



University of the
West of England

Library Services
<http://www.uwe.ac.uk/library>

Guide to Official Publications

Bolland Library

June 2002

Contents	Page
1 The Official Publications Collections	3
2 Official publications on the Internet	3
3 Parliamentary debates (Hansard)	3
3.1 House of Commons	3
3.2 House of Lords	4
4 Parliamentary papers	4
4.1 Parliamentary papers microfiche	4
4.2 Index to Parliamentary Papers CD-ROM	4
4.3 Bills	4
4.4 Command papers	5
4.5 House of Commons papers	5
5 Legislation	6
5.1 Statutes	6
5.2 Statutory instruments	6
6 Official statistics	6
7 Tracing Official Publications: sources of information	7
7.1 Databases	7
7.1.1 UKOP	7
7.1.2 Index to Parliamentary Papers CD-ROM	7
7.1.3 Lawtel	7
7.1.4 Lexis	7
7.1.5 Westlaw	7
7.2 Internet sources	8
7.3 Printed sources	9
7.3.1 Stationery Office catalogues	9
7.3.2 Official publications not published by TSO	9
7.3.3 Bibliographies of parliamentary papers	10
7.3.4 House of Commons Weekly Information Bulletin	10
7.4 Further information sources	10

1 The Official Publications Collections

The Official Publications collection at the Bolland Library is housed on Level 4. The collection is filed alphabetically by the name of the government department or committee responsible, e.g.: *Education and Employment, Department for*.

The alphabetical sequence is further subdivided within the departments by the **DATE** of the publication, e.g. Environment, Department of. 1992, or by the title of the **SERIES**, e.g. *Environment, Department of. Planning and Policy Guidance Notes*. The document's date, and/or series, can be found from its library catalogue record.

There are also significant holdings of official documents, primarily of historical significance, at St. Matthias Library.

2 Official Publications on the Internet

The UK government is increasingly making official documents available via the web.

www.ukonline.gov.uk

A good starting place for tracing Internet versions of government publications is this umbrella web site which links to over 1000 government and public service web sites. Texts considered in the public interest may be accessible free of charge via the relevant web site. The site includes links to the TSO/HMSO web sites when texts are held there.

www.hmsso.gov.uk

Includes an online index to all TSO/HMSO publications. Includes the full text of some texts, including legislation since 1988

www.parliament.uk

Parliament web site with full text of recent parliamentary publications (see below).

3 Parliamentary Debates (Hansard)

3.1 House of Commons

The Bolland Library has subscribed to *Weekly Hansard* since 1929. This is virtually a complete record of all parliamentary debates, written answers and question times in the House of Commons and is published weekly. They are housed on Level 4 with the Official Publications Collection. There is a separate index arranged by subject and published fortnightly.

Recent editions of House of Commons Hansard are available via the Parliament web site: see **Internet Sources** below.

For further information there are House of Commons Factsheets on bills available in the Official Publications Collection at location HOU INF, and at <http://www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/fact.htm>

4.4 **Command Papers**

Command Papers derive their name from the fact that they are presented to Parliament by a Government Minister "by Command of Her Majesty". The titles from this series of publications are often described as "White" or "Green" Papers but these expressions have no formal definition. White Papers are generally statements of Government policy whereas Green papers are proposals that are published as an aid to public debate. Command papers also include Royal Commission reports, Treaties to which the UK is a party, formal Government Responses to Select Committee Reports and many of the Reports emerging from Committees of Inquiry and Departmental Reviews.

All command papers are given a series prefix taken from the word "Command", followed by a number within that series from 0 to approximately 9,999. Since 1986 **Cm** + a running number has been used. Before that, from 1956-1986, the prefix **Cmnd** was used, while from 1919-56 the prefix was **Cmd** and from 1900-1919, **Cd**.

For tracing details of recent command papers the following tools are useful: **Index to Parliamentary Papers** microfiche and CD-ROM, **Lawtel** database, **UKOP** database, **Legal and Regulatory Developments Index** on **Westlaw**. Bibliographic details of pre-1980 command papers are difficult to trace using UWE library resources. If correct bibliographic details (including date, prefix and number) can be found it may be possible to obtain copies from the British Library using interlibrary loan or to obtain permission to use Bristol University Library, which has a complete set of Command Papers from 1715 to date.

There is a House of Commons Factsheet on Command Papers available at: <http://www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/fact.htm>

4.5 **House of Commons Papers**

House of Commons papers are numbered consecutively within each parliamentary session and can number as many as 800 in one session. These consist of Select Committee Papers, Minutes of proceedings of Standing Committees, Returns to Addresses, which are statistics from government departments, Estimates and Accounts, and Annual Reports and Accounts of some government agencies, public corporations and nationalised industries.

For recent years papers should be available via the **Index to Parliamentary Papers** microfiche or the **Parliament web site**. For older papers it may be possible to borrow papers from the British Library on interlibrary loan or obtain permission to visit Bristol University, which has a complete set of House of Commons papers from 1715 to date.

For further information there is a House of Commons Factsheet on House of Commons papers available at: <http://www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/fact.htm>

5 Legislation

5.1 Statutes

Statutes are laws that have been enacted by Parliament. They are introduced into Parliament as **Bills** and become **Acts** once they have been approved by both Houses of Parliament and have received the Royal Assent.

Acts first appear as individually published items. The library occasionally buys individual copies of an Act and these are shelved with the Official Publications Collection, under Public General Acts. However, there are several full collected editions of statutes in the Law Collection on Level 5 as well as full text versions on the **Lexis** and **Westlaw** databases (see **Databases** below)

5.2 Statutory Instruments

Statutory Instruments are made by Ministers who have been granted such powers to make legislation by an Act of Parliament. SIs deal with matters too detailed to be included in an Act of Parliament. They come under various titles such as **Orders, Regulations or Rules**. Printed collections of statutory instruments are shelved in the Law Collection on level 5. The full text of SIs are also available on the **Lexis** and **Westlaw** databases (see **Databases** below).

Index to Government Orders (Shelved in the Law Search area at 348.028 IND) summarises all statutory powers to enact subordinate legislation and all SIs in force.

For more detailed information on UK legislation, see the library guide *An Introduction to Legal Literature* (available on the library web pages in PDF format at There is also a House of Commons Factsheet: *L12: Tracing Acts of Parliament* available at: <http://www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/fact.htm>.

6 Official Statistics

The Statistics Collection is housed on Level 3 of the Bolland Library. It includes government statistics as well as statistics from other sources. All the material in this collection is for reference only. The collection is arranged alphabetically by the **TITLE** of the publication e.g. *Annual Abstract of Statistics, Economic Trends* and *United Kingdom Balance of Payments*.

The *Guide to Official Statistics* compiled by the Central Statistics Office is filed with the Statistics Collection. This is a subject guide to statistical sources and includes all official and a few non-official sources of statistics.

The official UK statistics web site is located at: <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/>

7 Tracing Official Publications: Sources of Information

7.1 Databases

7.1.1 UKOP (UK Official Publications)

This database is available via the library web pages at www.uwe.ac.uk/library/library/general/databases. It lists official documents published either by The Stationery Office (TSO) or directly by official organisations since 1980. It is updated daily and has become the official catalogue of UK official publications

UKOP includes Parliamentary publications (including Acts and Statutory Instruments), the publications of central government departments and devolved bodies, as well as the output of quangos, agencies and selected international bodies, including:

- Council of Europe
- European Communities
- International Monetary Fund
- OECD
- United Nations
- UNESCO
- World Health Organisation

UKOP is being enhanced by the addition of some full text. Where the full text is not available on UKOP, full details of the publisher are given and where it is possible to obtain the document even for out of print material.

7.1.2 Index to Parliamentary Papers CD-ROM

Details are given in section 4.2 above.

7.1.3 Lawtel

Legal database available via the library web pages at www.uwe.ac.uk/library/library/general/databases. Allows tracing of details of command papers since 1992 and provides a useful summary tracking progress of bills. Information updated daily.

7.1.4 Lexis

Legal database available via the library web pages at www.uwe.ac.uk/library/library/general/databases. Includes the full, amended text of all public general Acts and SIs that are currently in force. Legislation that has been recently enacted but is not yet in force is also included.

7.1.5 Westlaw

Legal database available via the library web pages at www.uwe.ac.uk/library/library/general/databases. Includes statutes currently in force back to 1267 and statutory instruments back to 1948. Also includes a database of historic legislation (law no longer in force) back to 1992.

The Legal and Regulatory Developments Index (choose option **Leg & Ref Dev Index** using **Quick Search**) indexes legal and regulatory events in the United Kingdom and European Union. Coverage encompasses selected government, Executive Agency and Parliamentary publications, press releases, White and Green papers, Command papers, consultative documents. European Union information includes Official and non-official documents, press releases as well as developments in Member States that affect the United Kingdom.

7.2 Internet sources

10 Downing Street

<http://www.number-10.gov.uk/>

Information about government policy and strategy, including the text of the Queen's speech. Information on Prime Ministers from 1721.

Acts of Parliament

<http://www.hmso.gov.uk/acts.htm>

Acts of Parliament from 1996 onwards are available in full text.

Bills

<http://www.parliament.the-stationery-office.co.uk/pa/pabills.htm>

Gives full text of **selected** public bills now before Parliament. At the head of each bill is a note of the stage that the bill has reached in its passage before Parliament.

Hansard (House of Commons Debates)

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmpublicns.htm>

Contains full text of parliamentary debates from the House of Commons back to 1988-9. Also includes members' questions and written answers to questions.

Hansard (House of Lords Debates)

<http://www.parliament.the-stationery-office.co.uk/pa/ld/ldhansrd.htm>

Currently contains full uncorrected text of Lords Hansard from 10 June 1996 to date.

House of Commons Factsheets

<http://www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/fact.htm>

These are produced by the House of Commons Information Office. They provide brief informative descriptions of various facets of the House of Commons, including types of procedure and legislation.

Monarchy

<http://www.royal.gov.uk/>

Monarchy in Britain - royal residences, family, etc.

Parliament

<http://www.parliament.uk/>

Contains information about UK Parliament, House of Commons and the House of Lords and free access to the full text of recent parliamentary publications.

Statutory Instruments

<http://www.hmso.gov.uk/stat.htm>

Since 1997 all new SIs are published in full text on the Internet.

Weekly Information Bulletin

<http://www.parliament.the-stationery-office.co.uk/pa/cm/cmwib.htm>

Weekly issues for sessions of Parliament from 1996 onwards. Details progress of legislation and forthcoming business of the House of Commons. There is a House of Commons Factsheet on the Weekly Information Bulletin available at: <http://www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/fact.htm>

UK Statistics

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/>

Official UK statistics web site.

7.3 Printed Sources

7.3.1 Stationery Office Catalogues

The TSO Annual Catalogue is updated by the Monthly Catalogues and the Daily List. The Daily List is useful for tracing very recent Acts, SIs, government reports and other official publications published by the Stationery Office or publications for which the Stationery Office is the sole agent. There is a three-month back file of the Daily List in the Official Publications Collection. Statutory Instruments and the Statutory Rules for Northern Ireland are not included in the monthly and annual cumulations: Separate monthly/annual listings of these are filed in the law collection with the SIs.

Each catalogue includes alphabetical, ISBN and subject indexes, for tracing:

- particular categories of material, e.g. Bills
- publications of a particular department
- publications by command paper number or House of Commons paper number

Most government departments also produce a **sectional list**. These list Stationery Office publications prepared by that department and currently in print.

All catalogues are shelved with the Official Publications Collection on Level 4.

N.B. In October 1996, most publications previously published by HMSO (Her Majesty's Stationery Office) were transferred to a new body, called the Stationery Office (TSO). Certain publications are still required to be published by the residuary body of HMSO.

7.3.2 Catalogue of British Official Publications not published by HMSO

This is an annual publication providing bibliographic references to the publications of over 500 organisations "financed or controlled completely or partially by the British Government which are not published by HMSO". The catalogue starts in 1980 and is continued from 1990 by UKOP.

7.3.3 Bibliographies of Parliamentary Papers

Printed bibliographies of selected parliamentary papers are available in the Bolland Library covering the following years:

Select Lists and Breviates

P Ford, G Ford	1833-1899
P Ford	1900-1916
P Ford, G Ford	1917-1939
P Ford	1940-1954
P Ford, G Ford	1955-1964
F Rodgers	1900-1968

British government publications: an index to chairmen and authors (Library Association)

S Richard	1900-40
S Richard	1941-78
A M Morgan	1941-66
S Richard	1979-82

7.3.4 House of Commons Weekly Information Bulletin

Produced weekly, when the House is sitting, by the House of Commons Information Office. Covers all main proceedings: subjects for debates, committee sittings, publications, etc. and selected publications from the House of Lords. Produced since 1978, the library keeps 2 years of back issues, filed with the **Journals** collection. Also available on the Internet (see **Internet Sources** above).

7.4 Further information sources

House of Commons Information Office

Public information service. Likely to be busy.

Tel: 0207 219 4272

Email: hcinfo@parliament.uk

House of Lords

Public information service. Likely to be busy.

Tel: 0207 219 3107

Email: hliinfo@parliament.uk

House of Lords Record Office

<http://www.parliament.the-stationery-office.co.uk/pa/genlinfo.htm>

Tel: 020 7219 3074

Email: hlro@parliament.uk

Provides an archive for both houses of parliament and facilitates public access to several million records, including Acts of Parliament from 1497, journals from 1510, parliamentary papers from 1531, peerage papers from 1597, judicial papers from 1621, and plans of public works from 1794. The Record Office Search Room is open for consultation by appointment. For details of opening hours and arrangements for visiting, see the web site above.

TSO Information Office

0870 6005522

This guide can be made available in alternative formats on request

Fiona Youngman
Librarian
June 2002

JF:infosupp/guides/general-library/offpubs02

Ref. no. GEN/FY/02-03