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UNITED STATES GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

ACCOUNTING AND FINANCIAL  
MANAGEMENT DIVISION

B-208490

SEPTEMBER 30, 1983

The Honorable Augustus Hawkins  
Chairman, Joint Committee on Printing  
Congress of the United States



Dear Mr. Chairman

Subject: Review of the Government Printing Office's  
Cost Estimate for the Cooperative Map Program  
(GAO/AFMD-83-89)

This report is in response to the former chairman's February 10, 1983, request that we determine the accuracy of the Government Printing Office's (GPO's) estimate of the cost of a proposed cooperative map program. The program would distribute certain maps to libraries designated as depositories for government publications pursuant to title 44 U.S. Code. The chairman also asked us to determine whether GPO has the funds and personnel resources necessary to implement the proposed program. The remaining issues raised in the chairman's letter (see encl. I) will be addressed in separate reports.

Our review included discussions with the officials responsible for the cost estimate and an examination of available supporting documentation. However, we were unable to compare the estimate to actual cost since the program is not operational.

SUMMARY

GPO did not develop a supported and complete estimate of costs for its participation in the proposed map program. GPO officials said the estimate was developed by its Library Program Service as a rough approximation of costs for use in initial planning of the program. However, we found that personnel involved in preparing the \$250,000 estimate could not provide adequate supporting documentation for \$150,000 of that amount, which was included in the estimate for distribution costs. In addition, they were unable to identify all costs of administration, space, and equipment to be incurred in implementing the program. GPO officials said they plan to revise the estimate when they have more reliable data on depository library map selections.

Without a reliable estimate, we cannot determine if GPO has the funds and personnel to implement the program. While GPO

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officials believe they have the resources necessary to administer the program in fiscal years 1983 and 1984, they have stated that unforeseen costs could require the agency to request additional funds from the Congress.

Details on the proposed map program, our analysis of GPO's cost estimate, and the availability of funding are provided on the following pages. During our review, GPO and other agency officials raised several questions about the proposed program and its possible future expansion. Although we did not determine the significance of the questions, we are forwarding them for your information.

#### THE PROPOSED MAP PROGRAM

Although title 44, U.S.C. provides that GPO distribute to its depository libraries copies of publications produced by federal agencies, the depositories currently receive government maps through other agencies' map programs. According to a 1973 study, about 39 federal agencies distribute maps and charts. This means that GPO depository libraries must request maps from a number of agencies, who duplicate the effort of distributing their maps to the libraries.

To eliminate this duplication of effort and to minimize costs, the Joint Committee on Printing proposed a centralized map program, with one distribution point for all federally produced maps. To test the concept in a pilot program, the map distribution operations managed by the Defense Mapping Agency (DMA) and the United States Geological Survey (USGS) would be consolidated with the GPO depository program, and if the consolidation proved effective, other agencies' maps could be included.

The agencies to be involved in the pilot program have met to plan and begin implementation. As part of the planning, GPO estimated its costs for participating in the pilot program and raised several concerns over availability of funds, facilities, and personnel resources. Those concerns were the primary reason we were asked to review GPO's involvement in the program.

Further details on the proposed map program are in enclosure II.

#### GPO'S COST ESTIMATE FOR THE PILOT MAP PROGRAM

GPO's cost estimate for the pilot program of approximately \$250,000 (see chart, p. 3) is not fully supported nor does it include all anticipated costs; a number of program variables are still unknown. Our discussions with the GPO personnel who prepared the estimate and our review of supporting documentation disclosed that the estimated personnel and map storage costs are supported by detailed calculations. However, the \$150,000 estimated for distribution costs has no support. In addition, the estimate excludes

additional costs that may be incurred for administration, space, and equipment because GPO cannot estimate these costs until planning for the program is completed. GPO officials stated that the cost estimate was developed as part of the initial planning and was not considered to be the final cost estimate; they cannot be certain of the full funding requirements for the map program.

GPO'S Total Estimated Annual Costs  
for the Pilot Map Program

	<u>Estimate as of</u> <u>February 1983</u>
Personnel costs	\$ 95,933 to \$112,492
Map storage cases	<u>7,200</u>
Total	103,133 to 119,692
Distribution costs	150,000
Additional administrative, space, and equipment costs	<u>Unknown</u>
Total	<u>\$253,133 to \$269,692</u>

A description of each cost category in this estimate is provided below.

Personnel costs

GPO estimates it will need an additional six or seven persons to handle the proposed program. These include one GS-5 library technician at a cost of \$13,369 a year, to prepare shipping lists and to keep records related to the libraries in the program; an additional GS-6 library technician; two or three GS-9 or GS-11 librarians; and one GS-3 file clerk. Total personnel costs for additional map classification and cataloging support will require an estimated \$70,310 to \$86,869 a year. Fringe benefits are not included in this estimate. We reviewed these estimated personnel costs and they appear supportable but may be low because they are based on the lowest salary for each grade level. On the other hand, if GPO agrees to a cooperative map cataloging arrangement with USGS or DMA, personnel costs may be less than estimated. Finally, GPO estimates that development of instructions to libraries and increased inspection duties will require an additional half-time GS-11 inspector at an annual cost of \$12,254.

Map storage costs

GPO estimates that the storage of maps could require an additional 5 to 10 map storage cases a year at a total annual cost of \$7,200. In our review of GPO's documentation for its February cost estimate, we found that GPO was unable to support the cost per case or the amount of space and related costs required for the cases. In August 1983, however, GPO obtained price estimates for 12 map

storage cases. The total cost ranged from \$8,800 to \$9,500 depending on the number of drawers--which, in turn, will depend on the amount and location of available space. GPO officials stated they would need only enough cases to store each map for 4 years, after which time it will be turned over to the National Archives.

#### Distribution costs

GPO could not provide adequate support for its estimate of \$150,000 for distribution costs. The figure was based on the assumption that GPO would reimburse USGS for shipping copies to requesting libraries of each of the 3,600 to 5,600 maps USGS and DMA produce annually. However, when GPO made the estimate, it did not have enough information to determine whether the map volume estimate realistically reflected the future selections of libraries participating in the program.

#### Additional administrative costs

GPO is not yet able to estimate the additional costs of administrative support, space, and office equipment it will incur to operate the program. We therefore cannot comment on the funding needed for these costs.

#### AVAILABILITY OF FUNDING

The map program was not included in GPO's budget requests for fiscal year 1983 or 1984 because at the time the budgets were prepared, little was known about the program and its costs. Funding for GPO's administration of the start-up phases of the map program is being provided from the Salaries and Expense Appropriation. GPO is confident that sufficient funds will be available for the remainder of 1983 to support the map program. They also believe that sufficient funds will be available in the fiscal year 1984 budget request to fund that year's map program. If, after further analysis, costs are found to be higher than expected and additional funds are needed, GPO officials stated that they would request supplemental funds from the Congress.

#### QUESTIONS ON IMPLEMENTING THE PROGRAM

Both GPO and USGS officials expressed concern over unresolved issues and the feasibility of expanding the program to include other map producing agencies. Our discussions resulted in the following questions. Although we did not determine the significance of individual questions, we believe they raise points to be considered in subsequent planning of the program.

#### Pilot map program

--Should GPO rely on USGS to catalog maps since it uses the same cataloging system as GPO, or should GPO catalog them a second time?

- Can distribution problems involving document volume, timing, and lost or otherwise short deliveries from agencies be effectively solved?
- Will GPO request separate funding and account for this program separately under the Superintendent of Documents?

Potential program expansion

- Does the present GPO computer system have the capacity to support the maintenance of libraries' map selections if the map program is expanded?
- Will the agencies that send maps to USGS for depositories still maintain their own depository and sales programs?
- Should distribution be paid for by the map producing agency or by GPO?
- What additional funds would be needed to expand the map program?
- Can USGS facilities handle an expanded map distribution workload, or must they too be expanded?
- Would it be more cost effective if GPO built the facilities required for an expanded map distribution program, or rented them?
- What expansion would the GPO Library Program Service have to undergo to accommodate a substantial increase in maps for the depository program?

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As arranged with your office, we are sending a copy of this report to the Public Printer. We appreciate the efforts of the Public Printer and GPO personnel in providing information for our review.

Sincerely yours,

  
Wilbur D. Campbell  
Acting Director

Enclosures

MC. MATHIAS, JR., SENATOR FROM MD.  
 MS  
 ABBETT, SENATOR FROM VA.  
 ATTFIELD, SENATOR FROM OHIO.  
 CANNON, SENATOR FROM IOWA.  
 L. FORD, SENATOR FROM KY.

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 ED JONES, REPRESENTATIVE FROM TENN.  
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 LYNN MARTIN, REPRESENTATIVE FROM ILL.

## Congress of the United States Joint Committee on Printing

February 10, 1983

S-101, U.S. CAPITOL  
 WASHINGTON, D.C. 20540  
 PHONE: 224-0861

The Honorable Charles A. Bowsher  
 Comptroller General of the United States  
 General Accounting Office  
 441 G Street, N.W.  
 Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Bowsher:

As Chairman of the Joint Committee on Printing I would like to request the following:

1. That the GAO perform an indepth analysis of the system of pricing documents sold by the GPO through the General Sales Program. The analysis should relate current costs being incurred to produce and distribute publications to current prices and also evaluate alternative methods of pricing publications to recover all operating costs. In addition, the study should determine the impact of price increases on revenues and sales volumes and the public's access to documents. I recommend that this analysis utilize the information being developed as part of the current GAO efforts per my request of April 16, 1982.

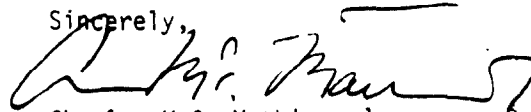
In order for the study to be as useful as possible, I request that you provide the Committee with written progress reports every 30 days, with the final report to be completed no later than July 30, 1983.

2. That the GAO perform a comprehensive audit of the Depository Library Program, as administered by the Superintendent of Documents. In addition, I request that you determine the accuracy of the figures provided by GPO on the costs of distributing certain charts and maps to the Depository Library System, and whether GPO currently has the fiscal and personnel resources necessary to implement the chart and map program.

In order for the study to be as useful as possible, I request that you provide the Committee with written progress reports every 30 days, with the final report to be completed no later than July 30, 1983. However, because of the urgency of the map/chart program, I would appreciate that portion of the study to be completed by March 18, 1983.

The JCP team will be Roy Breimon, Project Manager, and Bernadine Hoduski, who will be available to assist in determining the detailed scope of this request as the studies progress.

Sincerely,



Charles McC. Mathias, Jr.  
 Chairman

BACKGROUNDON PILOT COOPERATIVE MAP PROGRAMPRESENT MAP DEPOSITORY PROGRAM

The purpose of the depository library program is to provide public access to a wide variety of government publications through the distribution of copies to depository libraries. Under the terms of title 44, U.S. Code, the Superintendent of Documents administers the program, which currently includes 1,378 libraries.

Maps produced by federal agencies are not excluded from the definition of government publications in title 44. However, GPO's distribution of maps to its depository libraries is limited. Due to their special characteristics, maps are usually printed and distributed by non-GPO plants authorized by the Joint Committee on Printing (JCP). Approximately 39 Federal agencies produce maps and some of them have their own map programs. Participants in these programs may include libraries that demonstrate a need for the maps produced by the agencies. The Department of the Interior, United States Geological Survey (USGS), for example, annually distributes copies of its 3,000 to 5,000 maps to 549 recipients. About 76 percent of the current USGS recipients are GPO depositories themselves or are part of an institution that is a GPO depository.

The Defense Mapping Agency (DMA) is one of the world's largest mapping agencies. It is a military agency whose primary responsibility is to provide maps to the armed forces. DMA also makes some of the maps it produces available through its own distribution program, annually mailing copies of about 600 maps to each of its 245 recipients on a nonselective basis. About 89 percent of the current DMA recipients are GPO depositories or belong to an institution that is a GPO depository.

The map-producing agencies usually distribute their maps only to the libraries in their own distribution program. When a library in one agency's program needs maps from another agency, it must apply for membership in the other agency's program. Consequently, one library may belong to several map programs or, if denied membership, may not be able to receive free copies of a particular agency's maps.

PROPOSED MAP PROGRAM

Intending to enforce the provisions of title 44 and recognizing that GPO lacks the physical facilities to accomplish large scale map distribution, the JCP has proposed a map program that would provide a centralized, cooperative distribution point for all federally produced maps. The plan is to start with a pilot program to consolidate the map programs managed by DMA and USGS with the depository library program run by GPO. Recipient lists from all three agencies' programs would be consolidated into a single list. GPO would then survey the depositories and allow them to select and receive maps from the central distribution point.

In July 1982, the JCP prepared and distributed a questionnaire to the depository libraries. The questionnaire surveyed the libraries regarding their current status (Were they GPO depository, DMA, and/or USGS recipients?) as well as their interest in the proposed map program and in receiving DMA or USGS maps. The JCP received a 73-percent response from the 1,378 GPO depositories surveyed--625 wanted to receive maps; the other 362 did not.

In July 1983, GPO distributed surveys to the libraries to determine their map selections. GPO estimates that the results will be analyzed by October 1983.

### Distribution

An interagency map distribution agreement between GPO and USGS has been drafted but was not final as of August 31, 1983. Actual distribution of the maps to the depositories in the program is expected to begin during fiscal year 1984.

USGS and DMA will pay for the printed maps and supply them to USGS for distribution to the depository libraries. USGS will distribute all maps from its facilities in Arlington, Virginia, and Denver, Colorado. It will provide storage and mailing cartons as well as the staff needed to pack and distribute maps and respond to claims filed. It will also supply mailing labels from the library master file GPO maintains, and will send to GPO for cataloging one copy of every item shipped to the depository libraries. GPO will reimburse USGS for the costs of distributing maps to GPO depositories.

USGS and DMA also signed an interagency agreement, in January 1983, to combine their distribution. Although their objective was to provide more economical and timely distribution and reduce duplication, they have not yet combined their mailings or their depository programs.

Under the current agreement, DMA provides its mailing lists and maps to USGS for distribution. DMA reimburses USGS quarterly for material costs, postage, and labor. DMA estimated that the average distribution for the past 5 years was 35,000 map sheets per year. USGS estimated that the labor, shipping materials, and postage to handle the 35,000 map sheets was \$20,000, establishing a library rate at \$.57 per map during fiscal year 1983.

Once the pilot program becomes operational and it is determined which of the GPO depository libraries will participate, GPO will reimburse USGS for distribution of the DMA maps to GPO depositories. DMA will continue to reimburse USGS for distribution of DMA maps to the DMA recipients not included in the GPO depository program.

### Administrative support

GPO has agreed to provide administrative support to the program. It will initially survey the libraries and compile



information on which libraries wish to be members of the program and what maps they wish to receive. It will then prepare and maintain the list of library participants. In addition, GPO will catalog the maps printed and inspect facilities at the depository libraries to make sure they are maintaining the maps according to the policies outlined in title 44 for the GPO depository library program.

The start-up phases of the program--preparation, survey of the libraries, accumulation of information on the libraries' selections, and development of the mailing lists--have been completed or are expected to be completed by the end of fiscal year 1983.