Guide to Citing Canadian Government Publications

Citing government publications in a bibliography often presents difficulties not found with other types of publications. The citations for government publications should conform as much as possible to the style used for the other sources cited. However, to identify government publications adequately, the standard elements: author, title, place, publisher, and date are not always enough. This guide should be used to supplement the standard citation manuals. The suggested forms can be modified to whatever style you are using, but the elements included in the citation should be present whatever the citation style.

The basic citation forms used in this guide are based on The Complete Guide to Citing Government Information Resources, Revised ed. by Debora Cheney. (Z7164 G7 G37 Ref.)

Basic Citation Form (Print Sources):


1. Publications of Government Ministries, Departments, Boards, Agencies, etc.

AUTHOR/ISSUING AGENCY:

Begin each entry with the political jurisdiction (country, province, or municipality) and then the name of the government body responsible for issuing the document:


The jurisdiction is not required if it is contained within the issuing body’s name:


Include any branch, department, division or sub-division of the government body, if given, in descending order:

If a personal author is given as well as the government body, enter the personal author after the title:


Documents prepared for the government by consultants should be cited with the consultants listed as personal authors:


When more than one body has issued the work, use the one that is more prominently featured on the title page; if they are all equally prominent, use the first one and give the others in a note at the end of the citation.


**TITLE:**

When the name of the government body is part of the title, it does not have to be repeated in the title. For example: The title page reads: "Report of the Special Senate Committee on the Pearson Airport Agreements":


Series titles and numbers should be added at the end of the citation:


**PUBLISHER:**

The publisher is usually the government body responsible for issuing the document. However, if a major printer or distributor is given (e.g. Queen's Printer, Canadian Government Publishing, or the former Supply and Services) use this as the publisher:


**DATE:**

If a publication has no date visible anywhere, use the initials 'n.d' to indicate this. If you have a good idea of what the date might be (from a library catalogue or bibliography) use this date in square brackets.
NOTES:

Required notes are anything not covered by the previous entries that the reader needs to know to find exactly the same material you have consulted. For example: formats (microfiche, loose-leaf, etc.), unpublished papers, government assigned numbers, etc.)


2. Parliamentary and Legislative Publications

These documents have special characteristics with some different citing requirements. For Debates, Journals, and Committee Proceedings, for example, give the legislative body and its subsidiary parts as you would a department and its branches, and include the Parliament number and session:


The following abbreviations are commonly used for Acts: S.C.= Statutes of Canada, R.S.C.=Revised Statutes of Canada, c.=chapter, s=section, ss=sections, ( )=paragraph, but unless you are writing a legal paper or for a legal audience it is usually advisable to give more detail. (Use the short title of an Act when available):


Basic Citation Form (Electronic Sources):

Electronic Source Cited in Full:

(Entire databases, online documents are treated as books.)

Issuing Agency of content. Title. Edition. (Medium or format, if not obvious). Place, if available: Supplier, Date, if available. (Note specifying format in more detail, number of diskettes, software, or other, if required). Available at: URL; Accessed: date you accessed the site.


**Electronic Source Cited in Part:**

(Electronic journal articles, archived mailings, or information taken from a distinct database on a web site are treated as articles.)

Authoring/Issuing Agency of the part's content. "Title of part" (accession number or other identifying number). In: *Title*. (edition), (Medium or format if not obvious). Place, if available: Supplier, Date, if available. (Note specifying format in more detail, number of diskettes, software, or other, if required). Available at: URL or subscription database name; Accessed: date you accessed the source.


For more details on citing government publications see *The Complete Guide to Citing Government Information Resources*, Rev. ed. by Debora Cheney (Z7164 G7 G37 Ref.). The standard citation manuals such as *Turabian's Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (LB 2369 T92 Ref.) or the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (LB 2369 G53 Ref.) -- used in the humanities -- and the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (BF 76.7 P83 Ref.) -- used in the sciences -- should be consulted for the general rules of footnoting and bibliographic style.

For additional help in citing government information please ask at the Library Research Help Desk.

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