

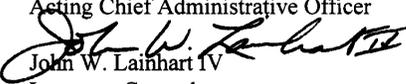
John W. Lainhart IV
Inspector General

Office of Inspector General
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-9990

MEMORANDUM

TO: Robin Carle
Clerk of the House

Jeff Trandahl
Acting Chief Administrative Officer

FROM: 
John W. Lainhart IV
Inspector General

DATE: March 17, 1997

SUBJECT: Audit Report - Improvements Are Needed In The Creation and Distribution Of Documents Within The House (Report No. 97-CCS-02)

This is our final report on the creation and distribution of documents within the U.S. House of Representatives. The objective of this audit was to determine the efficiency and effectiveness of House procedures and policies for the creation and distribution of documents to Members, Committees, and administrative offices. In this report, we identified weaknesses in the creation and distribution of House documents and made specific recommendations for corrective actions.

In response to our December 20, 1996 draft report, your offices concurred with our findings and recommendations. The January 22, 1997 and January 29, 1997 management responses are incorporated in this final report and included in their entirety as appendices. The corrective actions taken and planned by your offices are appropriate and, when fully implemented, should adequately respond to the recommendations. Further, the milestone dates provided for implementing corrective actions appear reasonable.

We appreciate the courtesy and cooperation extended to us by your staff. If you have any questions or require additional information regarding this report, please call me or Robert B. Frey III at (202) 226-1250.

cc: Speaker of the House
Majority Leader of the House
Minority Leader of the House
Chairman, Committee on House Oversight
Ranking Minority Member, Committee on House Oversight
Members, Committee on House Oversight

IMPROVEMENTS ARE NEEDED IN THE CREATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF DOCUMENTS WITHIN THE HOUSE

Report No. 97-CCS-02
March 17, 1997

RESULTS IN BRIEF

CONCLUSIONS

Improvements are needed in the methods used to create and distribute House documents. Specifically, improvements are needed because: (1) the Chief Administrative Officer controls the creation and distribution of several legislative documents which are the responsibility of the Clerk; (2) House offices do not always know how or where to obtain needed documents; (3) the *House Journal*, the official record of proceedings for the House, is six sessions behind in publication; (4) currently three offices have Member databases which are separately maintained with varied accessibility to House staff; (5) the Office of Printing and Mailing Services does not fully utilize the capability to electronically transfer documents to the Government Printing Office for printing; and (6) the Office of Printing and Mailing Services has been providing a supply service which should be the responsibility of the Office Supply Service.

As a result, the Clerk continues to have responsibility for some legislative documents for which the Clerk has no control over their preparation and distribution. The House offices do not always receive necessary documents in the most efficient and effective manner. The users of the *House Journal* have not had access to the current source for parliamentary precedence on rulings of order or for actual language of conference reports and motions. The users of data from the duplicative Member databases may be subject to conflicting, untimely, and inaccurate information. Inefficiencies in printing administrative documents and delays in posting to the Internet occur. In addition, House offices are required to obtain office supplies from two sources.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that the Office of the Clerk and Chief Administrative Officer develop a proposal, for approval by the Committee on House Oversight, to (1) transfer the responsibility for the legislative documents and associated Office of Printing and Mailing Services employee(s) to the Office of the Clerk; (2) remove the name of the Clerk from administrative documents; and (3) establish a centralized legislative and non-legislative document control system.

Also, we recommend that the Office of the Clerk: (1) expeditiously provide the Journal Clerks with access to the *Congressional Record* database; (2) train the Journal Clerks on how to insert information from the *Congressional Record* into the *Daily Journal*; (3) revise the current *House Journal* production process to reduce the proofreading requirement; (4) eliminate the soft bound copy of the *House Journal*; and (5) continue to maintain a Member database for the House and provide the Chief Administrative Officer access to this database for administrative uses.

In addition, we recommend that the Chief Administrative Officer: (1) discontinue the use of its separate Member databases in the Office of Printing and Mailing Services and House Information Resources and use the Member database provided by the Clerk; (2) fully utilize electronic transfer capabilities to transmit administrative documents to the Government Printing Office for printing and electronic access; and (3) develop a proposal, for approval by the Committee on House Oversight, to move the responsibility for processing special order printing requests from the Office of Printing and Mailing Services to the Office Supply Service.

Further, with the implementation of the above recommendations, the Chief Administrative Officer has the opportunity to further streamline operations within the Office of Publications and Distribution. Therefore, we recommend the Chief Administrative Officer--after a permanent selection is made--review the feasibility of realigning Postal Operations with the Office of Media and Support Services and closing the Office of Publications and Distribution and, if determined feasible, develop a proposal, for approval by the Committee on House Oversight, to reorganize these functions.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

On January 22, 1997, the Clerk of the House formally concurred with the findings and recommendations in this report. According to the response, the Clerk agreed to (1) accept responsibility for most of the employees associated with legislative and non-legislative documents, (2) collect and distribute all legislative and non-legislative documents from a central point, (3) provide *Congressional Record* information to the Journal Clerks, (4) schedule training for the Journal Clerks on inserting data directly into the Journal, (5) review the process for Journal production to reduce the proof reading cycle, (6) eliminate the soft-bound copy of the Journal, (7) maintain a Member database accessible to users on the Internet, and (8) ensure that all documents are transferred electronically along with a paper copy. With the transfer of both legislative and non-legislative documents, the recommendation to remove the name of the Clerk from non-legislative documents is no longer necessary.

On January 29, 1997, the Acting Chief Administrative Officer formally concurred with the findings and recommendations in this report. According to the response, the Acting CAO agreed to (1) transfer responsibility and most of the employees associated with legislative and non-legislative documents to the Office of the Clerk, (2) defer to the Clerk the responsibility for developing a proposal for the establishment of a centralized document control system, (3) work with the Clerk to establish the most effective way for providing Member database information, (4) maintain responsibility for certain special order printing requests and assign responsibility to the Office Supply Service, and (5) defer organizational realignment decisions to the permanent CAO. With the transfer of both legislative and non-legislative documents and most of OPS, the recommendations to remove the name of the Clerk from non-legislative documents and for the CAO to fully utilize electronic transfer capabilities to transmit administrative documents to GPO are no longer necessary.

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL COMMENTS

The Clerk's and Acting CAO's current and planned actions are responsive to the issues we identified, and when fully implemented, should satisfy the intent of our recommendations. We also agree that with the transfer of OPS to the Office of the Clerk, our recommendations to remove the name of the Clerk from non-legislative documents and for the CAO to fully utilize electronic transfer capabilities to transmit administrative documents to GPO are no longer applicable.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Background

Within the U.S. House of Representatives (House), the responsibility for document creation and distribution is shared by the (1) Joint Committee on Printing, (2) Government Printing Office (3) Office of the Clerk, (4) Chief Administrative Officer, and (5) Committees of the House.

The Joint Committee on Printing (JCP), as provided in title 44, U.S. Code, acts as the policy maker and overseer of printing, binding, and distribution activities of the Federal Government. It also provides oversight of Government Printing Office (GPO) activities.

GPO provides the Congress with most of its printing and binding needs. Specifically within the House, GPO delivers most Legislative Numbered Bills, Legislative Numbered Reports, Public Laws, Committee Hearings, Committee Prints, Committee Print Reports, and stationery directly to Members, Committees, and House Officers. An annual appropriation is made to the Congressional Printing and Binding Fund to cover the cost of GPO services to the Congress.

The Office of the Clerk (Clerk) is responsible for recording and disseminating legislative information. These responsibilities include (1) making the entries and journals of the proceedings of the House, including introduced bills and resolutions, House passed measures, and the *House Journal*; (2) arranging for the stenographic reporting coverage of House floor debate and committee and subcommittee hearings, markups, and meetings; (3) preparing reports for daily publication in the *Congressional Record*; (4) disseminating information on the status of legislation through the computer-supported service maintained by the Office of Legislative Information (LEGIS); and (5) distributing documents to the House staff and limited quantities of documents to the public.

The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), through its Office of Printing and Mailing Services, also provides the House with various printing services. Printing services, provided to Members, Committees, and House Officers, include the *House Journal*, ad hoc publications, letterheads and envelopes, business cards, and various types of mailing labels.

Committees of the House are responsible for producing and distributing hearings under their jurisdiction and determining which hearings, if any, are printed and distributed. Committees have the authority to work directly with GPO to publish hearings and, in many cases, have printing specialists on detail from GPO to assist in preparing the hearings for publication.

Objective, Scope, And Methodology

The objective of this audit is to determine the efficiency and effectiveness of House procedures and policies for the creation and distribution of documents to Members, Committees, and administrative offices. Our audit was conducted in the Offices of the Clerk and CAO. In

addition, we contacted the JCP and GPO to obtain a complete picture of document creation and distribution within the House. The audit covered the period July 1995 through November 1996.

We conducted our review in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. We identified and reviewed document creation and distribution functions for the House by interviewing JCP, GPO, Clerk, and CAO personnel; reviewing pertinent policies and procedures; observing operations; reviewing management reports; and evaluating the flow of transactions.

Internal Controls

During this review, we evaluated internal controls over the creation and distribution of documents within the House. The internal control weaknesses we identified are described in the "Findings and Recommendations" section of this report.

Prior Audit Coverage

The OIG previously issued an audit report -- *Opportunities Exist to Improve the Generation of Legislative Information in the Office of the Clerk* (Report No. 95-CLK-13, dated July 18, 1995) -- which assessed opportunities to improve dissemination of legislative information. The report identified three areas that needed improvement and made four recommendations. The Clerk has completed action on the all recommendations. (The Exhibit at the end of this report provides a summary of the implementation status of each of the recommendations.)

II. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding A: CAO Controls Over The Creation And Distribution Of Legislative Documents Should Be Eliminated

The CAO controls the creation and distribution of several legislative documents which are the responsibility of the Clerk. This occurred because the office which has responsibility for these documents was transferred from the Clerk to the CAO at the beginning of the 104th Congress. As a result, the Clerk continues to have responsibility for these legislative documents but has no control over their preparation and distribution.

During the reorganization of the House for the 104th Congress, the structure of House functions was modified in an effort to place "similar or related functions under unified management." To accomplish this, the lines of authority were defined by separating legislative responsibilities from administrative responsibilities. The Clerk's responsibilities were clearly defined as the management of all activities involving the legislative process, whereas the CAO was created to manage the administrative functions of the House. As part of this reorganization the role of the Office of Printing and Mailing Services (OPS) was viewed as primarily administrative in nature and transferred from the Clerk to the CAO. However, this change resulted in the CAO producing both legislative and non-legislative documents under the name of the Clerk--a situation that is contrary to the stated goals of the reorganization.

Documents produced and processed by OPS

OPS is responsible for the production of numerous documents. Some documents require extensive input, editing, or formatting by OPS staff while others require little or none. In addition, OPS compiles Member information gathered from a number of sources which is maintained in a database. Some documents are legislative, some are administrative, and some are a combination of both.

Among the documents OPS creates are the Alphabetic List of Members, Statistics of Presidential and Congressional Elections, Official List of Members, and List of Standing Committees and Subcommittees--all legislative in nature and content. The information used to create these documents is predominately obtained from or verified by the Clerk. All of these documents are currently produced from OPS' internal database and reflect the name of the Clerk. Similarly, OPS prints the *Rules of the House* and assists in the preparation of the *House Journal* (see Finding C) for the Clerk. Both of these documents are legislative in nature and bear the name of the Clerk although the Clerk has limited control over their creation or distribution. Conversely, OPS prints a wide variety of non-legislative documents bearing the name of the Clerk although the Clerk has little, if any control over their creation and distribution.

Recommendations

We recommend that the Clerk and the Chief Administrative Officer develop a proposal, for approval by the Committee on House Oversight, to:

1. Transfer the responsibility for the legislative documents and associated Office of Printing and Mailing Services employee(s) to the Office of the Clerk.
2. Remove the name of the Clerk from non-legislative documents.

Management Response

The Clerk and Acting CAO concurred, with explanation, to the recommendations in this finding. The Clerk and the Acting CAO believe that responsibility for legislative and non-legislative documents should be transferred to the Office of the Clerk. Furthermore, they agree that a majority of employees of the Office of Printing Services should be transferred. By maintaining a central control of all documents, user confusion is prevented. To separate legislative documents from non-legislative ones causes arbitrary distinctions that may not be clear to all users. Dividing OPS employees to support separate document creation by different organizational units would spread them so thin that additional employees would be needed to maintain the same level of service achieved now by having the resource flexibility of one group. With the transfer of OPS to the Office of the Clerk, removing the name of the Clerk from non-legislative documents is not necessary.

Office of Inspector General Comments

The planned actions are responsive to the issues we identified, and when fully implemented, should satisfy the intent of our first recommendation. Based on the Clerk's and Acting CAO's responses we agree that the responsibility for both legislative and non-legislative documents, and the majority of OPS employees should be transferred to the Office of the Clerk. We also agree that with the transfer of OPS to the Office of the Clerk, our recommendation to remove the name of the Clerk from non-legislative documents is no longer applicable.

Finding B: The House Needs A Centralized Document Distribution System

House offices do not always know how or where to obtain needed documents. This occurs because document distribution is usually controlled by the document's creator and, thus has become a fragmented process. Consequently, offices do not always receive necessary documents in the most efficient and effective manner.

Distribution of Legislative Documents

Title 44 establishes distribution requirements for both the public and internal dissemination of legislative documents (i.e., reports to accompany legislation, public and private bills, conference reports, Senate and House Resolutions, etc.). GPO distributes these documents directly to the House Document Room (Document Room) and, if a bill, to the Committee(s) to which it has been referred. The Document Room distributes up to three copies to House staff and maintains a limited number for distribution to the public. When the Document Room has exhausted its document supply, requesters are directed to alternative sources such as the Superintendent of Documents, the Depository Libraries, or the Internet. Use of these alternative sources has significantly reduced the need for reprints of legislative documents.

Other legislative documents, such as the *Congressional Record* and the *House Calendars*, are distributed to offices in the Capitol by GPO and through the internal House mail system for all other House offices. To be placed on a distribution list for these documents, an office must contact JCP (*Congressional Record*) and/or submit a written request to the Clerk (*House Calendars*). Since these procedures are not widely known, an office may not receive the necessary documents.

Distribution of Committee Documents

Committee Chairmen are responsible for the distribution of Committee documents. When a Committee prints a report of a hearing, the Chairman makes the report available to the public. However, whether Committee hearings have been printed and available for distribution is not always common knowledge. For example, one office, trying to obtain a copy of the Legislative Branch Appropriation Hearing for 1996, contacted the Office of Finance; Superintendent of Documents; and JCP before finding out that the hearing was only available through the Committee. However, when the office contacted the Committee, copies of one of the two parts of the hearing were no longer available.

Distribution of Administrative Documents

Offices responsible for the creation of administrative documents (i.e., Statement of Disbursements, House Telephone Directory, etc.) control their distribution. However, the distribution methods do not ensure that copies always reach the offices that need them. For example, the printing requisition for the Statement of Disbursements provides distribution instructions for the House--one for each Member office, 200 for Records and Registration, 199 for the Document Room, 100 for the Clerk, and one for the CAO. However, an official of Records and Registration stated that they receive far more copies of this document than are required. Conversely, Committees and administrative offices are not on the distribution list and, thus must know that the document is available and where they can get a copy.

Document Control System

Because existing House document distribution methods are fragmented, House offices may not receive all documents needed to accomplish their mission. A centralized document control system would allow for more efficient and economical distribution of documents. By establishing such a system, offices would be periodically informed of the documents available within the House and be given the opportunity to select the types and quantities of documents needed. (However, due to budgetary constraints the Clerk may need to put a limit on the quantities provided to each House office.) This information would be used by the creators of documents to ensure that sufficient copies are printed and distributed. Although the maintenance of this centralized system is administrative in nature, the majority of documents under its control are legislative. Therefore, the Clerk and the CAO should jointly develop a system to control both legislative and administrative documents.

Recommendation

We recommend that the Clerk and the Chief Administrative Officer develop a proposal, for approval by the Committee on House Oversight, to establish a centralized legislative and non-legislative document control system which would:

- a. provide all House offices with a list of categories and types of documents available within the House and give all House offices the opportunity to request needed documents;
- b. disseminate completed document requests to the Committees and offices responsible for creating documents so that House offices are placed on appropriate document distribution schedules; and
- c. provide House offices only those documents requested through the document control system.

Management Response

The Clerk and the Acting CAO both concurred with the recommendation in this finding. The Clerk is opening a Legislative Resource Center (LRC) which will allow the Clerk to collect and distribute all legislative documents under its authority from a central point. Also, transferring OPS to the Clerk will allow the Clerk to track documents processed by OPS. For those documents not directly under the Clerk's authority, the Clerk will work with GPO on a system whereby the LRC is notified when any documents are submitted and printed. The LRC can post an INTRANET page indicating what committee documents have been printed and are available. The Acting CAO defers to the Clerk the responsibility for developing a proposal for the establishment of a centralized document control system.

Office of Inspector General Comments

The planned actions are responsive to the issues we identified, and when fully implemented, should satisfy the intent of our recommendation.

Finding C: Improved Processes Needed To Bring Publication Of The House Journal Current

The *House Journal*, the official record of proceedings for the House, is six sessions behind in publication. These publication delays are due to problems in defining an indexing methodology for the *House Journal* and inefficiencies in the *House Journal* production process. As a result, users of the *House Journal* (i.e., House Parliamentarian, Members, State Legislatures, etc.) have not had access to the current source for parliamentary precedence on rulings of order or for actual language of conference reports and motions.

House Journal Indexing

In recent years, the indexing of the *House Journal* was compiled by a program developed by House Information Resources (HIR). However, changes in technology used to produce the *House Journal* made this program obsolete. Therefore, a new method for providing *House Journal* indexing needed to be developed. After much discussion and significant publication time loss, the Journal Clerks and the Parliamentarian finally agreed, and obtained authorization from the JCP, to use the *Congressional Record* Index Office. Since the resolution of this indexing problem, the Office of the Journal Clerk (OJC) has made great strides in reducing the *House Journal* publication backlog. Although the Clerk projects that the *House Journal* will be current before the end of 1997, inefficiencies in the *House Journal* production process could make this goal difficult to achieve.

House Journal Production Process

OJC produces a *Daily Journal* at the end of each legislative day. This *Daily Journal* is a one to twelve page document that, along with information incorporated from the *Congressional Record*, becomes the *House Journal*. However, since the Journal Clerks do not have access to the *Congressional Record* database, they have to manually annotate the *Daily Journal* and the corresponding *Congressional Record* to show OPS what text is to be inserted from the *Congressional Record* into the *Daily Journal*.

Relying on OPS to insert text from the *Congressional Record* into the *Daily Journal* requires the Journal Clerks to perform the tedious task of reviewing both documents and marking them to indicate what text is to be copied and where the text is to be inserted. It also requires these two "marked up" documents to be carried from one building to another. Although both Journal Clerks and OPS stated that the two offices communicate and coordinate well with each other, there have been delays in the manual exchange of documents. However, if the OJC's computer system had the capability to access the *Congressional Record* database, OJC could make the necessary insertions, thus eliminating the need to manually "mark up" and transport documents. Currently, the Journal Clerks have "marked up" *Congressional Records* through March 1996, but have only transmitted "marked up" files through the end of 1993 to OPS. The additional "marked up" files have remained with the Journal Clerks because of a lack of space at OPS.

In addition, multiple proofreading contributes to *House Journal* process delays. The current process requires both a GPO proofreader, detailed to OPS, and a Journal Clerk to proof the document at least three times. This multiple proofreading appears excessive and its need is questionable since the majority of *House Journal* text is copied directly from the *Congressional Record*--a previously proofed and published document. Also, transferring documents from one office to another for proofreading causes further delays. A review of the Assistant Chief of Printing Services' log indicated that significant delays of up to 18 months occurred between the time that documents were sent to OJC for additional proofreading and OJC returned them to OPS.

Another step that delays the process and requires the document to be physically exchanged from one office to another is printing a soft bound copy of the *House Journal*. This soft bound copy is used by the Journal Clerks to make a final cursory check of the entire document before final publication. However, since both the Journal Clerks and OPS have already reviewed the camera ready copy of the *House Journal*, preparation and review of a soft bound copy appears duplicative in nature. According to a Clerk official, OJC has historically received a soft bound copy of the *House Journal* for final proofreading, but stated that such a version had limited practical value. Also, soft bound copies are not used in the proofreading of any other House documents.

Recommendations

We recommend that the Clerk:

1. Expeditiously provide the Journal Clerks access to the *Congressional Record* database.
2. Train the Journal Clerks on how to insert information from the *Congressional Record* into the *Daily Journal*.
3. Revise the current *House Journal* production process to reduce the proofreading requirement.
4. Eliminate the soft bound copy of the *House Journal*.

Management Response

The Clerk concurred with the recommendations in this finding. The Clerk has already implemented corrective actions to (1) provide the *Congressional Record* information to the Journal Clerks, (2) schedule the Journal Clerks for training to enable them to copy and insert data directly into the Journal, and (3) eliminate the soft-bound copy of the Journal. The Clerk is currently reviewing the processes for production of the Journal under the control of the Journal Clerks to reduce the proof-reading cycles.

Office of Inspector General Comments

The current and planned actions are responsive to the issues we identified, and when fully implemented, should satisfy the intent of our recommendations.

Finding D: Duplicate Member Databases Need To Be Eliminated

Currently three offices (Legislative Computer Systems (LCS), OPS, and HIR) have Member databases which are separately maintained with varied accessibility to House staff. These duplicate databases evolved to meet information requirements of a particular office without fully considering any existing alternative information sources. As a result, users of this data may be subject to conflicting, untimely, and inaccurate information.

The Clerk's LCS database supports the Electronic Voting System used to capture House Members' votes on the passage of legislation. The system has to accurately reflect the correct composition of the House membership so votes will be recorded accurately. To keep the information current, the Clerk receives the Certifications of Election and the Election statistics from the Secretaries of State from each state. In addition, the Clerk also receives personal information from the elected Members. When a Member resigns, the resignation letter is addressed to the Speaker and read on the House floor. The Speaker provides a copy of the letter to the Clerk to update the Electronic Voting System.

The OPS Member database is used to create various legislative and non-legislative documents printed by GPO. It also has additional information used to create the requisitions to request printing from GPO and outside vendors. Access to the information contained in the OPS database is limited to the printed documents it generates. The electronic version of the data in the database is only accessible by OPS staff and the documents (i.e., Official List of Members, the List of Standing Committees and Subcommittees, Capitol Directory, etc.) are only regenerated after a significant number of changes have occurred to the House membership. The Member information contained in this database is entered manually from data obtained from the Clerk.

HIR databases are accessed freely by House staff through the Member Information Network. The Member information contained in these databases is entered manually from data obtained from the Clerk.

This duplication of Member data may cause House staff to use information which is conflicting, untimely, and inaccurate. Currently, each database has to be updated manually from a notice provided by the Clerk. This process is subject to delays and errors in the updating of the databases. To eliminate the duplication of efforts, one entity should have sole responsibility to maintain the "official" House Membership list and Committee assignments. Since the Clerk receives official notifications of change in House Membership, the Clerk should be assigned responsibility for maintaining this single database. However, all House offices should have access to this database to fulfill their designated responsibilities and needs. Further, a single database would also eliminate maintenance of three separate systems and significantly lessen the possibility of inaccurate information.

Recommendations

We recommend that the:

1. Clerk of the House continue to maintain a Member database for the House and provide the Chief Administrative Officer access to this database for administrative uses.
2. Chief Administrative Officer discontinue the use of separate Member databases in the Office of Printing and Mailing Services and House Information Resources, and use the Member database maintained by the Clerk of the House.

Management Response

The Clerk and Acting CAO concurred with the recommendations in this finding. The Clerk has directed LCS to develop a database to replace the current Member database and to post current, up-to-date information on the INTERNET, to act as publishing database to produce the Clerk's traditional documents for printing at the GPO and to feed all other information databases which require current official information. LCS will proceed to develop a database using newer Windows-based software and relational database software capable of easier data exchange and to take advantage of developing technology for both computer data exchange and for printing. The Acting CAO agrees that one database is appropriate to support these publication needs. HIR will work with the Clerk to establish the most effective way of obtaining needed information.

Office of Inspector General Comments

The current and planned actions are responsive to the issues we identified, and when fully implemented, should satisfy the intent of our recommendations.

Finding E: The CAO Needs To Fully Utilize Electronic Document Transfer Capabilities

OPS does not fully utilize the capability to electronically transfer administrative documents to GPO for printing. This lack of capability exists because OPS procedures have not kept up with changing technology. As a result, inefficiencies in printing administrative documents and delays in posting to the Internet occur.

To facilitate the printing process, the printing industry is moving from the use of camera-ready copy to electronic format. In addition, Congress has tasked GPO with making all printed information available on the Internet. The use of an electronic format allows for timely electronic distribution of information.

GPO prefers having the electronic format for printing since it allows for simultaneous placement on the Internet. However, OPS usually sends print jobs to GPO in camera-ready copy even though most of these documents already have the GPO printing codes needed to print from the electronic version. When the electronic version of documents is not submitted, GPO must scan the documents in order to make them available through the Internet.

Although OPS occasionally includes the electronic format on diskette, their use of electronic technology should be expanded. For example, since the migration from the FMS to the FFS accounting system, the *Statement of Disbursements* has been printed from camera-ready copy. OPS does not provide electronic format to GPO because the report file FFS produces does not contain the GPO locator codes required for electronic printing. However, if OPS provided GPO with both the ASCII file and the camera-ready copy, GPO would not have to scan the document to make it electronically available to the public.

Recommendation

We recommend that the Chief Administrative Officer fully utilize electronic transfer capabilities to transmit administrative documents to the Government Printing Office for printing and electronic access.

Management Response

The Clerk and the Acting CAO concurred with the recommendation in this finding. With the move of OPS from the CAO to the Clerk, the recommendation for the CAO to fully utilize electronic transfer capabilities to transmit administrative documents to GPO is no longer necessary. However, the Clerk has installed all necessary software in OPS to enable them to transfer documents electronically to GPO. Also, the Clerk will ensure that all documents are transferred electronically along with a paper copy.

Office of Inspector General Comments

The current and planned actions are responsive to the issues we identified, and when fully implemented, should satisfy the intent of our recommendation. We also agree that with the transfer of OPS to the Office of the Clerk, the recommendation that the CAO fully utilize electronic transfer capabilities to transmit administrative documents to GPO is no longer applicable.

Finding F: Office Supply Functions Need To Be Consolidated

OPS has been providing a supply service which should be the responsibility of Office Supply Service (OSS). OPS provides certain supplies because they have become the focal point for preparing GPO and other specialized printing requisitions. As a result, customers have to obtain office supplies from two sources. Since most office supplies are obtained from OSS, customers would be better served by a consolidation of these two functions.

Traditionally, House offices have made purchases of stationery items (e.g., letterhead, franked and unfranked envelopes, etc.) and specialized printing requests through OPS. Relative to stationery items, GPO provides the printing and delivers the supplies to the House office that placed the order. GPO also bills the requesting office directly for these stationery orders. Specialized printing requests, such as business cards and engraved stationery, are obtained through contract printers. Although OPS processes the requisitions for these jobs, the distribution of the order and billing is the responsibility of OSS. Centralizing ordering would allow for improved customer service and a single point of contact for all office supplies.

Recommendation

We recommend that the Chief Administrative Officer develop a proposal, for approval by the Committee on House Oversight, that would move the responsibility for processing special order printing requests from the Office of Printing and Mailing Services to the Office Supply Service.

Management Response

The Clerk and the Acting CAO concurred with the recommendation in this finding. The responsibilities for special order printing should remain with the CAO and the responsibility given to the Office Supply Service.

Office of Inspector General Comments

The planned action is responsive to the issues we identified, and when fully implemented, should satisfy the intent of our recommendation.

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III. OTHER MATTERS

The recommended transfer of most OPS functions to either the Clerk or OSS (see Findings A and F) provides the CAO with the opportunity to further streamline operations. One area for consideration is Postal Operations. This operation has five positions responsible for the management of the in-House mail services contract with Pitney Bowes Management Services.

Realigning Postal Operations with the Office of Media and Support Services (MSS) would place all outsourced services under one associate administrator. MSS currently maintains similar contracts, i.e., food services and retail. Placing outsourced services under one associate administrator should enhance contract monitoring and management.

Furthermore, the recommended transfers of OPS functions to the Clerk and OSS, and Postal Operations to MSS, raise questions relative to the continued need for the Office of Publications and Distribution (OPD). OPD has three positions and, with the recommended realignments of OPS and Postal Operations, limited oversight responsibilities. Based on fiscal year 1997 budget estimates, the decrease in three positions in OPD would result in savings of at least \$184,000 in salaries, approximately \$55,000 in associated personnel benefits, and \$11,700 in non-personnel items.

Recommendation:

We recommend that the Chief Administrative Officer--after a permanent selection is made--review the feasibility of realigning Postal Operations with the Office of Media and Support Services and closing the Office of Publications and Distribution and, if determined feasible, develop a proposal, for approval by the Committee on House Oversight, to reorganize these functions.

Management Response

The Acting CAO concurred with the recommendation in this finding. A permanent CAO should develop a full and complete CAO organizational proposal that will establish the most effective and efficient structure. Such a proposal would address the realignment of responsibilities for Media and Support Services and Publications and Distribution.

Office of Inspector General Comments

The planned action is responsive to the issues we identified, and when fully implemented, should satisfy the intent of our recommendation.

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**Status Of Implementation Of Prior Audit Report Recommendations
EXHIBIT**

Audit Report/Recommendations	Implementation Status	Comments on Corrective Actions Taken And/Or Planned	Scheduled Date of Completion
Audit Report No. 95-CLK-13, entitled <i>Opportunities Exist To Improve The Generation Of Legislative Information In The Office Of The Clerk</i>, dated July 18, 1995:			
A. Develop a proposal, for approval by the Committee on House Oversight (CHO), to implement policies and procedures regarding information dissemination.	Complete	The Proposed Document Management System and Electronic Configuration within the Office of the Clerk was submitted to the CHO on May 7, 1996. The CHO adopted a resolution supporting the proposal on May 23, 1996. Until the document management system is fully operational, documents electronically disseminated by House Information Resources (HIR) contain a disclaimer that the document is the unofficial version; only documents produced by GPO are the official version.	Not Applicable
B.1. Publicize the availability of documents on the Internet.	Complete	The Document Distribution Policy states that when the supply of 150 copies of a particular document available to the general public is depleted, the Document Room will refer customers to the Internet and other sources. During September 1996, the Document Room received 11,418 phone calls which were referred to the Internet and other sources.	Not Applicable
B.2. Evaluate the cost of printing documents on demand and, if cost-effective, prepare a proposal, for approval by the Committee on House Oversight, to install demand printers in the Document Room.	Complete	The Document Production Volume/Cost Summary for DocuTech equipment was completed on June 2, 1995. DocuTech equipment has been installed in the Capitol Document Room for print on demand needs, subject to guidelines issued by the Joint Committee on Printing.	Not Applicable
C. Improve electronic interface between the Clerk's office and GPO by working with HIR and GPO to establish a more comprehensive electronic data transfer capability.	Complete	At the beginning of the 105 th Congress, work was completed to improve the electronic interface between the Clerk's Office and GPO. The Clerk is transmitting to GPO all of the <i>Congressional Record</i> data that is available in an electronic format.	Not Applicable

Office of the Clerk
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-6601

MEMORANDUM

TO: John W. Lainhart, IV
Inspector General

FROM: Robin H. Carle, 
Clerk of the House

DATE: January 22, 1997

SUBJECT: Draft Audit Report - Improvements Are Needed In The Creation And Distribution Of Documents Within The House

Please find below the Office of the Clerk comments regarding the Draft Audit Report - Improvements Are Needed In The Creation And Distribution Of Documents Within The House. If you need further information or wish to discuss any portions of my response in greater detail - as always, feel free to call.

Finding A: CAO Controls Over The Creation And Distribution Of Legislative Documents Should Be Eliminated

Recommendations

We recommend that the Clerk and the Chief Administrative Officer develop a proposal, for approval by the Committee on House Oversight, to:

1. Transfer the responsibility for the legislative documents and associated Office of Printing Services and employees to the Office of the Clerk.

CONCUR WITH EXPLANATION

The Clerk believes that the responsibility for legislative and administrative documents and most employees of the Office of Printing Services should be transferred to the Office of the Clerk. By maintaining central control of the creation and distribution of the pertinent documents, user confusion is prevented by having one point of contact for requesting documents, and the value of cross-trained employees is continued. To separate legislative documents from administrative ones causes arbitrary distinctions that may not be clear to all users. Dividing OPS employees to

**APPENDIX A
(2 of 4)**

support separate document creation by different organizational units would spread them so thin that additional employees would be needed to maintain the same level of service achieved now by having the resource flexibility of one group.

2. Remove the name of the Clerk from non-legislative documents.

CONCUR WITH EXPLANATION

This is not necessary with the transfer of the full OPS to the Clerk.

Finding B: The House Needs A Centralized Document Distribution System.

CONCUR

The Office of the Clerk has longed planned the opening of a Legislative Resource Center at the beginning of the 105th Congress which will bring under one umbrella organization the former offices of Records and Registration, the House Document Room, the House Library and the former office of the House Historian. This allows the Clerk to collect and distribute all Legislative documents under its authority from a central point and also serve as a central historical repository for all Legislative documents for the House.

If the Office of Printing Services is again moved under the Office of the Clerk, we will work with the Government Printing Office to track all documents submitted to and received from them. When Legislative documents are printed and received from the GPO, the numbers to be distributed to offices can be coordinated with Postal Services from one central authority, and all remaining copies available in the LRC. Central management of the inventories of these documents will allow the LRC to print additional copies as needed on the high-speed Docutech printers when appropriate.

For documents not directly under the Clerk's authority such as Committee Prints and Hearings, we will work with the GPO on a system whereby the LRC is notified when any document is submitted and printed. Historical copies of all documents will be received and archived in the facilities of the former House Library and be available for inspection or check-out in the LRC. The LRC can post an INTRANET page indicating what committee documents have been printed and received indicating the appropriate Committee to contact for copies and its location. Further, the new Library cataloguing system will allow users to search the LRC collection to identify all Committee documents in the collection and allow users to review them.

Finding C: Improved Processes To Expedite The Production Of The Journal.

CONCUR

APPENDIX A
(3 of 4)

The Clerk concurs with the four recommendations made regarding the creation and production of the *House Journal*. In fact, three of the four have already been implemented.

- 1) The *Congressional Record* information needed by the Journal Clerks is now directly received by the Clerk's office from GPO and stored on the LAN drives the Journal Clerks are using.
- 2) During the first quarter of 1997, The Journal Clerks are scheduled for the necessary training to enable them to copy and insert the data directly into the Journal.
- 3) We are currently reviewing the processes for production of the Journal to move more of the production directly under the control of the Clerks responsible for its production. More direct control will enable us to reduce the proof-reading cycles.
- 4) The soft-bound copy of the Journal is no longer required as part of the proofing cycle.

Finding D: Elimination Of Duplicate Member Databases.

CONCUR

The Office of Legislative Computer Systems has been directed to develop a database to replace the current Member database. The new database can be used to post current, up-to-date information on the INTERNET, to act as publishing database to produce the Clerk's traditional documents for printing at the Government Printing Office, to print-on-demand in the Legislative Resource Center for House distribution, and to feed all other information databases which require current official information. Because the Printing Services database uses older DOS-based software and the GPO's Microcomp printing systems, LCS will proceed to develop a database using newer Windows-based software and relational database software capable of easier data exchange and positioned to take advantage of developing technology for both computer data exchange and for printing. LCS will work with Printing Services to develop the requirements for the new system and to gradually move production the Clerk's documents from the older database during 1997 and eliminate the current system by the end of the year.

Finding E: Utilization Of Electronic Transfer Of Documents.

CONCUR

We have installed all the necessary software in the Office of Printing Services to enable them to transfer documents electronically to both the GPO and to the Clerk's office. The Clerk will ensure that all jobs from the Clerk's office are transferred with an electronic copy along with the paper copy.

APPENDIX A
(4 of 4)

Finding F: Office Supply Functions Need To Be Consolidated.

CONCUR

The Clerk believes that the responsibility for processing special order printing requests should stay with the CAO.

Other Matters:

The Clerk defers to the CAO for a response to this recommendation.

Office of the
Chief Administrative Officer
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

APPENDIX B
(1 of 4)

MEMORANDUM

TO: Robert B. Frey III
Deputy Inspector General

FROM: Jeff Trandahl 
Acting Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: JAN 27 1997

SUBJECT: Draft Audit Report - Improvements Are Needed In The Creation And
Distribution Of Documents Within The House

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on your draft report. We have reviewed the draft audit report, "Improvements Are Needed In The Creation And The Distribution Of Documents Within The House", and carefully considered the recommendations contained therein. We note that references in the draft report to the Office of Printing and Mailing Services should be changed to the Office of Printing Services only, since the CAO has previously transferred the Mailing Services unit to the Postal Operations unit of the Office of Publications and Distribution. Our overall response is that the Office of Printing Services should remain intact and be transferred to the Office of the Clerk except responsibility for the handling of special order printing. Our specific responses with relevant discussion are indicated in the following:

**Finding A: CAO Controls Over The Creation And Distribution Of Legislative Documents
Should Be Eliminated**

Recommendations

We recommend that the Clerk and the Chief Administrative Officer develop a proposal, for approval by the Committee on House Oversight, to:

1. Transfer the responsibility for the legislative documents and associated Office of Printing Services and employees to the Office of the Clerk.

**APPENDIX B
(2 of 4)**

CONCUR WITH EXPLANATION

The CAO believes that the responsibility for legislative and administrative documents and the majority of the employees of the Office of Printing Services should be transferred to the Office of the Clerk. By maintaining central control of the creation and distribution of the pertinent documents, user confusion is prevented by having one point of contact for requesting documents, and the value of cross-trained employees is continued. To separate legislative documents from administrative ones causes arbitrary distinctions that may not be clear to all users. Dividing OPS employees to support separate document creation by different organizational units would spread them so thin that additional employees would be needed to maintain the same level of service achieved now by having the resource flexibility of one group.

2. Remove the name of the Clerk from non-legislative documents.

CONCUR WITH EXPLANATION

This is not necessary with the complete transfer of document creation from the CAO to the Clerk.

Finding B: The House Needs a Centralized Document Distribution System

Recommendation

We recommend that the Clerk develop a proposal, for approval by the CHO, to establish a centralized document control system ...etc.

CONCUR

Since the CAO agrees that the Clerk should develop this proposal, we defer to the Clerk for a response to this recommendation.

Finding C: Improved Processes Needed To Bring Publication Of The House Journal Current

Recommendations

We recommend that the Clerk:

1. Expeditiously provide the Journal Clerks access to the *Congressional Record* database.
2. Train the Journal Clerks...etc.
3. Revise the current *House Journal* production process ...etc.

4. Eliminate the soft bound copy of the *House Journal*.

The CAO defers to the Clerk's response to these recommendations.

Finding D: Duplicate Member Databases Need To Be Eliminated

Recommendations

We recommend that the:

1. Clerk continue to maintain a Member database for the House and provide the CAO access to this database for administrative uses.

CONCUR

2. CAO discontinue the use of separate member databases in the OPS and HIR, and use the Member database maintained by the Clerk.

CONCUR

The CAO agrees that one database is appropriate to support these publication needs. HIR will work with the Clerk to establish the most effective way of providing the needed information.

Finding E: The CAO Needs To Fully Utilize Electronic Document Transfer Capabilities

Recommendation

We recommend that the CAO fully utilize electronic transfer capabilities to transmit documents to the GPO for printing and electronic access.

CONCUR

While the CAO concurs with the intent of this recommendation, it would be a recommendation for the Clerk when such OPS responsibilities are transferred to the Clerk.

Finding F: Office Supply Functions Need To Be Consolidated

Recommendation

We recommend that the CAO develop a proposal, for approval by the CHO, that would move the responsibility for processing special order printing requests from the OPS to the Office Supply Service.

APPENDIX B
(4 of 4)

CONCUR

The CAO agrees that responsibility for certain special order printing and stationery be maintained under the CAO and responsibility given to the Office Supply Service.

OTHER MATTERS

Recommendation

We recommend that the CAO - after a permanent selection is made - review the feasibility of realigning Postal Operations with the Office of Media and Support Services and closing the Office of Publications and Distribution and, if determined feasible, develop a proposal, for approval by the CHO, to reorganize these functions.

CONCUR

A permanent CAO should develop full and complete CAO organizational proposals that will establish the most effective and efficient structure for discharging the CAO's responsibilities to the House. Such a proposal would address the realignment of responsibilities for Media and Support Services and for Publications and Distribution.