LEGAL DEPOSIT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

These questions were compiled from daily queries received from publishers.

1. **Q:** Why is the legal deposit system mandatory?
   
   **A:** It is mandatory in terms of the Legal Deposit Act No. 54 of 1997, in order to preserve the national documentary memory and heritage of South Africa.

2. **Q:** Which documents are deposited?
   
   **A:** All documents published (print and electronic) in or adapted to South Africa for the purpose of distribution. These include books, periodicals, newspapers, videos, music sheet, maps, CDs and DVDs, as well as government publications.

3. **Q:** Who must deposit these documents?
   
   **A:** Publishers (commercial and public), societies, churches, organisations, academic institutions and individuals.

4. **Q:** Where must I deposit my published documents?
   
   **A:** At the places of legal deposit and official publications depositories (the latter collect Government information only) - see: http://libguides.wits.ac.za/LegalDeposit/Repositories

5. **Q:** How many copies must I deposit?
   
   **A:** One (1) copy in each depository, however, an extra copy will be welcomed for backup purposes.

6. **Q:** How do I deposit documents?
   
   **A:** You can deposit a document via post or hand it in personally at each place of legal deposit, and where applicable, at official publications depositories (OPDs)
7. Q: Is there a specific form used to deposit documents?
   A: Yes, the South African National Bibliography (SANB) information sheet is used when depositing documents – see: http://libguides.wits.ac.za/LegalDeposit/Receipt

8. Q: Can I use one form to deposit more than one document?
   A: No, each document must be deposited on a separate completed form.

9. Q: What is the deadline for depositing my published documents?
   A: Unless otherwise prescribed, the required period for a publisher to deposit a document to legal depositories is within fourteen (14) days from date of publication.

10. Q: How will I know that my document was received?
    A: Each place of legal deposit and OPD will upon receipt of document complete the Legal Deposit Information Sheet and mail it you as proof of receipt of your document.

11. Q: When will my deposited document be accessible?
    A: Immediately after the document has been catalogued and processed, the record will be accessible on the Legal Deposit Consortium catalogue. While the period differs from one library to another, the maximum period is three (3) months.

12. Q: What are benefits of legal deposit?
    A: Benefits are as follows:
    
    - The purpose of legal deposit is to collect, preserve and make available to present and future users the documents that contain the intellectual and cultural heritage of the country.
    - Legal deposit enables the country to fulfil two fundamental moral obligations to mankind as a whole, which are:
      - to record all works that the country has published/produced for perpetuity.
      - to ensure that at least one copy of every published document is preserved and available for consultation by the public and scholars from all over the world.
    - Legal deposit ensures that a creator’s work is not lost for posterity and that it is available for future research.
    - It has the potential to make all users of places of legal deposit aware of what has been published or produced.
    - It highlights publishers’ outputs in the country and assists in marketing authors’ works via the Legal Deposit Consortium Catalogue.
    - Creators and publishers can approach places of legal deposit for their lost copies.
13. Q: What will happen to me if I do not deposit my document?
   A: Any publisher (commercial or public) who fails to deposit a published document shall be guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding R20 000.

14. Q: I have deposited the first issue of my magazine. Am I required to deposit subsequent issues?
   A: Yes, publishers are required to deposit one (1) copy of the first and every subsequent issues in all places of legal deposit.

15. Q: Where can I find more information on legal deposit?
   A: See: Legal Deposit in South Africa - http://libguides.wits.ac.za/LegalDeposit