



Public Information and Education

A PRINCIPAL FUNCTION of the Copyright Office is the provision of information on copyright law and its application. The Copyright Office responds to public requests for information in person, through its website, and via email, telephone, and correspondence. It also engages in outreach programs to educate the public about copyright issues.

In Fiscal Year 2002, the Office as a whole responded to 358,604 requests for direct reference services, including 57,263 email inquiries, of which some 10,000 were on the issue of webcasting.

The Public Information Section assisted 25,005 members of the public in person, taking in 17,644 registration applications and 2,884 documents for recordation. The Section answered 123,106 telephone inquiries, 10,783 letter requests, and 31,681 email requests for information from the public, representing a more than 100 percent increase in the use of email communications. This increase in electronic mail requests is partly a result of the public using an alternative means of communication during the mail disruption and

website modifications that made it easier to contact the Office by email.

The Copyright Office website continued to play a key role in disseminating information to the copyright community and the general public, with 13 million hits on key pages during the year, an 8 percent increase over the prior year. In FY 2001, the Copyright Office received 6,000 responses from the public to a survey about its website, resulting in a plan for a complete overhaul of the Office's web

The **Copyright Office Website**

(www.copyright.gov) is a public service that makes available circulars, announcements, regulations, the copyright law, related material, and all copyright application forms. The website can also be searched for copyright registrations and recorded documents from 1978 to the present.

presence. In conjunction with Copyright Awareness Week in April 2002, the Copyright Office launched its redesigned website (www.copyright.gov) to provide for easier and faster provision of information. Among the new enhancements for the website were:

- a navigational bar at the top of all pages, having tabs for the most frequently requested pages, enabling users to always know where they are and see other options without needing to revisit the home page
- a new, easier way to search Copyright Office registrations and documents
- a step-by-step guide to registration, arranged by category or work, with pop-up menus and windows to guide the user to the right form and to provide additional information
- a new, streamlined look that makes locating information easier and faster
- design compliance with requirements for federal website accessibility, so that members of the public who are blind, deaf, or cannot use their hands can access information on the website, for example by using alternative browsers for speech synthesizers or braille displays
- a search engine for the website
- an interactive “help desk” page to assist the public in responding to specific questions

The Copyright Office electronically published 39 issues of *NewsNet* during the year. The number of subscribers to this electronic news service rose to 5,797 by the end of the fiscal year, a 13 percent increase over the prior year.

In response to public requests, the Reference and Bibliography Section searched 22,515 titles (a 23 percent decrease from FY 2001) and prepared 2,215 search reports (a 50 percent decrease). This decline was due to mail disruption and improved public access to registration records via the website using newly implemented search software. In addition, the Section received 9,483 telephone calls and assisted 9,153 visitors to the Copyright Card Catalog.

The Certifications and Documents Section produced 4,837 copies of certificates of registration, a 32 percent decrease from the previous year caused by the mail disruption. During the fiscal year, the section produced 1,309 copies of copyright deposits and 858 certifications of deposits or records.

The Clerical Support Unit responded to 11,669 letter requests, 55,274 telephone requests, and 25,159 email requests from the public for forms and publications.

During the fiscal year, 347,955 deposits were processed for storage at the Deposit Copies Storage Unit in Landover, Maryland, constituting some 7,249 cubic feet. This is a slight increase from the volume processed the previous year. The unit transferred to remote off-site storage facilities 4,154 cubic feet of records, consisting of unpublished deposits and registration applications.

Credit Cards

In FY 2001, the Copyright Office began accepting credit cards as payment in public service areas. In FY 2002, the Office expanded credit card use to permit deposit account holders to replenish their accounts by credit card. The ability to accept credit cards in public service areas enabled the Office to proceed with processing orders for members of the public whose checks had been delayed in the mail disruption.

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

The Office received 36 requests under the FOIA during the fiscal year.