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A New Way to Manage Uncataloged Materials: A Case Study from Moving the University of Nevada, Reno's Federal Depository Collection

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Abstract

In 2008, the University of Nevada, Reno Library moved into a new building, the Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center. As part of this move, approximately half of the library's print collections were moved into the building's automated storage and retrieval system; a substantial portion of these materials were federal depository materials. This case study describes how cataloging and government documents staff at the University of Nevada, Reno collaborated to achieve intellectual and physical control over a huge, largely uncataloged government documents collection destined for automated storage. More than 9,000 linear feet of uncataloged government documents had to be placed into an automated storage system that requires catalog records for all stored items. To accommodate uncataloged documents, staff devised a way to create bulk catalog records, store these materials efficiently, and provide user access. The authors explain how this project was planned and executed as part of the library move, and then assess the success of the project and its impact on public and technical services operations after a year of working with the new system. The impact on public access in moving this collection is particularly significant in light of the library's service mandate as a regional federal depository.

Introduction

The University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) Libraries opened its new library building, the Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center, in the summer of 2008. The facility includes an automated storage and retrieval system, MARS (the Mathewson Automated Retrieval System), that is four stories high and estimated to be able to hold over a million volumes. Jacquelyn Sundstrand's 2008 article offers a general overview of the planning for the new building and the evolution of plans for MARS, as well as an account of this facility's capabilities for handling archival and manuscript collections.¹ The study presented here builds on Sundstrand's by describing specifically the planning and work done to prepare the Nobel H. Getchell Library's largely uncataloged government publications collection for its move to the new facility and into MARS. A key part of

this preparation was devising a system to create catalog records for ranges of uncataloged materials, freeing the library from the need to catalog over 9,000 linear feet of federal documents. Examining this process and how different library departments worked together to manage the project might prove useful to other libraries planning to move their uncataloged collections.

When planning began for the new building, the library's government documents collection constituted roughly one-third of the library's print holdings, with federal depository materials forming the largest component of this collection. As a regional federal depository, UNR bears a statutory responsibility to build and maintain a permanent federal documents collection freely available to the people of Nevada.²



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Historical Context of UNR's ASRS and the Decision to Store Depository Materials in MARS

Libraries began experimenting with automated storage and retrieval systems (ASRS) in the 1970s, but early installations failed due to problems with the sole manufacturer of such systems for libraries. This manufacturer, Kenway, DeMag, and Supreme Machinery (a division of Remington-Rand), offered little customization for the needs of library environments and ultimately abandoned their efforts to develop ASRS systems for libraries.³ In the 1980s and 1990s, the use of automated storage and retrieval systems in industrial settings expanded considerably with manufacturers taking into account customer demands, refining and improving functionalities. By the early 1990s, libraries were again beginning to explore such systems to cope with limited space and expanding collections. California State University at Northridge launched an ASRS in 1991, and its success led other institutions such as Eastern Michigan University and the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, to plan and install ASRS facilities in their libraries.⁴ Compared to construction costs of new libraries, automated storage and retrieval systems are very cost-effective ways to store low-use materials.⁵ These systems became quite attractive for libraries with technology that could interact effectively with library catalogs, thus providing high-density storage alongside ready access.⁶ When UNR began planning for its new library building in the late 1990s, an ASRS emerged as an obvious choice to maximize use of space in the new facility. Installing such a system would allow much more floor space to be devoted for library users – to work individually or collaboratively, in small or larger groups, and with the computer and multimedia technology increasingly expected by today's tech-savvy students.

Libraries that have introduced an ASRS have typically focused on storing lesser-used and older materials.⁷ While some institutions have included government publications in the materials they store,⁸ the criteria

for storing government publications were generally the same as for other library materials, usually large, cataloged, older serial runs and lesser-used publications. In planning to store approximately 90 percent of its depository materials in MARS, which included large quantities of uncataloged materials – materials that might never receive individual records – it became clear UNR would be forging a new approach.

There were substantial obstacles to implementing this plan. The University of Nevada, Las Vegas, a selective depository, was faced with similar issues to those of UNR when they determined that portions of their government documents collection would be going into an ASRS: the collection was largely uncataloged and would require cataloging, the serial runs needed to be itemized, and item barcoding had yet to be done.⁹ Technical Services librarians at UNLV did some in-house cataloging and purchased other records from MARCIVE, Inc., but even with a temporary librarian hired to help out, they still encountered many problems in preparing their collections. UNR, as a regional federal depository with a considerably larger collection than UNLV's and with fewer staff available to work on the collection, had to find a less labor-intensive but workable solution in preparing and storing its collection.

Assessing the Collection

The library undertook several phases of problem identification, planning, and execution in the years leading up to the move. For the government publications collections, this process involved cataloging segments of the collection, withdrawing selected duplicates, and implementing an innovative process to move and store uncataloged publications.

UNR is one of 50 regional federal depository libraries in the United States. The regional libraries hold extensive depository collections of United States government publications, ranging from the oldest Congressional publications to current materials received in depository shipments, and provide access to



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government materials online through hyper-linked MARC records. Since mid-1976, catalog records produced by the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO) have been available from OCLC. Later, these catalog records became available from several other sources, including commercial subscription services such as MARCIVE, Inc., but also Documents Data Miner, a free service from Wichita State University (<http://govdoc.wichita.edu/ddm2/gdocframes.asp>). Beginning in the mid-1980s, depository libraries began purchasing batched bibliographic and item records for their current depository acquisitions. Research on this development as well as anecdotal accounts indicate that use of federal documents increases dramatically when they are accessible through library catalogs.¹⁰ However, most older U.S. Government documents in these collections, those that predate a library's adoption of batched record loads, are unrepresented in local library catalogs.

The regional depository collection at UNR fits the pattern described above. The University library was designated a federal depository in 1907 and since then has built a comprehensive federal documents collection by adding commercially-produced microfiche sets such as U.S. Executive Branch and Congressional publications and by acquiring printed back runs of key titles like the *Congressional Record* and *United States Reports*. The government publications collection also includes Nevada state and local materials (mostly received through the state depository program), United Nations *Official Records*, other UN publications, and materials from several international government organizations (predominantly the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development). As is common with government publications collections, the primary means of access is through online databases and printed indexes and guides rather than a library catalog. UNR began MARCIVE record loads for its U.S. documents in 1999, but most other items in the federal, state, and international government collections remained uncataloged.

Assessment of the Government Collections Discussions about housing UNR's government publications collection in the new library began early in the planning process, when University administrators were considering more than one potential site for the new library. A planning consultant reported that any available site would require an automated storage and retrieval system in order to house the various collections planned to be moved to the new facility. Since the government publications collections were fairly large and received less use than the libraries' main collections, the Dean of the Libraries determined that 90 percent of the Business and Government Information Center's (BGIC) print collection would be housed in an automated storage and retrieval system. (Ninety percent was a rough number chosen both to meet the space requirements for the new building and to allow users some browseable access to high-use materials and items of local interest.) After the Dean had directed the government documents librarian to select which materials would sit on open shelves and which would go into MARS, the librarian (the Head of BGIC) consulted with three other department staff and recommended the collection be divided into three broad categories.

- Open stacks in new library. Nevada state and local government publications; U.S. decennial Census publications, 1790 to present (excluding printed block maps, which were designated for MARS); Census Bureau general publications; *Statistical Abstract of the United States* (including related supplements); *Census of Agriculture* (earliest to present); *War of the Rebellion*; a small group of environmental reports related to a planned military installation in Nevada. The last two sets were chosen per faculty requests. With these materials in the open stacks, the allotted space would accommodate growth in the titles or publication groupings selected for at least 20 years.



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- Collection components designated for automated storage and retrieval system. The U.S. collection (excluding the federal publications noted above as designated for open stacks); international collections; publications of the RAND Corporation (an independent research organization that analyzes policy, of for the U.S. government).
- Other resources. Several parts of the BGIC collection did not fit into either of the above categories. These included a business and government reference collection, a patent/trademark collection, and a Yucca Mountain Reading Room collection (received from the U.S. Department of Energy as a separate depository designation). BGIC staff weeded the patent/trademark collection after which it was moved to a service area in the new building. The Yucca Mountain materials were moved to a branch library where the University's geology and engineering materials are housed.

The complete BGIC collection, combined with federal documents from the Life & Health Sciences Library, occupied approximately 34,000 linear feet of shelf space. One of the first steps in preparing the collection for the move was to remove duplicates to ensure that all materials to be moved were things the library needed to keep. There was substantial duplication of content in print and microform throughout the BGIC collection, primarily in its U.S. and international components. Where staff could easily identify duplication of holdings in print and on microform, print holdings were withdrawn. The withdrawal of the print Congressional hearings alone removed 47,000 volumes from the collection. Staff ultimately determined that no more than about 18 percent of the BGIC collection was held in duplicate, which was quite less than an initial estimate of 60 percent.

With the collection narrowed down to what would be kept and moved, the library then faced the daunting task of preparing the approximately 30,000 linear feet of the BGIC

Government Documents collection for moving and storage in MARS. The difficulty was that the MARS system requires a catalog record and item record for every piece stored in its bins, but the majority of the government publications that would be moving into MARS were uncataloged. Preparing these materials for automated storage posed the single greatest challenge for moving the collection into the new building.

Meeting this challenge required collaboration and compromise between the two departments that were overseeing the task of getting the collection ready, the Cataloging Department and the staff of BGIC. Government documents staff were familiar with the collection and its organization and were aware of what portions were cataloged and which were the high-use areas. Cataloging staff knew the ILS database, how it worked, and how it would interact with the MARS database. Cataloging staff would have to create or acquire records to be loaded into the catalog database. Together, these departments came up with what was familiarly known as the "yellow-card system" to manage the uncataloged portions of the collection without creating individual records for every piece. Since it was important, on a case-by-case basis, to have some itemized records, they also worked together to select a limited number of materials for cataloging, either through locally-created brief records or through acquisition of batches of fully-cataloged records from MARCIVE. Brief records contained data deemed essential by BGIC staff, but were brief enough that high-level cataloging staff did not have to be involved.

The steps taken to prepare the collection are described in detail below, along with the criteria that were used to determine which materials received which treatments. There were three broad phases of this work: separating cataloged from uncataloged materials; selecting which uncataloged materials would receive individual catalog records and creating records for them; and preparing the rest of the uncataloged materials with the "yellow-card system."



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Preparing the Collection for Automated Storage and Retrieval

Preparing the collection for the MARS facility involved an extensive 11-step process that not only represents a new, innovative approach for UNR in handling this massive amount of material, but also offers a unique approach to moving materials and setting up database access that could be used by other federal depository libraries facing similar challenges.

1. Locate and label all cataloged/itemized publications. Each itemized piece has an adhesive blue label placed on the spine (where possible; on the cover if the spine could not accommodate the sticker), indicating its readiness for automated storage. We describe further cataloging and itemization in sections three to five.
2. Separate all cataloged/itemized publications from uncataloged publications (U.S. collection only). Due to severe space constraints in the old library, which was full almost to capacity, it was not possible to move cataloged and uncataloged materials into separate areas, though this would have been ideal. Nor was it possible to remove any significant part of the collection from public access after preparing it for the change. Instead, the preparation team moved uncataloged documents to the right side of their current shelf and kept cataloged/itemized pieces on the left side of their current shelf. This arrangement kept U.S. publications available to the public and in their original SuDoc call number order – the system created to classify federal publications by their issuing agency – shelf-by-shelf (rather than piece-by-piece, which was the original arrangement). This division caused some confusion with the library's circulation and interlibrary loan staff and required periodic assistance from BGIC staff, but it proved a satisfactory arrangement for the two years from the time the publications were separated until Getchell Library closed in August 2008. Before deciding on this arrangement, we considered boxing the uncataloged publications, but rejected this idea because boxes would have been too unwieldy if kept on the shelves as there was no other space available to store them.
3. Select groups of uncataloged monographs to receive brief records based on issuing government department/agency and content. Selected publications of several U.S. departments and agencies were processed in this phase of collection preparation, the largest single group of publications being environmental impact statements from the Bureau of Land Management. In 2004, the Cataloging Department hired two temporary staff members for collection preparation who created more than 15,000 brief records for the items selected for this treatment. The Cataloging Department manager created brief bibliographic record templates for this task that included unique coding as a way to identify these records in the future. BGIC and Cataloging staff members jointly determined which bibliographic elements to include in these brief records. These templates were also used for later work creating brief records for oversize documents and for non-U.S. government publications. Each different category received its own unique local code in the 001 MARC field.
4. Choose runs of uncataloged government serials to catalog and itemize. The Serials Cataloging Technician and the head of BGIC identified about 350 key U.S. serial titles that the technician cataloged. Cataloging student assistants barcoded and created item records for approximately 45,000 vo-



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lumes. The titles processed included partial holdings of the *U.S. Congressional Serial Set* and an almost complete run of the *Congressional Record*, together comprising about 11 percent of the BGIC print collection.

5. Select sections of uncataloged monographs to receive full bibliographic records and item records (again based on issuing department/agency and content). The library purchased 6,529 retrospective monographic records for selected GPO item numbers from MARCIVE, Inc. Once the library received MARCIVE records and smart barcodes, student workers took groups of barcodes into the stacks, searched for the publications, and attached each barcode to its corresponding publication. The project proved fairly troublesome because staff discovered that some of the publications were already fully cataloged, while others were bound together with other bibliographically distinct items. Additionally, we received records for some publications that were not in the collections (either not received or lost). Resolving these problems required more time than the collection preparation group first anticipated, although staff completed the necessary work within six months.
6. Integrate U.S. documents from two satellite collections. During the final year of Getchell Library's operation, two remote libraries, the Desert Research Institute and Life and Health Sciences libraries, that housed portions of the university libraries' regional depository collection, were forced to recover space (in one instance for faculty offices and, in the other, to accommodate journal holdings) and returned their U.S. documents collections to BGIC. The department consequently received and integrated approximately 1,000 linear feet of publications. Since dedicated staff members were already working on collection preparation, other BGIC staff integrated these materials into the U.S. collection. For these added materials, Cataloging Department staff changed location codes for all cataloged items to BGIC. Adding these collections affected staff work only insofar as they had to affix blue labels to barcoded items, separate them from unbarcoded materials, and integrate the latter groups into the "yellow-card project," described below in section 10. Although adding these materials slowed the overall process, the entire collection preparation was completed by its original target date of January 31, 2008.
7. Return printed Congressional hearings published from 1970-1999 to the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO). Conscious of the library management's interest in culling most duplicates before moving the collection, BGIC staff consulted with the U.S. Government Printing Office and withdrew approximately 47,000 volumes of print hearings from the collection, deleting item records from the catalog when necessary. In keeping with requirements for regional federal depository libraries, UNR retained either GPO or commercially-produced microfiche as its depository copies. Staff deleted print holdings from bibliographic records and attached item records for depository microfiche copies. BGIC staff completed this project over 16 months with no impact on other preparations for moving and, in the process, recovered about 1,400 feet of shelf space. Significantly, GPO paid the cost of shipping the hearings to Washington, D.C., where they may become part of a GPO "dark archive" or be digitized for public access.
8. Create brief records for oversize documents. During the final summer of collection preparation, the head of BGIC and one Catalog Assistant barcoded and created brief records for



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1,226 uncataloged oversized publications. This allowed more options for housing these items in the new building either on open stacks or in automated storage (where most oversized materials would be stored flat rather than upright). This activity did not affect the rest of the BGIC collection preparation workflow.

9. Process non-U.S. publications for automated storage. A technician in BGIC and the Catalog Librarian worked together to create brief or full catalog records for most international government monographs and serials, and for selected State of Nevada and RAND Corporation publications. While preparing for the move, 16,073 monograph records were created as well as 1,150 serials records and 30,900 item records. Of the monographs and serials, approximately 75 percent were brief bibliographic records. Most new international government monograph acquisitions were already being cataloged and classified in Library of Congress Classification (LCC) and mainstreamed into the library collection, thus making this part of the preparation easier.
10. Using yellow cards as dividers, separate uncataloged U.S. documents collection into sections of 11 linear inches or less and create an item record for each section. This was the "yellow card system" referred to above. The goal of this system was to divide the uncataloged portions of the collection into SuDocs number-ordered sections that could be loaded as groups into MARS bins. There would be only one

barcode per section, and the range would be documented in the item record for display.

Once uncataloged materials were segregated (step 2 above), the process of creating yellow card sections began. To fit into sectors in the MARS bins, sections slightly less than one linear foot were needed. BGIC staff used 11 inches as a target to allow enough empty space for staff to browse the publications in a bin sector. Within each sector, the materials were kept in SuDocs number order. A highly visible yellow card was placed at the beginning of each section. Each yellow card recorded starting and ending SuDocs numbers and the maximum height found in the section (this determined bin size), along with a single barcode for that section.

Approximately 9,000 linear feet of yellow-card sections were measured and itemized. Staff in the Cataloging Department created bibliographic records for sections of SuDocs numbers, organized by initial letter: "Uncataloged Materials Government Documents A," "...C," "... D," and so forth. Item records were added using the barcodes on the cards, with the range of SuDocs numbers recorded in the Volume field. Figure 1 shows a sample bibliographic record in the catalog with item records attached, and Figure 2 shows the data present in an item record.



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b24905999						
TITLE Uncataloged materials government documents Y-Z						
LOCATIONS ug						
Summary Record i31728467 0 Item-Level Holds 0 Bib-Level Holds						
View ITEM Attach New Item Delete Move Select						
#	Record Number	LOCATION	STATUS	BARCODE	VOLUME	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1 i31728467	ughk	-	31233012655445	Y 1.1:B 52 to Y 1.1:F 31A...	
<input type="checkbox"/>	2 i31728479	ughk	-	31233012655452	Y 1.1:F 31A.5 to Y 1.2:B 2...	
<input type="checkbox"/>	3 i31728480	ughk	-	31233012655460	Y 1.2:B 22/2/976 to Y 1.2:...	
<input type="checkbox"/>	4 i31728492	ughk	-	31233012655478	Y 1.2:Em 7/6/978A.2 to Y ...	
<input type="checkbox"/>	5 i31728509	ughk	-	31233012655486	Y 1.2:F 31/981 to Y 1.2:F ...	
<input type="checkbox"/>	6 i31728510	ughk	-	31233012655494	Y 1.2:H 75/3/971A.1 to Y ...	
<input type="checkbox"/>	7 i31728522	ughk	-	31233012655502	Y 1.2:N 39/959 to Y 1.2:P ...	
<input type="checkbox"/>	8 i31728534	ughk	-	31233012655510	Y 1.2:P 23/4 to Y 1.2:P 88	
<input type="checkbox"/>	9 i31728546	ughk	-	31233012655635	Y 1.2:P 88/2 to Y 1.2:P 91...	
<input type="checkbox"/>	10 i31728558	ughk	-	31233012655643	Y 1.2:P 91/3A.10 to Y 1.2:...	
<input type="checkbox"/>	11 i3172856x	ughk	-	31233012655650	Y 1.2:R 11/972 to Y 1.2:S...	
<input type="checkbox"/>	12 i31728571	ughk	-	31233012655668	Y 1.2:Sh 6/968 to Y 1.2:V ...	
<input type="checkbox"/>	13 i31728595	ughk	-	31233012655676	Y 1.2:V 64/supp.972 to Y ...	
<input type="checkbox"/>	14 i31728649	ughk	-	31233012655684	Y 1.2/2:103/1 & 2/final ed...	
<input type="checkbox"/>	15 i31728650	ughk	-	31233012655692	Y 1.2/4:00035 to Y 1.2/4:...	
<input type="checkbox"/>	16 i31728662	ughk	-	31233012655700	Y 1.2/4:002208 to Y 1.2/4:...	
<input type="checkbox"/>	17 i31728674	ughk	-	31233012655718	Y 1.2/4:006602 to Y 1.2/4:...	
<input type="checkbox"/>	18 i31728686	ughk	-	31233012655726	Y 1.2/4:009687 to Y 1.2/4:...	
<input type="checkbox"/>	19 i3172873x	ughk	-	31233012655734	Y 1.2/4:012891 to Y 1.2/4:...	

Figure 1. Catalog display of uncataloged sections of U.S. documents in MARS (Software by Innovative Interfaces, Inc. Used with permission)

Summary Record i31728467 0 Item-Level Holds 0 Bib-Level Holds						
i31728467 Last Updated: 11-05-2008 Created: 10-16-2007 Revisions: 6						
COPY #	1	INVDA	- -	LOCATION	ughk UNR KC Government Pubs--MARS	
ICODE1	400	IN LOC	0	LOANRULE	0	
ICODE2	-	# RENEWALS	0	STATUS	- NOT CHK'D OUT	
I TYPE	0 BOOK / SERIAL	# OVERDUE	0	BOUND USE	0	
PRICE	\$0.00	ODUE DATE	- -	CURRNT USE	0	
OUT DATE	- -	ILL USE	0	IMESSAGE	-	
DUE DATE	- -	RECAL DATE	- -	OPACMSG		
PATRON#	0	TOT CHKOUT	0	YTDCIRC	0	
LPATRON	0	TOT RENEW	0	LYRCIRC	0	
LCHKIN	- - :					
VOLUME	Y 1.1:B 52 to Y 1.1:F 31A.4 c.2					
BARCODE	31233012655445					
NOTE	12					

Figure 2. Catalog display of a single item record for an uncataloged section of U.S. documents. The "12" in the note field indicates the section will fit into a bin 12 inches high. (Software by Innovative Interfaces, Inc. Used with permission)

11. Check data on the yellow cards against the collection and correct any errors on cards, including mis-shelved items and related problems. Early spot checks of work on the yellow card project revealed an error rate slightly under ten percent.

The mistakes included errors in Su-Docs numbers written on the cards,

shelves skipped, and pre-existing shelving errors resulting in yellow-carded sections being out of sequence. The head of BGIC formed a four-person team to check all yellow-carded sections for these problems. Each team member corrected any mis-shelving and submitted problem cards to a staff member who double-checked and revised



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the cards, corrected item records in the catalog, and re-shelved the corrected cards. Any changes made to the original cards were dated and initialed by the person making the change. This quality-control review took eight months to complete and was finished five months before any of the collection was moved to the Knowledge Center.

Moving the Collection

The cataloged materials from BGIC and the materials relocated to the open stacks were moved by professional movers, but library staff – primarily Cataloging Department and BGIC staff – moved the yellow-card sections to ensure that the sections remained intact. Every effort was made to identify problems before the materials arrived at the new building and loaded into MARS. The yellow cards were systematically checked one last time during the move to catch as many of these lingering problems as possible. Staff examined the beginning and ending call numbers in a section, then took the materials off the shelf and moved them to carts for transfer to the new building. Government documents staff reviewed and fixed any errors that were discovered through this process. Most of the problems arose from changes that had been made to yellow card sections after the initial creation and review. These problems included sections being either too large to fit in one sector of a bin or sections being so small that bin space would be wasted. In some cases, it was found that cards had slipped off the shelf and disappeared; these cards had to be recreated.

Loading Materials into MARS

To meet the deadline for moving out of the old library, a certain number of oversized book trucks were filled, moved to the new building, and loaded into MARS each day. Naturally, this required careful planning and schedule coordination. Once this work was underway, a new deadline had to be set for vacating the old library and a second shift was added to the BGIC moving team.

(Incidentally, no additional staff were needed for MARS loading since earlier they had been loading other materials and now began handling more government publications). During MARS loading, any problem items that were uncovered in yellow-card sections were sent to the Cataloging Department to be corrected.

Handling pamphlets and leaflets.

Many cataloged depository items are pamphlets, single sheets of paper, or small, unbound publications (collectively called “flimsies”) that cannot stand alone on a shelf. Since they could easily slide down and be crushed or otherwise lost, these items could not be placed on their own in a random-storage bin. The solution to this problem was to store all such materials upright in browseable “pamphlet files” (open-topped boxes, two to five inches wide) that were then placed in a sector of a bin. Staff removed all “flimsies” from the cataloged sections. These items were sent to the Cataloging Department where students sorted and prepared the materials. Materials within each box were arranged in order by the last four digits of the barcode. When an item is requested from one of these boxes, the staff person pulling the item searches the barcodes to find the right one. When these items are returned (they are identified as having come from MARS by a transparent green sticker placed over the barcode), they do not have to be returned to the same box. A staff person maintains a barcoded, open box of these items on a desk outside the MARS area, and flimsies that are to be returned to MARS are placed in the box. Each barcoded pamphlet or leaflet is linked to the item record for its new box. When the new box is full, its items are sorted in order of the last four digits on their barcode labels. The box is then loaded into MARS. This system allows effective retrieval and return of cataloged pamphlets in MARS. Uncataloged pamphlets and “flimsies” were left in the yellow-card sections.

Handling serial publications.



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Managing serials throughout this process was difficult. While many serial titles were cataloged either with brief or full records and itemized as part of the preparation for the move, some serial titles remained in the uncataloged yellow-card sections that were loaded into MARS. When individual issues of serial titles were sent to the Metadata and Cataloging Department (MCD, which was renamed from "Cataloging Department" in conjunction with the move) for cataloging, due either to over-capacity yellow-card sections or being pulled at user request, staff faced the problem of how to handle a single issue from a serial run of unknown size. Staff did not have the time in the midst of the move and during the extensive follow-up work to search MARS for complete holdings information and itemize the entire serial run. We decided to fully catalog the serial run based upon data from the single issue, and then create a note in a holdings statement telling users to contact staff to locate other issues of that title. MCD plans to return to these titles once other follow-up work related to the library move has been finished.

Problems Encountered in the Uncataloged (Yellow-card) Sections

As explained above, staff checked the yellow-card sections for accuracy and size. While many problems were discovered and corrected before the collection was moved, staff found further errors while loading MARS and during subsequent follow-up work. We can attribute some of these problems to the fact that the collection remained in open stacks after the yellow card preparation was completed. Library staff and users had access to these materials for about a year before the move and could have changed anything in a given yellow card section. Listed below are three main types of problems encountered and how we corrected them.

1. Re-shelving caused some sections to go over capacity in certain instances, (due to the return of checked-out or mis-shelved items).

Solution: Items that pushed sections over capacity were sent to cataloging; these items were removed from the middle of the section so that beginning or ending SuDocs numbers did not have to be modified.

2. Overlap in SuDocs number ranges due to mis-shelving.

Solution: Corrected mis-shelving, then correct associated yellow cards and item records. If necessary, create new yellow-card sections.

3. Items attached in wrong order due to item records in the Millennium system being added by default at the bottom of the list of existing records.

Solution: All "Uncataloged materials" records were reviewed and resorted after loading was complete to ensure items were in proper sequence to keep item records in SuDocs number order.

Managing and Providing Access to Uncataloged Materials in MARS

Public services and cataloging staff decided not to display uncataloged materials records in the public catalog. A primary concern was to avoid users being able to request a section from storage that might contain hundreds of items as this would be an undue burden on retrieval staff and be confusing for users. As another issue, the yellow-card range identified for an item record contains only part of the library holdings within that range. Other items in a given range may be cataloged and thus located elsewhere in MARS, on the shelves in the open stacks area, in the microform area, or online.

One way to address these anomalies was to have public use of uncataloged materials mediated by library staff. This was not a big change for users. Mediation was typically required prior to the introduction of MARS, since the former BGIC space was difficult to navigate and users generally required assistance in identifying SuDocs numbers for desired items. Now, when users seek help with federal documents, staff first search the online catalog and, if appropriate, the uncataloged microfiche collection filed by Su-



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Docs number. If nothing is found, a staff member then checks the yellow card sections for the desired document(s). All staff trained to assist with federal documents can locate appropriate yellow-card section in the catalog using the SuDocs number ranges on the volume fields of item records and then search that appropriate sector in MARS.

No items are ever added to the yellow-card sections. Any materials that are pulled out of the yellow-card sections at user request are not re-filed into those sections. All requested items are fully cataloged after being removed from MARS (whether they are checked out to users on-the-fly or used in-house). If the first or last item in a section is removed, a staff member writes a new beginning or ending number on the card and then changes the item record to reflect the new range. In the two years since the library moved into its new building, the Metadata & Cataloging Department has added to the catalog over 2,500 items that were previously inaccessible. Many copies and volumes were added to existing fully-cataloged records during this time period.

Evaluation of Storing Depository Materials in MARS

Benefits for Staff and Users

The collection preparation resulted in the addition of more than 30,000 government publications and RAND *titles* to the library catalog, representing about 85,000 additional *item* records. Since the move, more than 1,500 additional titles have been fully cataloged. Users may actually have a net advantage since more of the collection is discoverable in the catalog. A user may request a publication found in the catalog at any time and pick it up from the library services desk whenever the building is open. Users who receive assistance from staff in accessing materials via the library catalog experience no real disadvantages due to the storage arrangement. Access to uncataloged publications requires staff assistance, potentially, at several levels including 1) verifying citations and SuDocs numbers, 2) searching

bulk records in Millennium, 3) retrieving a bin, 4) searching the bin for the desired item, and 5) following up with an interlibrary loan request if the piece is not available. Two of these five steps are necessitated by MARS storage (searching bulk records and retrieving a bin), but the other steps in the search process have similarities to using the old open stack arrangement. Creating bulk records for uncataloged U.S. publications allowed the collection preparation to be completed before the move. The bulk records have also proved to be beneficial in others ways. For instance, library staff—even those unfamiliar with SuDocs classification—can, after some basic training, now find and browse a bulk record, retrieve a single MARS bin, and check it for the desired publication. These combined factors lend more certainty to government publications searches.

Problems Experienced by Staff and Users

As discussed above, library users cannot browse any publications loaded into MARS and only staff can retrieve MARS bins with yellow-carded sections. Only ten percent of the government documents collection remains in open stacks for browsing. As a downside, then, users realize gains in access through the catalog at the expense of browsing.

Implications for Local Collection Management

Since MARS storage eliminates most shelving errors, staff members now find it easier to locate items needing maintenance or withdrawal. Preservation conditions are much better than they were in the open stacks since MARS bins are in a climate-controlled environment and items are handled only when needed. Opportunities for theft or intentional damage are reduced. MARS can easily accommodate projected growth in the federal depository collection (currently at about no more than one percent annually). MARS storage necessitated changes in technical operations, including processing new acquisitions and performing maintenance activities. All new items now



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must be barcoded and represented by an item record in the catalog whether or not we receive the record and barcode from MARCIVE, our vendor for GPO records. This has led to a considerable increase in depository materials that have to be locally cataloged by MCD. Maintenance of items already in the collection is more cumbersome, particularly if a staff person needs to identify and retrieve uncataloged publications.

Implications for Access to the Depository Collection

Access has improved for the majority of library users, since more of the collection is cataloged. While some regular users who were accustomed to going directly to the open stacks for known items were initially frustrated at having to go through the process of requesting items from MARS, many users now prefer MARS retrieval since they do not have to find the correct area of the stacks and then understand the SuDocs classification system enough to find the item wanted. Although not all staff understand the search procedures for uncataloged government publications, this appears simply as a new manifestation of an old problem since many public service staff could not locate government publications *before* the library move, when documents were shelved on open stacks. Another disadvantage for some users is that we have withdrawn some little-used print publications, which are now available only in microfiche.

What Would We Do Differently?

1. Explore alternatives to the yellow-card system. The entire collection, including the yellow-carded sections, remained on open shelves until staff moved them to the MARS facility. We devised the yellow-card system in order to keep the materials on the shelves and available to users for as long as possible. However, the cards were imperfect – they could easily fall off the shelf or be moved out of place, and it was too easy for new or re-

shelved items to be put into an already existing, measured section and push it over the size limit. Removing the yellow-carded sections from public access after being processed for the move would have greatly reduced the problems we encountered while moving and loading the materials into MARS, but maintaining access was a priority. Significantly, no practical alternative to our yellow-card system was apparent at the time and none has come to our attention since.

2. Analyze the collection more thoroughly before purchasing records from MARCIVE. Looking back, we probably would not have purchased any retrospective records from MARCIVE since these helped little in mitigating the problems encountered.
3. Use a test ASRS database before starting to load materials into the system. We made some uninformed assumptions about how the ASRS software would work since we did not have a test system available. For example, we learned it is far more difficult than anticipated to modify records for materials in MARS since the catalog and MARS databases interact within very limited parameters. We might have created different kinds of bulk records had we fully understood this. We might have created more brief records or more collection-level records with detailed itemization (such as suited the RAND publications). We also would have checked (and re-checked) and re-sorted item records for the yellow-card sections *before* they were loaded, since revising records that have already been loaded is cumbersome and sometimes requires removing the items from the ASRS database, fixing the records, and reloading them.

Conclusion and Considerations for the Future

The UNR Libraries' move to a new building with an automated storage and retrieval



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system provided the opportunity to assess, reorganize, and consolidate its federal depository collection. We believe the “yellow-card” system created was the best solution available to provide physical and intellectual control of our holdings within the limits of available space, time, and staffing. The results currently provide better control and access than available in the past. The collaboration between cataloging and government documents staff proved quite fruitful. Two of the former BGIC staff members have in fact moved into the Metadata and Cataloging Department since the move and, together, they continue to work on improving user access to government documents. Overall, the benefits realized in the project far outweighed the drawbacks, ultimately enhancing access to this specialized collection.

The logistics of moving a regional federal depository collection into an automated storage system have been discussed, as well as the impact the move has had on users and on library operations – but the implications for future management of the depository collection are still largely unknown. We are concerned about how our library could respond to potential policy changes affecting depository collections across the nation, particularly regional depositories, including the reduction in numbers of depository libraries from the current number of 50 regional libraries. Such a large number of federal depository collections increasingly seems redundant in our networked world, but as yet there is no framework to allow for their orderly reduction.¹¹ If and when such a reduction occurs, depository libraries will have to identify creative ways to manage such change.

Any shifting role of depository collections may be significant for UNR in a number of ways. Since the library is unlikely to systematically catalog more of the older federal documents, it may be unable to take on an expanded role in the Federal Depository Library Program, that is, to provide a comprehensive collection if other libraries give up their regional responsibilities. Incorporating

uncataloged older materials into MARS would be difficult beyond the project described above, and there is no extra space in the open stacks to accommodate an influx of new material. At the same time, if UNR wished to relinquish its status as a regional depository and another library took over the regional depository’s collection and oversight responsibilities, more work would be necessary now than in the past to withdraw both cataloged and uncataloged publications.

Regional librarians have also discussed more nuanced approaches to collecting federal publications, including regional depositories agreeing to collect and permanently retain publications of specific federal departments or agencies, rather than maintaining comprehensive depository collections indefinitely. This would result in several comprehensive, but decentralized, federal depository collections nationwide. However, since depository libraries need enabling legislation in order to implement this or any similar plan to reform the FDLDP, their collections must either be managed as best as possible within the current legal framework, or choose, more or less unilaterally, to relinquish their depository status.

Managing “as best as one can” was manifested locally by creating at UNR the best available solution for housing government publications. It is hoped that collection management decisions enacted at the University of Nevada, Reno, for this project and for the future as it unfolds, will not only exploit real opportunities for increased access and better preservation, but also provide insights and viable models for other libraries facing similar space and relocation challenges.

Endnotes

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