Q. What is GPO?

A. With just 1,900 employees, GPO is the official, digital and secure source for producing, protecting, preserving, and distributing the official publications and information products of the Federal Government.

Q. What is GPO’s purpose?

A. GPO’s operations produce the materials in digital and print formats that are required to conduct the legislative processes in Congress and the statutory processes of the executive and judicial branches. GPO’s mission can be traced to the requirement in Article I of the Constitution that each House keep a journal of its proceedings and from time to time publish the same.

Q. What are GPO’s functions?

A. The agency is responsible for the production and distribution of information products for all three branches of the Federal Government, including U.S. passports for the Department of State as well as the official publications of Congress, the White House and other Federal agencies, and the courts. GPO’s print production operations are configured primarily to meet the basic needs of Congress and Federal agencies, but include fine bookbinding operations for those publications that continue to require this specialty.

- **Federal Register**

  Through GPO’s efforts, the online Federal Register is being made available in XML to support bulk data downloads via data.gov and GPO developed the online Federal Register 2.0. GPO’s advanced authentication systems, supported by Public Key Infrastructure, are an essential component for assuring the digital security of congressional and agency documents. The agency is currently working with the Library of Congress to digitize historical documents, including the Statutes at Large and the Congressional Record, and in collaboration with the Library, GPO will begin providing updated digital access to the Constitution Annotated this year.

- **Passports**

  GPO produces all U.S. passports for the State Department and secure credentials for a variety of agencies, including the Department of Homeland Security. Passports contain advanced electronic and print security systems consistent with international standards and agreements. Passport operations are located in Washington, DC, and southwest Mississippi. GPO is the only Federal agency certified to graphically personalize/print HSPD-12 secure identification cards on a government-to-government basis. Its passport and smart card operations are also certified by the International Standards Organization.

- **Online Databases and more**

  GPO’s prepress operations are organized for the creation of databases from which digital products can be produced for public access via GPO’s Federal Digital System (FDsys, www.fdsys.gov) and tangible products can be produced to fulfill the requirements of Congress and Federal agencies. GPO’s legislative information databases are shared with the Library of Congress for the operation of Congress.gov information system and for the legislative information systems provided by the Library to the House and Senate. Today, GPO makes legislative information available in a variety of formats, including PDF and XML, and has developed mobile apps of both legislative and executive branch information.

Q. How has the use of digital information technology affected GPO?

A. Since GPO first began computerizing its prepress functions in the 1970s, the agency’s use of digital information technology has generated productivity improvements that have reduced the cost of congressional information products by approximately 66% in real economic terms. Since GPO first began providing free online access to Government documents in the early 1990s, similar reductions have been achieved in the cost of disseminating information to the public.

Q. How does GPO work with the printing industry?

A. GPO has a longstanding partnership with the private sector printing industry that provides for the procurement of information products for the entire Government. GPO purchases approximately $350 million annually from private sector vendors nationwide for our agency customers. GPO regularly procures approximately 75% of all the products ordered annually (other than passports and secure credentials), including Social Security cards, census and tax forms, Medicaid and Medicare materials, and a wide variety of other products. All printed products ordered by GPO comply with current sustainability requirements. Since the early 1990s, papers used by GPO’s production operations contain recycled content. Since 1994, all inks used by GPO are made with sustainable vegetable oils.

Q. How are contracts awarded?

A. Contracts are awarded on a purely competitive basis; there are no set-asides or preferences in contracting other than what is specified in law and regulation, including a requirement for Buy American. GPO’s procurement program provides great economic opportunity for the private sector. The majority of the firms GPO deals with are small businesses of 20 employees or less. The total number of contractors registered to do business with GPO is currently 17,000, representing potentially 340,000 private sector jobs.
Q. Where is GPO located?

A. The central office is located in Washington, DC. GPO has regional and satellite procurement offices nationwide to support the needs of regional Federal agencies in Atlanta, Boston, Charleston SC, Chicago, Columbus, Dallas, Denver, Hampton VA, New York, Oklahoma City, Philadelphia, San Antonio, San Diego, San Francisco, and Seattle.

Q. How does GPO make documents available to the public?

A. Along with sales of publications in digital and tangible formats to the public, GPO supports openness and transparency in Government by providing permanent public access to Federal Government information at no charge through its Federal Digital System (FDsys, www.fdsys.gov) and through partnerships with approximately 1,200 libraries nationwide participating in the Federal Depository Library Program.

- **Federal Depository Libraries**
  GPO’s primary information dissemination program involves another longstanding partnership with approximately 1,200 Federal depository libraries nationwide, or about 3 per congressional district. Today, the partnership is predominately electronic, but tangible formats are distributed where online equivalents are not available. Federal depository libraries serve as one of the vital links between “We the People” and our Government. Anyone can visit Federal depository libraries and use the Federal documents collections, which are filled with information on careers, business opportunities, health and nutrition, laws and regulations, statistical data, demographics, consumer information, and numerous other subjects. Participating libraries can be located via http://catalog.gpo.gov/.

- **Federal Digital System (FDsys)**
  GPO also disseminates a massive amount of Federal information online free of charge through FDsys (www.fdsys.gov). FDsys has more than 800,000 Federal titles online and more than 37 million documents are downloaded every month. In addition, GPO provides for public sale of Government publications via its traditional and online bookstores, and offers eBooks through partnerships with Google and other providers. GPO operates facilities in Laurel, MD, and Pueblo, CO, that fulfill orders for Government publications.

Q. How is GPO funded?

A. GPO operates on a revolving fund basis, just like a business, and is reimbursed by its customers for the cost of work performed. Total revenues for FY 2012 were $713.8 million, which included $314.5 million in pass-through payments to procurement vendors. Approximately 16% of GPO’s funding comes from direct appropriation, comprising about 4% of the overall legislative branch budget. Appropriated funds are to cover the cost of congressional work (and may only be accessed when work is performed as ordered by Congress) and the depository library program and supporting distribution programs. Total appropriations for FY 2013 currently are $117.5 million. All other revenues to GPO are reimbursements from agencies for work performed or sales of publications to the public.

Q. Who runs GPO?

A. As an agency of the legislative branch of the Government, GPO is headed by the Public Printer of the United States, who serves as the agency’s chief executive officer. The Public Printer is nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate. Davita Vance-Cooks currently serves Public Printer, the first woman in GPO’s history to hold the post.

Q. How do I stay connected to GPO?

A. You can visit www.gpo.gov or connect with us on:
  - Twitter: twitter.com/USGPO
  - YouTube: www.youtube.com/user/gpoprinter
  - Facebook: www.facebook.com/usgpo
  - Pinterest: http://pinterest.com/usgpo/
  - Government Book Talk: http://govbooktalk.gpo.gov/

Q. How do I get documents from GPO?

A. Over 50 collections of official Federal Government publications are available to the public via the Internet on FDsys www.fdsys.gov. Printed copies of many of those documents ranging from the Federal Register to reports from the Bureau of Labor Statistics may also be purchased in person, online, via phone, fax, or postal mail.

To order in person, please visit the GPO Main Bookstore at 710 North Capitol St. NW, Washington, DC (Corner of North Capitol and H Streets) from 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m. EST.

To order online, visit the U.S. Government Online Bookstore at http://bookstore.gpo.gov.

To order by phone or inquire about an order, call toll-free 866.512.1800 or, in the D.C. metro area, call 202.512.1800 from 7:00 a.m.-6:30 p.m. EST.

By fax, dial 202.512.2104. Send order inquiries to contactcenter@gpo.gov.

Send mail to
U.S. Government Printing Office
P.O. Box 979050
St. Louis, MO 63197-9000

All orders require prepayment by VISA, MasterCard, American Express, or Discover/NOVUS credit cards, check, or SOD deposit account.

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