

Technical Reports

Introduction

Technical reports are documents that generally contain results of research and development supported by government grants or contracts. There are also private and corporate sponsored research reports. Although they are not usually formally refereed, they are an important form of scientific and technical information and communication. They made their first impact during World War II; since then their production has increased tremendously. The National Technical Information Service (NTIS) currently adds over 71,000 technical reports to the database every year. Technical reports are often written as a requirement of a contract, they are a permanent record of publicly supported research, and they are an efficient means of disseminating information back to scientists and engineers and to the general public. In early years, reports were published and disseminated largely in paper format. In the 1960's and 70's it became common for reports to be disseminated in microfiche, and now, it is becoming common for technical reports to be disseminated in electronic form.

How to Identify

Several characteristics of most reports will help track down the location of a report. These include: personal author(s), corporate author(s), issuing agency, title, publication date, contract or grant number, report number(s), order or accession number, number of pages, releasing agency, and distribution limitations, if any.

The **report number** is the most important identification feature of a report. Report numbers usually consist of alphanumeric characters that designate some or all of the following: originating or contracting agency, series, accession number, subject classifications, form, date, and security classification. Reports often are assigned more than one report number.

e.g., ADA-88-1098: AD=Dept of Def; A=Unclassified, Unlimited; 88=1988; 1098=the 1098th in a series.

Obtaining technical reports

The first place to go to obtain older reports we do not own is [NTIS](#): (703) 605-6585.

CSEL has an extensive collection of reports from the Department of Energy (DOE) and from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) (and NACA, NASA's predecessor). They are in microfiche, in report number order. Some old AEC and NASA/NACA reports are in paper in the Dewey's and compact storage in CSEL. Some paper copy DOE reports are in Zimmerman Library's Government Information Department. Some paper NASA and NUREG reports are in CSEL's government publications area. Most reports owned by CSEL are not cataloged and will not be found in LIBROS, which means one has to simply go to the shelf or drawer and look.

But for the ones that are cataloged and in LIBROS, several problems arise:

DOE: In LIBROS, DOE reports are often listed with a location ZIM and a call # beginning with E1.99: or E1.28:. In reality, you will find these in the CSEL microfiche reports section, under a report number, or whatever comes after the E1.99: or E1.28:. For example, for #E 1.28:SERI/TP 220-3632, look in the CSEL microfiche cabinets by the report number of SERI/TP 220-3632.

NASA: In LIBROS, NASA reports will have a call # beginning with 'NAS' or sometimes, with 'N'. For early years and from 1996 forward, the reports will most likely be filed under the number beginning with NAS (a standard SuDoc #). If it is not found there, and for most of the 1980's into the 1990's, it won't be, you will need to find the 'N' report #. There are a number of places to look for this. First, try LIBROS, then change the record format to MARC (in the Web version, click on MARC DISPLAY; in the Telnet version, choose 'T'). The MARC format changes a record into separate lines, each beginning with a 3 digit number. Look for line 037 or 088 (the record will not always have these) which, with any luck, will have

something that will translate to a number such as N 90-1234 (sometimes it will appear as 90N1234). The next best place to look is the [NASA Technical Report Server](#). WorldCat and NTIS are other places to try, as well as the Criss-Cross Directories (REF TL521.312 C75 1984). Be sure to look in both paper and microfiche collections.

Some older reports beginning with AD, ADA, or PB may be found in the SuDoc #C21:AD, as well as in the regular technical reports collection.

Full Text Electronic Access to Technical Reports

Many government agencies and other institutions are now providing electronic access to the full text of their reports.

Federal Government Multi-Agency Listings:

[National Technical Information Service](#)

"The National Technical Information Service serves our Nation as the largest, central resource for government-funded scientific, technical, engineering, and business related information available today. For more than 50 years NTIS has assured businesses, universities, and the public timely access to well over 2 million publications covering over 350 subject areas ..."

[GrayLit Network](#)

"The GrayLIT Network makes the gray literature of U.S. Federal Agencies easily accessible over the Internet. It taps into the search engines of distributed gray literature collections, enabling the user to find information without first having to know the sponsoring agency... Federal Agencies participating in this project are DOD/DTIC, DOE, EPA, and NASA. Participation will be expanding as the site develops..." Gray literature is typically defined as conference papers and presentations, technical reports, and other hard to find material outside the more formal information channels of journals and books.

Federal Government Single Agency Listings

[Dept of Energy, January 1995-](#) Also, many reports can be found via their originating Laboratory's library catalog. List of [DOE Lab Libraries](#)

[USGS](#)

[Dept of Defense, September 1998-](#)

[Wright Air Development Center Digital Collection](#) (reports from the 1950's and 1960's, plus the Roswell reports from the 1990's)

[Naval Research Laboratory](#) -- unclassified, unlimited NRL reports through 1996

NASA

[Center for Aerospace Information \(CASI\) Technical Report Server](#)

[The Lunar and Planetary Institute](#)

Full-Text [NACA Reports](#)

Other places to try:

<http://www.sti.nasa.gov/>

<http://www.nasatech.com/Briefs/books.html>

Each individual NASA research center. For a list, go to:

<http://www.nasa.gov/nasaorgs/index.html>

[Office of Technology Assessment](#) 1974-1995

Computer Science

ResearchIndex <http://citeseer.nj.nec.com/cs>, which indexes Postscript and PDF research articles on the Web. Again, not everything cited in the database is available online, but it's fully searchable. It includes full-text articles available for free on the web, and not just technical reports.

Networked Computer Science Technical Reference Library <http://cs-tr.cs.cornell.edu/>

University metasites:

[Stanford](#)

University of Maryland Libraries [Virtual Technical Reports Center](#)

[MIT](#)

Subject Access to Report Literature -- In CSEL, Printed and Electronic

Government Reports Announcements & Index. U.S. Department of Commerce. National Technical Information Service. 1975-1996.

REF Index Z 7916 G78

1990-present at: <http://www.ntis.gov/>

Published twice monthly, this provides abstracts, subject indexing, and numerous other indexes such as author and contract number to all unclassified unlimited reports issued by government agencies and their contractors, some foreign agencies, and local governments. Most of the documents are distributed in microfiche, although paper copies can sometimes be obtained.

Energy Research Abstracts. U.S. Department of Energy. Office of Scientific and Technical Information. 1976-1995.

REF Index TJ 163.2 U5445

1995-present at: <http://www.osti.gov/bridge/index.jsp>

Through 1990, this indexes and abstracts all literature produced by the Department of Energy and its contractors, and some reports from foreign organizations. Beginning in January 1991, ERA covers report literature only.

INIS Atomindex. International Atomic Energy Agency. 1976-1990

REF Index QC770 I65

The International Nuclear Information System (INIS) is a database that contains reports and other types of publications related to nuclear science and its peaceful applications. Full indexing is provided.

Nuclear Science Abstracts. U.S. Atomic Energy Commission and Energy Research and Development Administration. 1948-1976.

REF Index QC 770 U64

International coverage of nuclear science related literature is provided. Abstracts and full indexing.

Scientific and Technical Aerospace Reports. Scientific and Technical Information Program, National Aeronautics and Space Administration. 1963-1993

REF Index TL 500 S35</P>

1996-present at: <http://www.sti.nasa.gov/Pubs/star/Star.html> or even better: the Center for AeroSpace Information (CASI) Technical Report Server (TRS). The [CASI-TRS](#) contains publicly available records in the NASA Scientific and Technical Information (STI) database, from which STAR is compiled, at: [Public STINET](#). Department of Defense. Provides access to all unclassified, unlimited citations to documents added into DTIC from late December 1974 to present.

Finding Aids for Report Numbers -- Printed Resources

Dictionary of Report Series Codes. Second Edition. Lois E. Godfrey and Helen F. Redman (eds.). New York: Special Libraries Association. 1973.

REF Z6945 A2 D5 1973</P>

The introduction to this volume contains a succinct and interesting history of the use and bibliographic control of technical reports, and how the report series codes (report numbers) evolved. The Dictionary attempts to include all known report numbers (cross-referenced to their corresponding corporate sources) used in report literature. This edition, which includes everything from the first edition, used the following sources to compile the list: document catalogs of Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory, Air Force Special Weapons Center, Sandia Corporation, and White Sands Missile Range; published indexes to the literature; and published lists of report series codes used by numerous government agencies. Approximately 30,000 codes are listed.

Report Series Codes Dictionary. Third Edition. Eleanor J. Aronson, (ed.). Detroit: Gale Research Co. 1986.

REF T10.7 R4 1986

The third edition used only the catalog of the National Technical Information Service (NTIS) from the years 1979 to May 1985 to produce this list of report series codes and their corresponding corporate authors. It does not include everything that was in the second edition. 20,000 codes are listed.

How To Get It: A Guide to Defense-Related Information Resources. Arlington, VA: Institute for Defense Analysis. (IDA PAPER P-1500).

REF UA23 H69 1995

Criss-Cross Directory of NASA "N" Numbers and DOD "AD" Numbers, 1962-1978, & , AD to N 1979-1986, N to AD 1962-1986. Aerospace Division of the Special Libraries Association. 1984. (3 volumes)

REF TL521.312 C75 1984

DC 07/03/01 -- [Questions?](#)