



Secretariat

ST/AI/189/Add.26
25 September 1989

ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTION

To: Members of the staff

From: The Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services and Special Assignments

Subject: REGULATIONS FOR THE CONTROL AND LIMITATION OF DOCUMENTATION

Addendum

GUIDELINES FOR ELECTRONIC PUBLISHING

1. The purpose of these guidelines is to ensure that documents and publications (including newsletters and other items not part of the publications programme of the Organization) that are prepared by means of electronic publishing and distributed in printed form meet quality standards established for United Nations publications and are produced in the most efficient and cost-effective manner. They are also intended to draw attention to the need for consistency in the design, style and content of United Nations publications regardless of the techniques used for their production. These guidelines should be read in conjunction with other guidelines issued concerning design, format and layout standards and editorial standards for electronic publishing.
2. With electronic publishing, many of the functions normally carried out by other organizational units, particularly within the Department of Conference Services, must be carried out by the author department, since that department maintains overall control of the document. Therefore author departments have the responsibility for making adequate staffing and budgetary provisions to ensure that they can meet this responsibility (without establishing a miniature Department of Conference Services in each author department). While one of the advantages of electronic publishing is a decentralization of certain functions, avoiding bottle-necks that may otherwise impede timely production, the functions should be carried out competently and efficiently and with appropriate quality control.

Criteria for the use of electronic publishing

3. Electronic publishing techniques offer advantages that seem particularly appropriate for newsletters and other publications that appear at fairly frequent intervals and for which timeliness and low production costs are particularly important.

(a) Timeliness. Electronic publishing can reduce the time required to produce a publication. "Turn-around time" is reduced because typesetting of the text is done by the author department rather than by the printer, and the cycle in which the printer sets texts, checks them with the originator and makes any necessary corrections is eliminated. It is also much less difficult to make last-minute changes and corrections. In certain cases, graphs and illustrations are prepared by the author department using the computer rather than by graphic artists, so the process of preparing the text is faster since the number of persons involved is reduced;

(b) Economy. The use of a computer and a low-to-medium resolution printer to generate "camera-ready" material is usually less expensive than commercial typesetting. Even if the electronic publishing software is used as a link between word-processing and typesetting, costs would be reduced, since there would be no need to re-key for typesetting and therefore the need for proof-reading or checking of proofs after typesetting is greatly reduced;

(c) Control. From the point of view of the author department, another important advantage is that electronic publishing offers the author greater control over the process and the final product.

Planning

4. Planning is important for electronic publishing. The decision to use electronic publishing techniques should be based upon close consultations between the author department and the Printing and Reproduction Sections as well as with any other concerned service, such as editing or translation. It is also important at the planning stage to make a full analysis of the costs, direct and indirect, of using electronic publishing techniques. In addition, the Office Automation Service, Office of General Services, should be consulted on the technical requirements in order to ensure integration with other existing or planned electronic equipment.

Design of documents

5. The design and layout of publications require special skills. Author departments should therefore consult the Graphic Presentation Unit in the early stages of planning and follow its guidance, particularly in respect of such aspects as layout, size of page, type style, type size, line length, line spacing, page depth and treatment of maps, graphs and other illustrations. To assist author departments, the Publishing Division is responsible for issuing both general

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guidelines and more detailed standards with respect to the typographical aspects of documents and publications as they relate to specific electronic publishing software packages. To identify any design problems and suggest areas for improvement, ex post facto interdepartmental reviews of publications should be carried out. Such reviews may be initiated by author departments or by the Department of Conference Services.

Editing and translation

6. When editing is required, the text should be provided to the editing services in word-processed form, prior to typesetting, so that any changes that are needed can be introduced with a minimum of difficulty. Editors should also be consulted about the proposed layout of the document, to ensure that it conforms to applicable editorial guidelines. The Editorial Service, Department of Conference Services, is responsible for issuing editing guidelines to be followed in producing documents using electronic publishing techniques and providing the services of an editor to assist author departments using these techniques, so that editing is done quickly and efficiently. In the case of translation, a typeset text may be provided for reference purposes.

Use of specialized services

7. In case author departments require specialized services relating to various aspects of the preparation of a document using electronic publishing techniques, they should direct their requests to the Publishing Division, which should establish and maintain a roster of suitable specialists and should negotiate and administer the contracts for their services.

Assignment of responsibility

8. Normally, the responsibilities for specific stages of electronic publishing will be distributed as follows:

(a) Design, layout and style

- (i) At the initial stages of planning for a new recurrent publication or an ad hoc publication, author departments should consult with the Graphic Presentation Unit of the Printing Section, Department of Conference Services, to obtain guidance on adherence to established United Nations design, format and layout standards;
- (ii) To obtain advice on elements of style established as United Nations standards in such matters as spelling, capitalization, punctuation, etc., author departments should consult with the Copy Preparation Unit of the Printing Section, Department of Conference Services;

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- (iii) Once the basic design, format and layout, as well as the style, have been established, author departments should proceed with subsequent issues of the recurrent publications, consulting the Graphic Presentation Unit on an ad hoc basis whenever significant changes in the publication are to be made. There should be periodic ex post facto reviews of publications to ensure that appropriate standards in design and style are being maintained, carried out by author departments in co-operation with the Graphic Presentation Unit and the Copy Preparation Unit, respectively;

(b) Production scheduling. The Documents Control Section, Department of Conference Services, is responsible for establishing, in close consultation with the author department, an agreed schedule of processing to meet desired publication dates. As part of these consultations, author departments should obtain from the Co-ordination and Records Unit, Publishing Division, Department of Conference Services, information to be shown on the title page of publications (ISBN number, Sales number, print run, job number, price, copyright, disclaimers, etc.);

(c) Editing

- (i) Author departments are responsible for ensuring that publications are appropriately edited. Texts submitted to the Editorial Service for substantive editing should be in word-processing rather than electronic publishing form to avoid the need for extensive corrections to a typeset text;
- (ii) The final typographic output, after proof-reading by the author department, should be cleared with the Editorial Service to ensure the correct application of United Nations editorial standards;

(d) Translation

- (i) In the case of internal translation, author departments should submit the final text in word-processing format through Documents Control to the translation and word-processing services, following the usual procedures which should translate the text and then proof-read the typeset version of the text prepared by the author department. Fully proof-read documents will then be returned to the author departments for final processing;
- (ii) If contractual translation services are to be used, the author department should consult with the Contractual Translation Unit and Documents Control Section to determine the feasibility and desirability of requesting the contractual translator to submit the text prepared with electronic publishing software. Clear specifications concerning the software to be used (to ensure compatibility with that of the United Nations) and the format of the document should be provided; the typeset format of the original language version should also be provided to the translator. Responsibility for proof-reading will be shared by the author department and the Contractual Translation Unit in the usual manner: the latter will be responsible for verifying that the quality of the translation meets United Nations standards, and the former will be

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responsible for certifying that the camera-ready material or electronic document received from the translator is suitable for printing;

(e) Word-processing. For the original language text, word-processing and copy-reading will be the responsibility of the author department. For translations done by the Translation Services, word-processing and copy-reading will be done by the Department of Conference Services in the same manner as for other documents submitted for translation;

(f) Copy preparation

(i) Author departments are responsible for copy preparation for materials produced using desk-top publishing techniques;

(ii) The Copy Preparation Unit of the Printing Section, Department of Conference Services, is responsible for copy preparation of the "soft copy" (word-processing data) for materials produced using type- or image-setters outside the author department;

(iii) Copy preparation, effected by either author departments or the Copy Preparation Unit, is to be based on typographic design and specifications developed by the Graphic Presentation Unit and elements of style as established by the Editorial Service;

(g) Typesetting. Author departments are responsible for typesetting when "camera-ready" materials are output prepared on their own low-to-medium resolution plain paper printers; when typesetting is to be output on high resolution type- or image-setters outside the author department, the department is responsible for the preparation of the final text in electronic form and the Publishing Division, Department of Conference Services, is responsible for conveying this electronic data to the typesetter;

(h) Proof-reading. Author departments are responsible for proof-reading typeset material;

(i) Final typesetting and final proof-reading. Author departments are responsible for executing all corrections after initial proof-reading and changes made to text and for certifying that the text submitted for final printing is free of errors;

(j) Reproduction. The Printing and Reproduction Sections, Department of Conference Services, will be responsible for the final printing and binding of material prepared using electronic publishing techniques. Author departments should not engage in direct negotiations with external printers for the reproduction of such material.

Training

9. The effective use of electronic publishing and electronic typesetting techniques requires a well-trained staff. The Staff Administration and Training Division, Office of Human Resources Management, is responsible for establishing appropriate specialized training courses in electronic publishing, and departments should ensure that training is provided to a sufficient number of staff to avoid having the publication of a document dependent upon a single staff member.

Standardization

10. Standardization or compatibility of software and hardware is essential so that work can easily be done on a document or publication by different organizational units. In addition, standardization facilitates training and support of equipment and software by the Electronic Services Division. Standards for electronic publishing hardware and software will be established in accordance with the procedures set out in administrative instruction ST/AI/347 of 9 March 1988.

Technical support

11. The Publishing Division, Department of Conference Services, and the Office of Automation Service, Office of General Services, will provide all users of electronic publishing techniques with the necessary technical support and advice, through the establishment of "help centres".
