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Correctional Service  
Canada

Service correctionnel  
Canada



SAFETY, RESPECT  
AND DIGNITY  
FOR ALL

LA SÉCURITÉ,  
LA DIGNITÉ  
ET LE RESPECT  
POUR TOUS

# National Guide for Institutional Libraries

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# Correctional Service of Canada 2012

## National Guide for Institutional Libraries

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### 1.0 Purpose and Philosophy<sup>1</sup>

- 1.1 The purpose of the library in a federal institution is to meet the needs of the correctional community by providing an essential service which emulates the public library model, with free and equitable access to a wide range of ideas, information, and perspectives.
- 1.2 The institutional library, while providing access to information, will be respectful of Canadian correctional legislation, policy and practice. It is therefore recognized that while certain information or services are provided via the public library model, others cannot be offered in institutional libraries due to security considerations.
- 1.3 The institutional library should provide inmates with the opportunity to pursue recreational, cultural and spiritual interests, while also providing services and materials that support institutional programs. Special attention should be given to meet the basic needs of minority official languages inmates.
- 1.4 The use of the institutional library should be promoted as it can be a stabilizing influence in the institution by reducing idleness, while also promoting constructive use of time. Finally, it is also recognized that the institutional library has a unique role, as a resource for information, education and enrichment, in the successful reintegration of offenders.

### 2.0 Definitions

- 2.1 The institutional library, herein referred to as the library, is an information centre that supports all institutional programs and addresses inmates' needs for recreational, cultural, spiritual, educational and informative materials.
- 2.2 The library should be supervised or managed by qualified and trained personnel (librarians, library technicians or individuals with a minimum of two years of experience acquired through employment in a school or community library), herein referred to as librarians.
- 2.3 Library users, or patrons, refer to all individuals who frequent the library. This can include inmates, CSC staff, contract personnel and volunteers.

### 3.0 Authorities, Policies and Standards

- 3.1 Canadian correctional legislation requires that certain materials be made available to inmates<sup>2</sup>. Please refer to subsection 97(3) of the *Corrections and Conditional Release Regulations*, excerpted below:

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<sup>1</sup> The National Guide for Institutional Libraries was strongly influenced and guided by the following publication: Lehmann, V., & Locke, J. (2005). *Guidelines for library services to prisoners*. (3<sup>rd</sup> edition). (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions Professional Report no. 92). The Hague: IFLA.

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97. (3) *The Service shall ensure that every inmate has reasonable access to:*
- a. *legal counsel and legal reading materials;*
  - b. *non-legal materials, including:*
    - i. *Commissioner's Directives, and*
    - ii. *Regional instructions and institutional standing orders, except those relating to security matters.*
  - c. *and a commissioner for taking oaths and affidavits.*
- 3.2 Canadian correctional policy requires that certain materials, in addition to the aforementioned stated in the subsection above, be made available to inmates in libraries. Please refer to [Commissioner's Directive 720 – Education Programs and Services for Inmates](#).
- 3.3 In addition to Canadian legislation and policy, international standards on institutional libraries have been established. Rule 40 of the United Nations' Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, excerpted below, states the following on the topic:
40. *Every institution shall have a library for the use of all categories of prisoners, adequately stocked with both recreational and instructional books, and prisoners shall be encouraged to make full use of it.*
- 3.4 Canadian correctional policy also prohibits inmate access to certain materials. Please refer to [Commissioner's Directive 764 – Access to Material and Live Entertainment](#).
- 3.5 To determine whether certain requested materials or information are prohibited by correctional legislation, policy or practice, librarians should have time to work closely with, and rely on the expertise of, the on-site manager, the institutional security expert or the institutional information specialists in reviewing library items. The Institutional Head is ultimately responsible for ensuring that all material entering into, or performing within, the institution meet the conditions set forth in [Commissioner's Directive 764 – Access to Material and Live Entertainment](#).
- 3.6 In addition to the prohibition of certain material and information, it is important to note that Canadian correctional policy does not permit inmate access to CSC's electronic network. Information on this restriction can be found in [Commissioner's Directive 226 – Use of Electronic Networks](#).
- 3.7 The principles set out in the legislation and policies enumerated in this section apply to any materials or information requested in libraries, regardless of format.

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<sup>2</sup> Please note that the legislation does not specify the location where the materials identified should be accessed.

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### 4.0 Library Access and Privileges

- 4.1 Respecting each institution's standing orders, library services should be provided to all inmates, CSC employees and contract personnel during the hours that best meet the needs of the institution and maximize accessibility to the correctional community. It is understood, however, that the hours for library services will vary due to institutional factors such as security level, staffing and location.
- 4.2 It is recognized that there shall not be different standards in terms of library access and privileges for inmates with either physical or cognitive disabilities. Appropriate accommodations that comply with national accessibility laws and regulations will be provided to the best of the institution's ability.
- 4.3 Inmates with unrestricted movement within the institution should be able to visit the library every week for periods sufficiently long to select and check out materials, ask reference questions, and read materials that do not circulate (e.g., reference material).
- 4.4 For inmates on restricted status (e.g., segregation, hospital ward), libraries should provide, if feasible and not detrimental to library materials, inmates with the ability to request library material.
- 4.5 In addition, a satellite collection of at least fifty (50) books or two (2) books per inmate (whichever is greater) should be made available on each restricted unit and refreshed on a monthly basis, if possible. Above all else, the quantity of books available for the satellite collection should be proportional to overall library resources.
- 4.6 Should an institution be unable to implement and maintain a satellite collection, inmates must be allowed to request material on a one-for-one basis.
- 4.7 Any user's library privileges may be limited or suspended and financial penalties imposed for justifiable causes such as, but not limited to:
  - a. failure to return library materials;
  - b. damage to, or destruction of, library materials;
  - c. disturbance of other patrons;
  - d. refusal to sign borrower's agreement (if applicable);
  - e. improper use of electronic resources in the library; and/or
  - f. any other objectionable conduct in the library.
- 4.8 Financial penalties imposed for failing to return library materials, or for the damage or destruction of library material, are to be proportional to the value of the material in question.

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- 4.9 The final decision to suspend library privileges is to be made based on the expertise and judgment of the librarian, institutional security experts, institutional information specialists and/or on-site managers.

### 5.0 Library Staff

#### 5.1 Responsibilities of the Librarian

- 5.1.1 Create a warm environment that library users will find welcoming, attractive and functional.
- 5.1.2 Organize materials and information to reflect professional library standards for optimum user access.
- 5.1.3 Deliver professional library management services which support and promote the following: institutional programming; education and literacy; employment; social, ethnic and cultural development; information resources; legal research; personal enrichment; and recreation.
- 5.1.4 Determine the continual needs of the correctional community by keeping in touch with its existing clientele, and matching services and resources to meet those needs and interests when possible and appropriate.
- 5.1.5 Promote the library's active role by developing and maintaining a close liaison with management and institutional programming;
- 5.1.6 Adhere to institutional policies and procedures affecting the security of the institution and/or inmates.

#### 5.2 Additional Staff

- 5.2.1 Wherever possible, consideration should be given to hiring inmates to assist the librarian in order to maximize the efficient use of library staff time. This may include inmate library assistants and cleaners.
- 5.2.2 The librarian will hire inmate library assistants in accordance with institutional practice.
- 5.2.3 Inmate library assistants should be trained to be knowledgeable, helpful and courteous.

#### 5.3 Developmental opportunities

- 5.3.1 Librarians are encouraged to seek out, and participate in, opportunities for professional development. These opportunities, which include continuing education programs and courses, are contingent on supervisor approval and available funding.

## **6.0 Library Collection**

- 6.1 The library should include materials in various formats in order to respect the philosophy outlined in this Guide and to meet the myriad needs of the correctional community.
- 6.2 New materials should be acquired on a regular basis in order to enhance the library's existing collection.
- 6.3 If the library is to fulfill its obligation to the correctional community as a whole, it must provide a collection of materials which represents varied points of view.
- 6.4 In upholding the above mentioned principle, it is accepted that, while library users have the right to avoid material of which they do not approve, they do not have the right to restrict the freedom of other library users to access that material.
- 6.5 The library collection should be appropriately displayed (as space and resources permit) and catalogued using existing standards (e.g., Dewey Decimal, Library of Congress, Sears, MARC).
- 6.6 The library collection should be promoted within the correctional community via the means available at each institution.

## **6.7 Selection of material**

- 6.7.1 The librarian is responsible for the selection of materials. The librarian may consult with other staff members who have a variety of expertise in their respective fields. The librarian is also responsible for assessing the needs of the correctional community and tailoring the selection process to fulfil those needs.
- 6.7.2 The librarian shall select materials for acquisition using a variety of sources, including but not limited to:
  - a. reputable reviewing journals;
  - b. publishers representatives and catalogues;
  - c. examination of materials;
  - d. media information; and
  - e. suggestions from library users.
- 6.7.3 During the selection process, materials are to be considered in terms of the following:
  - a. suitability and appropriateness of the subject;
  - b. relationship to the existing collection and other material on the subject;
  - c. ability to support institutional programs and recreational, cultural and spiritual interests;
  - d. importance as a record of the times;
  - e. insight into human and social conditions;



- f. authority, skills, competence and purpose of the originator of the work;
- g. reviews conducted by critics and attention received by the public; and
- h. condition, age and form of the material.

6.7.4 The librarian can reconsider and re-evaluate the suitability of any book in the collection that individuals or groups may find offensive.

## **6.8 Required Acquisitions**

- 6.8.1 Materials to inform and increase the individual's ability to function effectively as a member of society and understand the world in which we live.
- 6.8.2 Materials to supplement institutional and offender programs (where requested and if available), formal education, learning, informal self-education, literacy, recreational activities.
- 6.8.3 Contemporary materials, representing varying points of view, which are of current interest and possible future significance. This includes, but is not limited to, materials which reflect current conditions, trends or controversies.
- 6.8.4 Materials which reflect the diverse, ethnic, linguistic and cultural heritage of the correctional community in the region where the library is situated. This includes, but is not limited to, material in Canada's two official languages, English and French.
- 6.8.5 Legal material to meet the minimum requirements as documented in the *Corrections and Conditional Release Regulations* and Commissioner's Directives.
- 6.8.6 Reference materials of sufficient depth, quality and quantity to establish and maintain a well-defined core reference collection.

## **6.9 Limitations and restrictions of collection**

- 6.9.1 The library shall not acquire material that has been judged obscene, pornographic or as hate literature, which contravenes [Commissioner's Directive 764 – Access to Material and Live Entertainment](#).
- 6.9.2 The library should not acquire textbooks or other curricula or educational materials the purpose of which is to act as a primary educational resource for formal education.
- 6.9.3 Acquisitions will be limited by budget constraints and by the library's goal of providing a stable, wide-ranging collection that is responsive to the overall correctional community needs.

## **6.10 Donations**

- 6.10.1 The library may accept gifts and donations of materials from individuals or groups, subject to overall policy, and with the prior authorization of the librarian. It is

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understood that all gifts and donations are to be given freely, without conditions attached. The standards of merit and relevance that apply to all material selection shall be used to evaluate the acceptance of gifts and donations.

6.10.2 The protocol on donations can be found in [Annex A](#) of this Guide.

### 6.11 Maintenance of collection

6.11.1 Library materials should be kept in good repair, be labelled with call numbers and kept organized for open and easy access.

6.11.2 A goal of the library must be to have an attractive, relevant and appealing browsing collection. Although this is of primary importance when determining whether to mend, weed or discard a book, budget limitations must be considered.

6.11.3 Mending and maintaining should be done on a regular basis to ensure quality control.

6.11.4 Librarians should receive proper training in book repair and in turn, train their library assistants.

6.11.5 The disposal of any surplus materials must be done in accordance with the policy on the “Policy on the Disposal of Surplus Library Materials” (see [Annex B](#)).

## 7.0 Library Services

7.1 The library should provide information and materials to help inmates equip themselves for useful occupations, increase their competence to form sound judgments, deepen their understanding and appreciation of their cultural heritage and promote personal and social well-being.

### 7.2 Reference services

7.2.1 Library staff shall provide users with guidance and assistance in locating information whether in print or other media.

7.2.2 Patron requests can vary widely in scope and complexity. Although the libraries encourage reference and information requests, lengthy research requiring extensive staff time is not provided as part of this reference assistance. Judgment must thus be exercised when determining the amount of service that can be provided.

### 7.3 Computers

7.3.1 Computers in libraries may include both inmate accessed computers and librarian accessed computers. One of the primary functions of these computers should be to develop and maintain an electronic catalogue and circulation system. Catalogues improve collection development, as well as access to, and sharing of, resources.

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Librarians are encouraged to work with other CSC libraries in selecting software and designing a catalogue that allows for the exchange of records, sharing of resources and the development of shared, or union, catalogues.

### 7.3.2 Inmate accessed computers

7.3.2.1 Inmate accessed computers in the library can fall into two basic categories<sup>3</sup>:

- i. Stand-Alone Public Access Information Stations (used by inmates to access Commissioner's Directives and other limited resources). The purpose of the Public Access Information Stations is to:
  - a. provide access to information and electronic resources that supplement the library's print collection;
  - b. provide access to electronic documents produced by the Service for the use of inmates; and
  - c. provide inmates with an opportunity to learn electronic searching techniques that parallel those used on the Internet (or World Wide Web). The library is not mandated to support computer games as a leisure activity. It is further recommended that even system games (e.g., Solitaire, Minesweeper) be removed from these stations.
- ii. Stand-alone Inmate Library Worker Stations (used by inmate library assistants to maintain the library catalogue of holdings, circulation tasks, amongst other duties). The purpose of the Inmate Library Worker Stations is to provide inmate library assistants with the tools necessary to perform clerical library tasks, under the direction of the librarian. These tasks may include, amongst others, data entry of new library materials, printing of book labels, data entry of circulation records and business letter writing.

7.3.2.2 Librarians will consult with Information Technology (IT) if/when they want Stand-Alone Inmate Library Worker Stations to be loaded with software or equipped with hardware that fall outside the technical requirements for inmate computers. An example of this type of request would be the installation of library management software.

### 7.3.3 Librarian accessed computers

7.3.3.1 Librarians shall have access to the corporate Infonet, the Internet and electronic mail (e-mail), in order to perform their required professional duties, as outlined in this Guide.

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<sup>3</sup> Please note that inmate access networks are available in certain regions.

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- 7.3.3.2 Librarians must have the ability to update and store a backup of the library catalogue to/from the CSC corporate network via a burnable disk or memory key in order to ensure that these data are protected and not lost.
- 7.3.3.3 Librarians provided with a computer on the corporate network shall follow CSC's security and authorization policies and procedures, including [Commissioner's Directive 226 – Use of Electronic Networks](#), and [Commissioner's Directive 764 – Access to Material and Live Entertainment](#). Librarians may run library management software from their C:\drive, with the authorization of their IT division.
- 7.3.3.4 Back-up of library data is solely performed by the librarian. Back-up systems will be accessible only to the librarian and secured in consultation with IT, and other relevant parties, in a secure locked location.

### 7.4 Electronic networks and electronic documents

- 7.4.1 As conveyed in section 3.6, policy does not permit inmate access to CSC's electronic network; however, access to relevant CSC documents and policies should be made available in the library. Certain electronic documents and/or multi-media resources may be accessed on a stand-alone station in the library.
- 7.4.2 Policy prohibits inmate access to the Internet (or World Wide Web). It is important to note the difference between an inmate being given access to the Internet and an inmate having access to information that is available on the Internet. In the case of the latter, there are instances where it may be necessary for inmates to have access to information that is available on the Internet. In instances where the Internet is the only readily available source for the desired information, it may be necessary for librarians to use the Internet to download information in either print or electronic format. For example, many federal government departments now make their primary publications available electronically, and requests for paper copies are referred to the Department's Web site. Any such downloaded information is not to be given to individuals; it will instead become part of the library collection.
- 7.4.3 The librarian will conduct these types of searches as time and resources permit. The librarian can also refuse to download information for an inmate if he or she believes that the information can be obtained through other means and/or for security reasons.
- 7.4.4 Any information obtained via Internet search must meet the requirements of Canadian law on copyright and correctional legislation, policy, practice and guidelines.

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### 8.0 Physical Facility and Equipment

- 8.1 The physical space occupied by the library should be appropriate to carry out the direction outlined in this Guide. The space should, at a minimum, include a secure staff office, ample space for the collection, necessary resources and secure storage, work areas for reading or laying out materials and, sufficient seating and lighting for library users.
- 8.2 Whenever possible, the library will be situated in a location that is most accessible to the largest number of inmates.

### 9.0 Feedback

- 9.1 To ensure that the library meets the needs of its patrons, library staff members are encouraged to have an open dialogue with library users.
- 9.2 Users wishing to pass along comments or suggestions in regards to, amongst other things, the library collection and available services, may do so in either verbal or written form.
- 9.3 Attempts should be made to deal with complaints from users in an informal manner. Inmates wishing to formally register a complaint should be encouraged to complete an inmate complaint form and direct it through the appropriate channels.
- 9.4 It is recognized that the integrity and use of the library will be enhanced if (approved) feedback is implemented within a reasonable timeframe.

### 10.0 Budget

- 10.1 The authority responsible for the library should ensure that designated funding from CSC National Headquarters is appropriately utilized and that the library is provided with an annual operating budget that is commensurate to the needs of the facility.
- 10.2 The library budget should factor in the need to provide the broad range of materials, information and guidelines as conveyed in this Guide, in addition to promoting the library collection within the correctional community.
- 10.3 Librarians shall develop needs assessments for their institutional libraries and submit plans, priorities and schedules to supervisors on an annual basis, normally at the start of each new fiscal year.

*Original signed by*

Chris Price  
Assistant Commissioner,  
Correctional Operations and Programs

February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2012

## **Annex A: Book donation protocol**

### **1.0 Purpose**

- 1.1 The book donation protocol has been developed in order to streamline book donations to libraries across Canada.

### **2.0 Process**

- 2.1 National Headquarters (NHQ) will be the main point of contact for all book donations<sup>4</sup>, whether they originate from individuals or organizations. All inquiries surrounding book donations should consequently be made to NHQ via:

bookdonation@csc-scc.gc.ca

This contact information can also be found on CSC's main Web site and can be provided to current book providers.

- 2.2 When NHQ receives notification that an individual or organization has books to donate, NHQ will provide a list of the titles, in addition to the number of books available, to the Regional Manager of Education (or equivalent). If the individual or organization would prefer that the books be sent to a particular region or institution, only the corresponding Regional Manager of Education (or equivalent) will be contacted.
- 2.3 Once the destination of the books is confirmed, NHQ will organize a courier pick-up of the books and have them shipped to the appropriate Regional Manager of Education (or equivalent). If there are multiple destinations, NHQ will work with the individual or organization to ensure that the various courier pick-ups and shipments are labelled correctly and reach the intended destinations.

### **3.0 Requests**

- 3.1 When the librarian (or equivalent) would like to request specific books, the request should be sent directly to NHQ, using the electronic mail address listed in section 2.1 (bookdonation@csc-scc.gc.ca), copying the Regional Manager of Education (or equivalent) on the request.
- 3.2 NHQ will compile the list of requests and send it out to organizations, like the John Howard Society, in order to determine if the request can be fulfilled. If it cannot be fulfilled at the time of the request, the list will be saved and re-sent at a later date. If the request can be fulfilled, even partially, NHQ will organize a courier pick-up of the books and have them shipped to the appropriate Regional Manager of Education (or equivalent).

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<sup>4</sup> Discretion at the site level can be used for local requests and donations.

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### 4.0 Regional responsibilities

- 4.1 Upon receipt of donations, the Regional Manager of Education (or equivalent) will contact the librarians in order to make arrangements for the delivery and inspection of materials.
- 4.2 Each library must ensure that all materials collected contribute to CSC's mandate and adhere to this Guide.
- 4.3 Librarians will be responsible for sorting the books.
- 4.4 When sorting the books, for security and other reasons, it should be kept in mind that donated books must:
  - a. not have any identifying information in them (e.g., names, addresses, phone numbers, student numbers, credit card information, photos, or receipts). If there is identifying information in the books, it must be rendered unreadable. To do so, either blackout the information using a permanent marker, or, as a last resort, neatly cut it out of the page;
  - b. not have an attached CD-ROM;
  - c. be in good condition (e.g., no missing pages or covers, no mould, not falling apart, and not excessively covered in writing or highlights).
  - d. not be markedly old, with the exception of classic literature, non-fiction material.
- 4.5 The librarians will be responsible for putting in place additional restrictions when sorting book donations. This includes, but is not limited to, adhering to regional book donation standards and/or practices.

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### Annex B: Policy on the Disposal of Surplus Library Material

Multi-Institutional Disposition Authority No. 2008/007

Issued to

Government Institutions subject to the *Library and Archives of Canada Act*  
for  
Policy on the Disposal of Surplus Library Materials

The Librarian and Archivist of Canada, pursuant to sections 9 and 16 of the *Library and Archives of Canada Act*, consents to the disposition, either by redistribution or by destruction, of surplus publications under the control of Government of Canada institutions when institutions subject to the *Act* decide that these publications have no further operational value.

Appendix: Terms and Conditions

Original signed by  
Ian E. Wilson  
Librarian and Archivist of Canada

#### Appendix TERMS AND CONDITIONS

for the Disposition of Surplus Publications in Government of Canada Institutions

##### A. Key Definitions

Canadian imprint  
Material published in Canada.

Deaccession  
The process of deleting from catalogue records the information related to publications that are being removed from a library collection.

Government Institution  
Government institution has the same meaning as in section 3 of the *Access to Information Act* or in section 3 of the *Privacy Act* or means an institution designated by the Governor in Council.

Publication  
Any printed matter that is made available to the public generally or to qualifying members of the public by subscription or otherwise, in multiple copies or at multiple locations, whether without charge or otherwise.



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### Redistribution

Donation to another government institution or to a Canadian not-for-profit organization such as an academic institution, other Canadian library or charitable organization registered in Canada.

### Surplus publication

Any publication under the control of a government institution that is no longer required to support the mandate, functions and activities of that institution (i.e., there is no current or foreseen requirement for it).

### Weeding

The process of examining items in a library collection title by title to identify for permanent withdrawal those that meet pre-established criteria.

## **B. Scope of the Authority**

This authority is applicable to all government institutions subject to the *Library and Archives of Canada Act*.

This authority is delegated to the senior official responsible for information management in government institutions.

This authority may be further delegated to Heads of libraries, or Heads of information management in institutions with no library.

In institutions with a publication program, this authority to dispose of these surplus publications may be delegated to the program manager.

This authority is applicable to all publications under the control of a government institution subject to the *Library and Archives of Canada Act* that have been internally produced or acquired by purchase or donation and have been declared surplus.

## **C. Obligations of Government Institutions**

1. In support of the mandate of Library and Archives Canada (LAC) to continually build Canada's documentary heritage collection, LAC retains the right to acquire any publications declared surplus by government institutions before they are offered to other potential acquiring entities or destroyed. Government institutions must notify LAC when they declare surplus any publications having at least one of the following characteristics:

single copies of rare Canadian imprints in good condition;

collections of Canadian imprints when a government institution or its library is closing permanently;

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results of major weeding/de-accessioning initiatives which include significant numbers of Canadian imprints.

2. All government institutions shall develop and implement a set of criteria for identifying publications that may be declared surplus.