

*These notes refer to the Legal Deposit Libraries Act 2003
(c.28) which received Royal Assent on 30 October 2003*

LEGAL DEPOSIT LIBRARIES ACT 2003

EXPLANATORY NOTES

BACKGROUND

4. Under section 15 of the Copyright Act 1911, a copy of each book or serial or other printed publication which is published in the UK is required to be deposited, free of charge, in the British Library. In addition, five other libraries (the National Libraries of Scotland and Wales, and the University libraries of Oxford, Cambridge and Trinity College Dublin) are each entitled to receive, on request, one free copy of any book or other printed publication published in the UK. These libraries, together with the British Library, are collectively known as the legal deposit libraries (or deposit libraries).
5. Section 15 of the Copyright Act 1911 applies only to works in printed form. Since the development of new media and the growth of publication in non-print forms, the existing legislation has ceased to be adequate to ensure the continuation of a comprehensive archive of the nation's published material.
6. The main purpose of the Legal Deposit Libraries Act 2003 is to give the Secretary of State power to extend the system of legal deposit progressively and selectively to cover various non-print media as they develop, including off-line publications (e.g. CD ROMS and microforms), on-line publications (e.g. e-journals) and other non-print materials. This will ensure that publications of significance are collected, regardless of the medium in which they are published, and are preserved as part of the national archive of UK publications, so as to remain available to future generations of eligible users. It is assumed that initial regulations will be restricted to off-line publications.