U.S. Government Printing Office

Style Manual

An official guide to the form and style of Federal Government printing

2008

Production and Distribution Notes

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THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE STYLE MANUAL
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EXTRACT FROM THE PUBLIC PRINTING LAW

(TITLE 44, U.S.C.)

§ 1105. Form and style of work for departments

The Public Printer shall determine the form and style in which the printing or binding ordered by a department is executed, and the material and the size of type used, having proper regard to economy, workmanship, and the purposes for which the work is needed.

(Pub. L. 90–620, Oct. 22, 1968, 82 Stat. 1261.)

Historical and Revision Notes

Based on 44 U.S. Code, 1964 ed., § 216 (Jan. 12, 1895, ch. 23, § 51, 28 Stat. 608).

About This Manual

By act of Congress the Public Printer is authorized to determine the form and style of Government printing. The GPO STYLE MANUAL is the product of many years of public printing experience, and its rules are based on principles of good usage and custom in the printing trade.

Editors and writers whose disciplines have taught them aspects of style different from rules followed in this MANUAL will appreciate the difficulty of establishing a single standard. The GPO STYLE MANUAL has served Federal printers since 1894, and with this 30th edition, the traditions of printing and graphic arts are carried forward in the 21st century.

Essentially, the GPO STYLE MANUAL is a standardization device designed to achieve uniform word and type treatment, and it aims for economy of word use. Such rules as are laid down for the submission of copy to GPO point to the most economical manner for the preparation and typesetting of manuscript. Following such rules eliminates additional chargeable processing by GPO.

It should be remembered that the GPO STYLE MANUAL is primarily a GPO printer's stylebook. Easy rules of grammar cannot be prescribed, for it is assumed that editors are versed in correct expression. Likewise, decisions on design and makeup are best determined by the individual publisher to meet the needs of the intended audience. As a printer's book, this MANUAL necessarily uses terms that are obvious to those skilled in the graphic arts.

Users of the GPO STYLE MANUAL should consider it as a general guide. Its rules cannot be regarded as rigid, for the printed word assumes many shapes and variations in type presentation. An effort has been made to provide complete coverage of those elements that enter into the translation of manuscript into type.

The GPO Style Board made significant revisions to update this edition of the GPO STYLE MANUAL. The changes include redesigning the format to make it more modern and easier to read; replacing "What is *GPO Access*?" with "GPO's Online Initiatives"; removing the atomic weights column from the Chemical Symbols table; expanding and updating time zone abbreviations;

listing additional entries to the Post Office abbreviations; extensively reviewing the capitalization chapter to remove outdated entries and include new ones; realigning the abbreviations lists to create a new list of technical abbreviations and initialisms; updating old and adding new tables to the Useful Tables chapter; expanding military titles; creating new sample pages for the Reports and Hearings chapter; providing many URLs as references; and including many suggestions by users.

Comments and suggestions from users of the GPO Style Manual are invited. All such correspondence should be addressed as follows:

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For the purposes of the GPO Style Manual, printed examples throughout are to be considered the same as the printed rules.

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Time zones

9.47. The following forms are to be used when abbreviating names of time zones:

AKDT—Alaska daylight time

AKST—Alaska standard time

AKT—Alaska time (implies standard or daylight time)

AST—Atlantic standard time

AT—Atlantic time

CDT—central daylight time

CST—central standard time

CT—central time

DST—daylight saving (no "s") time

EDT—eastern daylight time

EST—eastern standard time

ET—eastern time

GCT—Greenwich civil time

GMAT—Greenwich mean astronomical time

GMT—Greenwich mean time

HDT—Hawaii-Aleutian daylight time (not observed in HI)

HST—Hawaii-Aleutian standard time

LST—local standard time

MDT—mountain daylight time

MST—mountain standard time

MT— mountain time

PDT—Pacific daylight time

PST—Pacific standard time

PT—Pacific time

UTC—coordinated universal time

Acronyms and coined words

9.48. To obtain uniform treatment in the formation of acronyms and coined words, apply the formulas that follow:

Use all capital letters when only the first letter of each word or selected words is used to make up the symbol:

APPR (Army package power reactor)

EPCOT (Experimental Prototype Community of Tomorrow)

MAG (Military Advisory Group)

MIRV (multiple independently targetable reentry vehicle)

SALT (strategic arms limitation talks); (*avoid* SALT talks)

STEP (supplemental training and employment program)

Use all capital letters where first letters of prefixes and/or suffixes are utilized as part of established expressions:

CPR (*c*ardio*p*ulmonary *r*esuscitation)

ESP (*e*xtra*s*ensory *p*erception)

FLIR (*f*orward-*l*ooking *i*nfra*r*ed)

Copy must be followed where an acronym or abbreviated form is copyrighted or established by law:

ACTION (agency of Government; not an acronym)

MarAd (*Mar*itime *Ad*ministration)

NACo (*N*ational *A*ssociation of *Co*unties)

MEDLARS (*Med*ical *L*iterature *A*nalysis and *R*etrieval *S*ystem)

Use caps and lowercase when proper names are used in shortened form, any word