and updated frequently.¹⁹

§11 More recently, GPO has also begun archiving complete websites. Web archiving involves a periodic crawl of an entire agency site to create more or less functional snapshots at given points in time.²⁰ Currently, the program includes about 130 sites.²¹ While web archiving may be an effective way to preserve the “look and feel” of a website, it is far from a perfect solution to capturing all of the online content. One clear limitation is that a site must be archived at particular points in time, meaning that information may be lost as content is modified, moved, or taken down between crawls of the site.²² GPO’s web archiving software is also unable to capture the contents of databases or other webpages that rely on dynami-
cally generated content. Thus, even at the moments a site is crawled, much valuable information may not be captured.

§12 As agencies continue to post more information on the web, the problem of fugitive documents—government publications that are in the scope of the FDLP but have been neither cataloged nor distributed to depositories—also continues to grow. In theory, almost all federal government publications should be distributed through the FDLP. The Depository Library Act directs agencies to submit publications to the Superintendent of Documents for distribution, carving out only two exceptions to this general rule: (1) internal documents that have “no public interest or educational value” and (2) “publications classified for reasons of national security.”

§13 In practice, agencies regularly neglect this duty, a problem that did not originate with digital publishing. Even before web publishing became a widespread phenomenon, agencies often self-published or went through private publishers, neglecting to submit the required copies to the Superintendent of Documents. However, web publishing is frequently cited as the cause of a sharp increase in the number of fugitive documents. In 2003, Gil Baldwin, then director of GPO’s Library Programs Service, estimated the number of digital fugitive documents at 250,000. According to a more recent estimate, there may be “more born-digital government information items produced in a single year than all the two or three million non-digital information items accumulated in the FDLP over 200 years.” Of those, a significant percentage may be fugitive documents.

§14 In the past, fugitive documents thwarted the efforts of depositories to provide access to all publications of the federal government. Today, the public often has Internet access to documents, at least for whatever period of time the agency decides to make the document available on its website. However, the failure of agencies to submit web-based documents to GPO typically hinders efforts to identify publications for cataloging and archiving—actions that might help to reduce the risk of information once posted on the web becoming irrevocably lost.

23. Web Archiving, supra note 20 (“Additionally, some Web sites, such as databases or Web sites where content is generated ‘on the fly’ by a content management system, cannot be properly harvested or archived by Archive-It. In these instances, we try to create partnerships with the providing agencies to ensure permanent public access to their Web sites.”).

24. For example, when one tries to navigate to the Federal Energy Commission’s advisory opinions from the version of the FEC site captured December 8, 2015, attempts to search for opinions in the database or browse by the year of the opinion (http://wayback.archive-it.org/4326/20151104165427 /http://saos.fec.gov/saos/searchao) result in a “Not in Archive” error message.


30. Id. at 13.
Legal Information and Administrative Decisions

§15 Much of the information produced by the government is legal information, including the statutes, regulations, and opinions that constitute the primary sources of law. Some primary sources, such as the United States Code, United States Reports, and the Code of Federal Regulations, are still widely distributed by the FDLP in print and therefore available to legal researchers in stable formats as well as online. However, the web is becoming the main location for other government-produced legal information, including primary sources of administrative law.

§16 Generally applicable regulations are required to be published in the Federal Register and are therefore distributed through the FDLP in both the Federal Register and the Code of Federal Regulations. On the other hand, there has never been a statutory requirement to publish written opinions issued under an agency’s quasi-judicial authority. Historically, availability of administrative decisions has varied widely, with some agencies publishing their decisions in reporters printed by GPO, others through private publishers, and others making the decisions available only upon a specific request.

§17 The lack of uniformity in publishing requirements does not imply that administrative decisions lack importance for legal researchers. Administrative decisions are analogous to court opinions, often containing the reasoning behind the agency’s determination and interpretations of relevant law. These decisions may be treated as sources of precedent within the agency. Courts also treat administrative decisions as precedential and accord special deference to an agency’s interpretations of its own rules.

§18 Casual observation suggests that administrative decisions are among those documents increasingly likely to be self-published on the agency websites rather than in tangible formats. How these general trends in government publishing impact the long-term survival for this category of legal information has not yet been studied in detail. By its very nature, the problem is difficult to study. Decisions may be fugitive documents and therefore omitted from GPO’s CGP, the most complete listing of federal publications available. No official census lists all agencies that issue administrative decisions, much less where and by whom those decisions are published. Information about preservation activities that may include these items is not collected in a single location. Nonetheless, using GPO’s catalog, supporting documentation, and other available resources, it is possible to improve our understanding of some basic issues that impact the long-term preservation and public accessibility of documents. Questions that existing tools can answer include whether analog copies of documents are being distributed to depositories, whether documents are being hosted in a publicly accessible standards-compliant repository such as FD Sys, and whether GPO has cataloged (and is therefore likely to have archived) documents.

32. 2 CHARLES H. KOCH, JR. & RICHARD MURPHY, ADMINISTRATIVE LAW & PRACTICE § 5:61 (3d ed. 2010).
34. 3 KOCH & MURPHY, supra note 32, § 10:26.
35. JACOBS, supra note 29, at 7.
The first step toward studying whether publications are at risk was to inventory available agency decisions. To find a list that was reasonably complete, I consulted two separate sources: the Superintendent of Documents’s List of Classes\(^{36}\) and a separate list of administrative decisions maintained by the University of Virginia (UVA) Library.\(^{37}\) The List of Classes contains all items that are available to federal depositories. It is organized around the Superintendent of Documents (SuDocs) classification scheme used by the FDLP, which classifies documents based on agency provenance.\(^{38}\) Although the List of Classes does not focus specifically on administrative decisions, it formed a useful starting point for gathering information because titles included in the List of Classes are listed alongside their Superintendent of Documents Classification Number. This provided a precise method of searching for documents in the CGP.

The titles identified through the List of Classes were likely to form an incomplete list for two reasons. As discussed in the previous section, agencies frequently publish information without going through GPO, meaning that some relevant sets of decisions would not appear in the List of Classes. Second, even those decisions being distributed to depositories may not be clearly described as such in the List of Classes due to the lack of standardization in the SuDocs Classification Scheme.\(^{39}\) I therefore consulted the UVA list to fill in these potential gaps. The UVA list attempts to include all agency decisions available on the web, not necessarily those available through GPO, so it was more likely to include fugitive documents in the list of available publications.

After using these sources to compile the inventory, I gathered information to determine the degree of risk to each publication. To conduct this analysis, I used a framework outlined by the Legal Information Preservation Alliance to evaluate the levels of risk to electronic resources:

- **Lowest Risk**: Digital surrogates with an analog counterpart that is properly curated.
- **Low Risk**: Digital content that is curated properly and maintained in digital repositories with preservation policies and strategies specifically stated.
- **Medium Risk**: Digital content held by several independent organizations, possibly including the creator, caretakers, and publishers.
- **High Risk**: Digital content that is not held in redundant systems or a digital repository.


• Highest Risk: Digital content that is not held in redundant systems or a digital repository and that cannot be reformatted to eye readable formats.\footnote{Cobb & Allen-Hart, supra note 10, at 28–29.}

\§ 22 I obtained most of the information relevant to the risk assessment for particular items through the CGP, which contains records of government publications since 1976. GPO does not attempt to catalog all government information made available through nongovernment sources such as commercial publishers or nonprofit groups. It also does not include the contents of National Archives and Records Administration’s digital repositories.\footnote{NARA maintains its own catalog, which includes records of electronic items, available through http://www.archives.gov/research/catalog/about.html.} The CGP therefore does not exhaust the entire universe of sources through which digital publications may be preserved. However, the CGP does include catalog records for items located with nongovernment entities that have formed agreements with GPO to guarantee public access to documents, making it reasonably complete with regard to the sources to which the public has a right to free access.

\§ 23 Information about whether analog versions of a title are distributed to depositories is readily available through the CGP. The same SuDoc class number typically includes records for both paper and electronic versions of the same title. GPO also attempts to link paper and microform from records for electronic equivalents and vice versa. Information about whether analog versions are current and up to date is also available through the CGP. Catalog records typically contain item-level information about continuing resources as well as information about whether these items were distributed to depositories. GPO catalogers may also use the publication dates or notes field to indicate whether an item has been discontinued or continued exclusively in electronic format.

\§ 24 Some information about whether documents are held in a properly maintained digital repository or redundant system may also be inferred from what is available in the CGP. Because FDSys is an OAIS-compliant repository, its items qualify as low risk.\footnote{Cobb & Allen-Hart, supra note 10, at 30.} Catalog records for discrete documents that link directly to the item hosted on an agency site are evidence that GPO has an archived backup copy of the document, although not necessarily hosted in FDSys.\footnote{U.S. Gov’t Printing Office, Managing the FDLP Electronic Collection: A Policy and Planning Document 9 (2d ed., June 18, 2004), http://www.fdlp.gov/file-repository/about-the-fdlp/gpo-projects/collection-of-last-resort/1908-managing-the-fdlp-electronic-collection-a-policy-and-planning-document?path=about-the-fdlp/gpo-projects/collection-of-last-resort [https://perma.cc/D8U9-3DDP].} The implications of items cataloged at a more general level are more ambiguous. For the purposes of this article, I have presumed that when the catalog record links to a landing page with static links to content, the information contained in those links has been archived.\footnote{See supra ¶¶ 9–10.} For records that link to databases with dynamically generated content, evidence suggests that this content has not been archived.\footnote{See supra ¶ 11.}

\§ 25 The appendix contains the complete list of the forty-two publications studied, along with conclusions about their risk levels and summaries of the informa-
tion on which those conclusions are based. What follows is a brief summary of the information in the appendix.

¶26 Of the forty-two total publications, twenty-six were identified through the List of Classes and sixteen through the UVA list. Of the sixteen items from the UVA list, I identified only two that had associated records in the CGP. The remaining fourteen publications I therefore tentatively identified as high risk, with content existing solely in a digital medium, held by a single institution, with no specified preservation strategy.

¶27 Of the remaining twenty-eight titles for which SuDoc numbers were identified, three were not associated with any records of publications in the CGP. Three titles, or approximately 7.1% of the total number of publications, were at the level of lowest risk with all years for which the publication was available being distributed to depositories in a tangible format. Two titles (about 4.8%) were at medium risk for all dates available, and five of the cataloged titles (11.9%) were at high risk for all dates available, with contents available exclusively in electronic databases with dynamically generated contents. The remaining fifteen titles were at more than one risk level depending on the dates under consideration. Not surprisingly, eight of these titles (19.0%) went from lowest risk to high risk as paper publications formerly distributed to depositories were replaced by online-only databases.

¶28 In total, thirty publications, or 71.4% of the total number of publications studied, were at high risk for some period of their publication histories, owing to a lack of analog distribution and digital content either not being cataloged by GPO at all or else being hosted in a database making the contents of the database inaccessible to archiving. Only three publications (7.1%)—the Federal Communications Commission Record, Decisions of the Federal Labor Relations Authority, and Nuclear Regulatory Commission Issuances—unambiguously continue to exist at the lowest level of risk.

¶29 Although these numbers may not directly generalize to other types of publications, this inquiry certainly raises the question of whether other legal information created by federal agencies is being preserved in a publicly accessible form. In addition to decisions, agencies produce legal advisory opinions, internal rules and regulations, public guidance documents, newsletters, and journals with legal commentary. None of these resources are subject to publication in the Federal Register, but all are administrative law materials that fall within the scope of the FDLP. Further investigation is warranted to determine whether other legal information is being disseminated in a way that will ensure permanent public access.

Recommendations

¶30 The availability of items through the FDLP directly impacts law libraries, whether or not they are members of the program. The FDLP decreases researchers’ dependence on commercial fee-based services. Public libraries that offer free online sources improve their ability to serve patrons who may not have full access to the libraries’ paid subscriptions. The system of depository libraries also increases the likelihood that patrons can obtain harder-to-find government information, through either referral or interlibrary loan.
§31 The fact that many administrative decisions are at high risk in terms of preservation suggests that GPO’s preservation efforts are not necessarily focused on items used by legal researchers. Other legal publications produced by federal agencies—such as internal regulations, advisory opinions, public guidance documents, and legal periodicals—may no longer be distributed to depositories or preserved in digital formats. If we want to make sure this information is preserved in a form that remains free to all patrons, law libraries should be involved with efforts to save legal information published on government websites.

§32 All librarians can contribute to GPO’s preservation efforts by using the existing channels to request that GPO catalog and preserve specific publications. Identifying all in-scope publications omitted from the FDLP is a challenging and time-consuming task. However, law librarians can contribute to crowd-sourced efforts to identify fugitive documents by first determining whether GPO has cataloged publications that their patrons use and then reporting omissions to GPO through AskGPO or through the Lost Docs reporting form, neither of which require depository status to use.

§33 Reporting documents to GPO may help to focus preservation resources on items most important to legal researchers. However, the universe of born digital documents is large and GPO’s resources are finite. It is unlikely that GPO’s preservation efforts alone can catch up with the sheer volume of information now being produced by the federal government. GPO’s current strategic plan reflects this reality: it calls for the creation of a Federal Information Preservation Network (FIPNet) to share the burden of preserving digital resources among many institutions.

§34 While the precise requirements of being a FIPNet preservation partner are as yet largely untested and undefined, it is clear that cooperating with the planned network will allow GPO to centralize coordination of preservation tasks. This may benefit participating libraries by avoiding unnecessary duplication of effort, as well as raising the profile of local collections through the help of GPO’s existing finding aids and publicity tools. Partnerships may also help libraries to maintain their collections long term by allowing GPO to assume some of the burden of permanent public access.

§35 Further, even libraries that cannot commit long term to partnering with GPO can significantly help preservation efforts. A collection need not be ideal to reduce the risk to large numbers of documents. Preservation measures may be as simple as downloading documents from government sites to local servers, along with a minimum of metadata, until such time that more permanent solutions become feasible. This type of project may be undertaken at relatively low cost by

49. Partnerships, FDLP: FED. DEPOSITORY LIBRARY PROGRAM (last updated Sept. 12, 2016), http://www.fdlp.gov/about-the-fdlp/partnerships [https://perma.cc/253R-6UP8] (“In the event that a partner is unable to provide permanent public access, GPO will make arrangements to provide access to the resource.”).
either writing scripts or using one of a growing number of open source, free, or commercial web scraping tools.\textsuperscript{51} Web scraping can recategorize a large number of documents from high risk to medium risk relatively quickly, by simply ensuring that backup copies exist somewhere in the event that the originals are removed or altered.\textsuperscript{52} This intermediate step may prove necessary given the current magnitude of the problem.

**Conclusion**

\textsuperscript{\S 36} In the short term, web publishing gives members of the public improved access to government information. But as web publishing has supplanted distribution of tangible materials through the FDLP, the guarantee of long-term public access to these materials has become increasingly elusive. Long-term preservation of digital resources requires a more active approach than that for tangible materials. This inherent challenge gives enough cause for concern, but in addition, a vast quantity of information now resides exclusively with agencies that may lack an ongoing commitment to public access to these resources.

\textsuperscript{\S 37} Many publications at risk of disappearing are legal resources, including primary sources of law such as administrative decisions. The vast majority of the administrative publications studied here, in fact, have qualified as high risk for some or most of their publication histories. Law libraries’ interest in ensuring that government-produced legal resources remain free and available to the public must translate to action to save many currently available resources. Law librarians should contribute to preservation efforts, whether by identifying documents for preservation by others or by building their own collections of born-digital documents.

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\textsuperscript{51} Some examples of free web scraping tools include the Outwit Docs plugin for Firefox (http://outwit.com/products/docs/), which harvests documents, and the Web Scraper plugin for Chrome (http://webscraper.io/), which is designed to harvest metadata from webpages.

\textsuperscript{52} For example, at Rutgers Law Library, we have downloaded about 5000 military departmental regulations and associated metadata from government databases using scripts written in the Perl programming language. The project is currently hosted at http://govdocs.rutgers.edu/mil/form.php.
## Appendix

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>SuDoc No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<td>A 1.58/A</td>
<td>Agriculture Decisions</td>
<td>In print: last volume cataloged 2006; 2005–2006 not arrived or not distributed; electronic: record links to <a href="http://www.oaljdecisions.dm.usda.gov/agriculture-decisions-publication">http://www.oaljdecisions.dm.usda.gov/agriculture-decisions-publication</a>, with links to individual volumes; note from the Agriculture decisions webpage: “While Agriculture Decisions generally does not include full texts of Miscellaneous Orders, Default Decisions, or Consent Decisions, those decisions and orders are available in their entirety, in portable document format (pdf), under OALJ Decisions.”; the OALJ decisions page (<a href="http://www.oaljdecisions.dm.usda.gov/current">http://www.oaljdecisions.dm.usda.gov/current</a>) does not appear to be in CGP.</td>
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<td>FCC Record</td>
<td>In print: paper volumes cataloged through 2015; electronic copy available through <a href="http://digital.library.unt.edu/explore/collections/FCCRD/browse/">http://digital.library.unt.edu/explore/collections/FCCRD/browse/</a></td>
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<td>Federal Trade Commission Decisions</td>
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<td>Lowest (to 2000)/medium (since 2000)</td>
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<td>GA 1.5/A-2</td>
<td>[GAO] Decisions</td>
<td>703 records cataloged as individual titles most recent from 2013; sample of purls appear to be archived on permanent.access.gpo.gov; FDSys contains decisions from 1995–2008; note in FDSys indicates “GPO signed a partnership agreement with the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to provide permanent public access to the GAO Reports database and GAO Comptroller General Decisions database on the GAO Web site. Under this agreement, GAO agrees to provide storage capacity and user access without restrictions on re-dissemination.” Decisions on the GAO website (<a href="http://www.gao.gov/legal/">http://www.gao.gov/legal/</a>) appear to be dynamically generated in response to user searches.</td>
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<td>In print: individual volumes of paper version not cataloged, general note “Not distributed to depository libraries in a physical form, 1983–”; electronic records links to <a href="http://www.mspb.gov/decisions/decisions.htm">http://www.mspb.gov/decisions/decisions.htm</a> and <a href="http://www.mspb.gov/decisions/searchdec.htm">http://www.mspb.gov/decisions/searchdec.htm</a>, which requires searching a database to get to decisions.</td>
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<td>SE 1.11:</td>
<td>Decisions and Reports</td>
<td>Record only for print item; dates are unclear but this title appears to have been last distributed in 2005–2006; current SEC decisions located at <a href="http://www.sec.gov/litigation/apdocuments.shtml">http://www.sec.gov/litigation/apdocuments.shtml</a> do not appear to be cataloged.</td>
<td>Lowest (to 2006)/High (since 2006)</td>
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<td>TD 13.6/3:</td>
<td>Surface Transportation Board Decisions and Notices</td>
<td>Electronic only, links to <a href="http://www.stb.dot.gov/decisions/readingroom.nsf/WebServiceDate?openform">http://www.stb.dot.gov/decisions/readingroom.nsf/WebServiceDate?openform</a>, which appears to be dynamically generated content listing individual decisions by date.</td>
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<td>VA 1.95/2:</td>
<td>Board of Veterans’ Appeals Decisions</td>
<td>CD-ROM, individual volumes not cataloged; preliminary record for online version links to <a href="http://www.index.va.gov/search/va/bva.jsp">http://www.index.va.gov/search/va/bva.jsp</a>, a database search page.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudoc No.</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>Risk Level</td>
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<td>Y 11.15:</td>
<td>Decisions of the Board of Directors</td>
<td>37 individual decisions cataloged (1997–2005); current decisions located at <a href="http://www.compliance.gov/directives/final-decisions-year-issuance">http://www.compliance.gov/directives/final-decisions-year-issuance</a>, which does not appear to be cataloged.</td>
<td>Medium (for cataloged decisions)/ high (for decisions since 2005)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Y 3.EQ 2:18-7</td>
<td>Federal Sector Appellate Decisions (database)</td>
<td>Nothing cataloged with this SuDoc number.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Y 3.N 88:11</td>
<td>N.R.C. Issuances, Opinions and Decisions of the N.R.C. with Selected Orders</td>
<td>In print: cataloged through 2015; electronic record links to <a href="http://www.nrc.gov/readingrm/doc-collections/nuregs/staff/sr0750/">http://www.nrc.gov/readingrm/doc-collections/nuregs/staff/sr0750/</a>, which has link to individual volumes.</td>
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<td>Y 3.OC 1:10-6/</td>
<td>Commission Decisions</td>
<td>Electronic record only links to <a href="http://www.oshr.gov/decisions/decisions.html">http://www.oshr.gov/decisions/decisions.html</a>; also available on CD-ROM for dates that are not clear in the catalog record.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Y 3.P 84/4:10</td>
<td>Opinion and Recommended Decision (online database)</td>
<td>Electronic record only links to <a href="http://www.prc.gov/dockets/search">http://www.prc.gov/dockets/search</a>, a database search page; PRC site is archived by GPO but individual opinions do not appear to be available through the archived site.</td>
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<td>Forest Service Environmental Appeal Responses</td>
<td>No catalog record identified; <a href="http://www.fs.fed.us/appeals/">http://www.fs.fed.us/appeals/</a>.</td>
<td>High</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sudoc No.</td>
<td>Title</td>
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<td>Risk Level</td>
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<td>Patent Trial and Appeal Board Decisions</td>
<td>No catalog record identified; <a href="http://e-foia.uspto.gov/Foia/PTABReadingRoom.jsp">http://e-foia.uspto.gov/Foia/PTABReadingRoom.jsp</a>.</td>
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<td>Decisions of the Secretary of Education</td>
<td>No catalog record identified; <a href="http://oha.ed.gov/secretarydecisions.html">http://oha.ed.gov/secretarydecisions.html</a>.</td>
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<td>Education Office of Hearings and Appeals Decisions</td>
<td>No catalog record identified; <a href="http://oha.ed.gov/ohaindex.html">http://oha.ed.gov/ohaindex.html</a>.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Farm Credit Administration Legal Opinion Summaries</td>
<td>No catalog record identified; <a href="http://www.fca.gov/readingrm/legalop/LegalOpinionSummaries/Forms/AllItems.aspx">http://www.fca.gov/readingrm/legalop/LegalOpinionSummaries/Forms/AllItems.aspx</a>.</td>
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<td>FDIC Enforcement Decisions and Orders</td>
<td>No catalog record identified; <a href="https://www5.fdic.gov/EDO/index.html">https://www5.fdic.gov/EDO/index.html</a>; HHS decisions <a href="http://www.hhs.gov/dab/decisions/index.html#">http://www.hhs.gov/dab/decisions/index.html#</a>.</td>
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<td>Coast Guard ALJ and Commandant Decisions</td>
<td>No catalog record identified; <a href="http://www.uscg.mil/alj/decisions/">http://www.uscg.mil/alj/decisions/</a>.</td>
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<td>USPS Administrative Decisions</td>
<td>No catalog record identified; <a href="http://about.usps.com/who-we-are/judicial/admin-decisions/welcome.htm">http://about.usps.com/who-we-are/judicial/admin-decisions/welcome.htm</a>.</td>
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<td>Railroad Retirement Board Coverage Decisions</td>
<td>No catalog record identified; <a href="http://www.rrb.gov/blaw/bcd/cov_introduction.asp">http://www.rrb.gov/blaw/bcd/cov_introduction.asp</a>.</td>
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<td>SEC Opinions and Orders</td>
<td>No catalog record identified; <a href="http://www.sec.gov/litigation/opinions.shtml">http://www.sec.gov/litigation/opinions.shtml</a>.</td>
<td>High</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Small Business Administration Office of Hearings and Appeals Decisions</td>
<td>No catalog record identified; <a href="https://www.sba.gov/oha/decisions">https://www.sba.gov/oha/decisions</a>.</td>
<td>High</td>
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53. This website was no longer working at the time of publication. An archived version is available through the Internet Archive at https://web.archive.org/web/20161209092317/http://www.asbca.mil/Decisions/decisions2015.html.