Comment: **(Richard Smith - NLS)**
Welcome everyone. It's…a nice warm summer afternoon here in Washington (DC). The last month of July. Everyone is saying how hot it is – and I remind them it's July guys… We're going to go around the table. My name is Richard Smith. I'm Chief of the Network Division here at NLS. We'll introduce everyone in the room. To my right is…

Comment: **(Library Staff - NLS)**
Steve Prine, Network Division; Paula Bahmani, Education and Training Specialist; Hien Nguyen, Bibliographic Control Section; Margie Goergen-Rood, Quality Assurance; Michael Martys, Senior Advisor; Kristen Fernekes, Head of Communications and Outreach; … Shana Osborne, Equipment Control Officer; David Spett, Data Analyst; Judy Dixon, Consumer Relations; Don Olson, Network Services; Vickie Collins, Network Services; Mary Dell Jenkins, Music Section; Meredith Beckhardt, Reference Section; Karen Keninger, Director; Jason Yasner, Deputy Director; MaryBeth Wise, Network Consultant.

Comment: **(Richard Smith - NLS)**
So, we have a nice crew – there are 39 libraries on the line. Probably a couple more have joined since – so we have a full crew. We do have a couple reports, and I'm going to let MaryBeth start it off…

Comment: **(MaryBeth Wise - NLS)**
I just wanted to announce that the 2020 National Conference of Librarians – serving blind and print-disabled individuals – will be held at the Graduate Lincoln Hotel in Lincoln, Nebraska. The dates are: Sunday, May 17th through Thursday, May 21st, with a pre-conference workshop scheduled Saturday, May 16th. An Ops Alert went out this week, and I look forward to getting your suggestions for topics and conference sessions. I've actually gotten a few already and, thank you to those who have sent those suggestions. So, I look forward to having this conference in May 2020.

Comment: **(Richard Smith - NLS)**
And we had a Chairs call last week. I also reminded the Chairs last week, that each region is responsible for a presentation – and (to) put on their thinking caps and get suggestions from their regional libraries so that we have a great conference in Nebraska. Next on the agenda I think, Jason do you want to report?

Comment: **(Jason Yasner - NLS)**
I'm here to talk a little bit about the rollout of Gutenberg Duplication-on-Demand system to KLAS. NLS engineers have been working with the Keystone engineers in-house here at NLS – to configure the machines and make sure that everything is working properly before we send a machine out to the field. Just this week, we are sending a machine out to Georgia first. We're going to start our first beta test with Georgia in the field, with a KLAS library using Gutenberg Duplication-on-Demand. So, we're optimistic. We're excited. This has been a very long road and I'm glad to see we've hit this milestone. After we confirm that things are working well with Georgia, we're going to proceed next to Colorado. After that, we'll work with Keystone and the KLAS User's Group, and all of you Keystone libraries to figure out what the rollout schedule, etc. will be. So, more news coming forward but we have hit the milestone that the first library – Georgia – will receive a Gutenberg machine that works with KLAS – and we'll start the beta testing.

Comment: **(Richard Smith - NLS)**
Excellent. Again, the Chairs last week suggested that that might be a topic of discussion this week. We also have David Spett, who has a report on a recovery program.

Comment: **(David Spett - NLS)**
Absolutely. So, I may not have had the chance to introduce myself to all of you yet, but I started at NLS in March and I'm helping out with a variety of quantitative and qualitative data analyses projects. It's great to be aboard, and I've gotten to know some of you thus far. I'm one of a number of us here at NLS…who are working to assess whether we can extend the lifespan and the pool of available Digital Talking Book machines. We are trying to see if we can extend that time horizon for which the machines are available. A number of you have been contacted by Shana or by me, MaryBeth or others, to help out by putting notices in your newsletter about returning unused DTBMs; to help us make calls to BARD Mobile users who might not be using their DTBMs; and to send postcards to users with multiple DTBMs or who use BARD Mobile. So, for now, we're testing these interventions with just a small

number of libraries – so we will likely be reaching out to more of you over the coming months, to ask for your help. We thank you all in advance and we thank those libraries that have worked with us on the small interventions as we work on this important project.

Comment: (Shana Osborne - NLS)

I have a couple of things. The first thing I wanted to discuss with everyone – many people have ordered chrome labels for your DTBMs, and you should have either received them or they are on their way to you. We had a small snafu with the order. The manufacturer who produces these labels…mail them out to you directly. They had a mix up and basically sent labels out incorrectly to different libraries, so a number of you have contacted me. If you have not contacted me, and you have received labels for another library, I want everyone to hold onto those labels. We've talked to the manufacturer and they're going to complete a new order and send everything out to you. So, please don't throw the current labels away – don't do anything with them, just hold onto them until you receive the new labels – and then we'll have additional directions for you after that.

The next thing I wanted to discuss: You guys should have also seen Operations Alert 19-49, regarding the monthly inventory. This is going to be similar to the inventory we requested back in January. I want everyone to follow the instructions that we provided – and this inventory, you guys are going to pull your reports on the last day of the month, which would be today by the close of business. You're going to inventory your in-stock totals, compare them against the report totals and then provide those answers to the questions that (were) listed in the Operations Alert – and you can just email those to me. You will have until the 9th day of August, the 9th of September and the 9th of October to provide the answers to the survey questions for the previous month. You guys will have some questions I'm sure so, just let me know.

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

With that…we'll open it up for questions from the field.

Comment: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

We have got a "Star" staff group here today, so ask away. We've got all kinds of people that can answer all kinds of questions.

Question: (Amy Nickless - MO)

The agenda said there would be an update on the braille e-reader program pilot. Can we go ahead and get that update?

Answer: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

The braille e-reader pilot – as of July 17th we have begun work on developing the e-readers. We have two vendors. One of them is Humanware. The other one is Zumax. We will have two different units to pilot test when we get to that point – and that point will probably be next April or May. So, we are beginning work on the development aspects of this – on the non-recurring engineering part – and next April or May we will be able to have – we believe – units for distribution for our large pilot with the Network libraries.

Question: (Reed Strege – CA8)

I was wondering the status of the change so that a new patron will be automatically signed up for BARD, and ready to go when he or she registers a new patron application.

Answer: (Michael Martys - NLS)

Actually, we haven't had much progress on that initiative lately. Most of our time has been going into moving our current BARD system from our Library of Congress data center to one of the commercial cloud providers. That project has been chewing up a considerable amount of our time – and as a result, we haven't had much time to work on our other initiatives like the one that you talked about, but it is still one of our planned initiatives and, to be honest, we're probably not going to make much headway on it until next calendar year – given the rate things are going right now with our progress at moving BARD to the cloud. If you're wondering why we are putting so much emphasis on moving BARD to the cloud, it's that, right now we are probably reaching our capacity limit given the current environment for BARD. The amount of data that leaves the Library of Congress on any given day is pretty high, and it's dominated by BARD data. In order for us to grow the number of connections for BARD, we really need to move it to the cloud. That's kind of taken our number one priority for now. If you have any other questions, I can try to answer them for you.

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)
Thanks Reed. Good presentation at ALA.

Question: (Mike Marlin – CA9)
I just have a follow up question on the braille e-reader pilot that Karen mentioned. I heard the words "large pilot" and can you elaborate? And more importantly, how can I get our library signed up? I know we have patrons who would like to pilot-test it when it's ready.

Answer: (Karen Keninger - NLS)
We have expectations of having about 1500 machines – e-readers – that we will be able to distribute. We will be working with libraries to determine which libraries will be in the initial part of that pilot and honestly Mike, that decision regarding the criteria of the libraries has yet to be made – so we can't answer the "how do you get in line?" except expressing your interest will not go amiss.

Question: (Susan Hammer-Schneider - ND)
Hello everyone. I have three things. One is: what was the deciding factor – from Operations Alert 19-47 – to go to 180 days, where it used to be a year?

Answer: (Michael Martys - NLS)
We were required to do that by the Library of Congress' IT Security Group. We made our case to them, arguing for a 1-year period of time and we were unable to convince them that that was something we absolutely must have. So, we thought 180 days – which is six months – was better than what they really wanted. The Security Group wanted it to be 30 days, but we feel that 180 days is a compromise. It's not something we did enthusiastically, but hopefully it won't turn out to be too detrimental to our patrons. If it does turn out to cause issues, I would love to get those things documented – and if you can send them to me or your library consultant – actually, send them to your library consultant – that would be better – and we may use those issues to perhaps re-address this issue later on, if we can make a successful business case, showing that it has a detrimental effect, we might be able to get it changed.

Question: (Susan Hammer-Schneider - ND)
Will there be a new "fact sheet" written up for BARD? The last (one) was 2014 and on there, there's nothing about downloading books onto smart devices, and all that, and I was just wondering (has a thought been given) to update that fact sheet? And then the other one would be "Frequently Asked Questions," that little pamphlet. Is that going to be updated soon? Because it's out of date.

Answer: (Kristen Fernekes - NLS)
You should be getting a "Frequently Asked Questions." It's going to be a two-sided sheet for the moment. That's actually at the printer presently, so that will be coming to you soon. With the BARD fact sheet, if that's a priority then we can go ahead and move it to the top of the list. There have been a few things that have been preventing us from moving forward with updating some of our stuff. We've been trying to hold out until our name change went through.

Answer: (Meredith Beckhardt - NLS)
I just wanted to point out one thing about the BARD fact sheet. I believe the last one was issued in 2017. I'm not sure if you have the latest version. I'll check on that when I get to my office…and if it is 2017, I'll make sure that you get copies – and it does mention BARD Mobile and other platforms, where it's available. Even BARD Express.

Question: (Jennifer Shipley - FL)
With regard to Operations Alert 19-49, is that just for regional libraries? Or do all libraries conduct the inventory?

Answer: (Shana Osborne - NLS)
So, you should be working with your regional library to report your machine totals so that they can report them directly as a whole.

Question: (Ivan Johnson – CA8)
I had another question for Shana: In our case at Braille Institute, we'll generate a report from KLAS, but the numbers we're giving you – in the survey – will be numbers from our own paperwork – the numbers that we have compiled independently of KLAS. Is that correct?

Answer: **(Shana Osborne - NLS)**

Correct. So, you're going to utilize the report from KLAS as a starting ground, and then you're going to compare those numbers to what you actually have in stock. If you have more in stock, you will report the total that you currently have in stock. If you have less in stock, you will report that, and then update your circulation system to reflect the correct number.

Comment: **(Ivan Johnson – CA8)**

Ok. I'll have to consult with our IT guy to see how we would update KLAS because it's always been on its own. I know that – in our case – it's pretty close.

Question: **(Mark Lee – PA8)**

Is there any update to the status of the public law that governs NLS to more closely match the language of the Marrakesh Treaty?

Answer: **(Karen Keninger - NLS)**

As a matter of fact – this very day – we had a briefing with the people who are the staffers on the committees that will move that forward, and (we) got their interest re-energized for making that change – and, the language is with the Senate Rules Committee, and we have asked them to move it forward and this is one of the things we did today was refocus on that, so no, there isn't any update beyond that. We are hopeful that they will get it moved forward. If you know anybody on that committee and want to talk to them about it, that wouldn't go amiss.

Question: **(Jane Glasby – CA9)**

We're a little concerned about the BARD-only titles, and how our patrons get to know about them if they're not on BARD. We understand it's a selling-point for BARD, but we would like our patrons to know – especially as we're moving toward Duplication-on-Demand – that we would be able to offer those titles. Is there any way that you're thinking of making them more discoverable by the patrons?

Question: **(Michael Martys - NLS)**

Maybe you can give us an idea of what you mean by "more discoverable."

Answer: **(Jane Glasby – CA9)**

That there would be a list available to them for example. Maybe there would be somewhere that they could get to on a website or in Talking Book Topics… I'm looking for ideas. I don't necessarily have solutions myself.

Answer: **(Kristen Fernekes - NLS)**

There is a (published) list of those – that comes out periodically. Unfortunately, the person who could answer this a little more adeptly is out of town. I believe that it goes up on the Network site periodically. So that's one way that you can know about it.

Comment: **(Jane Glasby – CA9)**

Yes, I'm aware of that list and I look at that list, but I wonder if there's any way that such a list could be made available to patrons who don't use BARD. I don't know how it would be done because I think you've got too many titles there for Talking Book Topics maybe. That's a Publications question.

Comment: **(Kristen Fernekes - NLS)**

That is something that we are struggling with a little bit. We've actually sort of reached the limit in capacity of Talking Book Topics. So, this is something that is being discussed pretty extensively here… I don't know that I have the best possible answer for you – except that I do know that we are making the libraries aware. It's something that we're talking about a lot.

Question: **(Michael Martys - NLS)**

Do you want something in print? Or do you want something online? Like, what are you thinking?

Answer: **(Jane Glasby – CA9)**

The answer to that is YES (laughter). I'm just thinking that some of our people would probably like it in print or in the audio version of print and – online is easier because we could just update that spreadsheet on our own website. I'm thinking of the people who are less technically adept, or less able to have an online connection.

Question: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

Jane, this is not a promise, but it is a question: If we were to come across extra funding…and we were able to do some kind of a document, would the short annotation be sufficient in that context? I know that we had this conversation about it with regard to Talking Book Topics some years ago and we've had way too many books to fit in there – and we use the short annotations – and I know that…the patrons weren't all that very happy about it, but do you believe or does anyone else out there believe that that would be sufficient for this particular situation?

Answer: (Jane Glasby – CA9)

I think that would be a great improvement. I mean, a short annotation is better than nothing – so that's what I think, and people here are nodding around me.

Comment: (Steve Prine - NLS)

One of the concerns that we would certainly have is that, once we publish that kind of list – particularly if it's in print – that's going to put the burden on the libraries to do that duplication, because people are going to ask for those books. Some libraries will be in a position to do that, but some will not.

Comment: (Jane Glasby – CA9)

That's a really good point Steve. I'm assuming that it's more economically viable to make it part of Talking Book Topics rather than a separate publication.

Comment: (Kristen Fernekes - NLS)

No, not necessarily. It depends on how we do it. We do Talking Book Topics obviously every two months. The issues that we're having with it is that there's a printing threshold that we can't go past, without it being considerably more expensive. But doing an additional publication every six months (with) these additional titles that are not part of the Copy Allotment process, might be feasible. The issue that Steve was talking about, which is that if we send it out and people believe that they can order it in that manner, would all the libraries be able to fulfill that? I don't believe that that's the case.

Comment: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

At least not until everybody is on "Dupe-on-Demand" and then it probably wouldn't be an issue.

Comment: (Jane Glasby – CA9)

Right. So maybe it would be possible for the libraries to control the message on who gets subscriptions – so if you're doing Dupe-on-Demand, you "push" it to people, and if you're not…or you push it to your BARD subscribers. The other thing is – I just got a note from Ricardo here – it says "what about the PDF version that we could print out and offer to send to people?" That would be a possibility. That would put the onus on the libraries to do the printing. That would be a possible way of going forward. We could afford to print it but maybe other libraries couldn't.

Comment: (Kristen Fernekes - NLS)

That's a possibility. We would just have to look at internal resources to basically layout another publication.

Comment: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

We would also want to hear from other libraries as to how do-able that is.

Comment: (Jane Glasby – CA9)

I'd love to hear from other libraries so, thank you. I think that has started the conversation for me so thank you very much.

Comment: (Joshua Berkov - NC)

This isn't so much a question as a comment to the BARD-only books and publicizing them – that Jane Glasby mentioned. The Collection Development Advisory group this year did make a recommendation to this effect. I don't know how much I should divulge. I don't know what your interim deliberations are right now but, just to echo what Jane is saying, we do believe that these books should be published in some sort of a list format to patrons – however possible – whatever your budgets allow. And as far as what we do with patrons who are not on Dupe-on-Demand yet. I think that one of the suggestions we'd made was that if these books were to be put into Talking Book Topics, there would be some sort of symbol to denote that they were "download only" and that would alert patrons that they need to get on BARD or they need to get help downloading the books… At least that way, they would be aware of them. I think a third of the collection that is being produced is "BARD only" and that's a big percentage to not make available to all patrons.

Comment: (Kristen Fernekes - NLS)

I have one thing. MaryBeth has been kindly texting me, and I wanted to bring up something very quickly while I have everybody on the phone. As you guys know, and I think it was announced in June, we have gotten clearance from the (Library of Congress) and everyone that needs to give us that clearance – and we will be moving forward with a name change for NLS starting on October 1st. There were some questions from some of the libraries asking whether or not to throw things away that have our current name on them – on October 2nd. Please do not do that. In the interest of not being wasteful, we are going to expend all of those stored publications and collateral pieces before we reprint them with the new name on them, so I would ask everyone to not throw away what they have.

Comment: (Mike Marlin – CA9)

In this political season, with so many candidates, I just want to say that I'm with Jane.

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

We had a good representative (showing) from the whole country, from San Francisco down to Miami (and) North Carolina. Pretty good call today. We'll talk to you the end of August. Have a good month. Bye.