

NLS Telephone Forum – 4-29-2015
(paraphrased)

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

There are our beeps and I think that we are “live.” So, here we are in Washington on a beautiful spring day. I think we have 41 callers so I think that that’s a good group. Glad to hear you’re here. I think we’ll go around the table and if everyone could give (their) name and title – my name is Richard Smith. I’m the Chief of the Network Division – and to my left here around the table...

Comment: (Library Staff - NLS)

Paula Bahmani, Education and Training Specialist; Michael Martys, Automation Officer; Neil Bernstein, Research and Development Officer; Robert Axtell, Head of Bibliographic Control Section; Judy Dixon, Consumer Relations Officer; Meredith Beckhardt, Head of Reference Section; Vickie Collins, Network Services Section; Karen Keninger, Director; Steve Prine, Assistant Chief of the Network Division; Michael Katzmann, Chief of the Materials Development Division.

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

So, we have a pretty good crew here. A few announcements before we start: One thing I think we promised in the email was, Paula...

Comment: (Paula Bahmani - NLS)

I just wanted to let everybody know that we’ve resolved the issues that we were having with the Android application, and I am going to push the software out to libraries that have signed up for the preview, so look for an Operations Alert announcing a conference call in the coming weeks to address questions, comments and concerns about the application.

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

I think that was good news. Excellent. And, I think...

Comment: (Steve Prine - NLS)

Two things. One is...regarding WebREADS – as of today we have 20 sites that are up and using WebREADS, and the rest are in the UAT or the sandbox in various stages of trying things out – and so they’re moving forward...migrating to WebREADS. Also, for some of you who, just today did the braille survey to determine the number of braille titles you have with missing volumes and where they fall in the collection, as well as asking about single-volume braille mailing containers and your needs for that. So if you got that survey, please respond to it.

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

Excellent. One thing I wanted to mention (is) that indeed this week we will be shipping our 4GB reusable peach color cartridges. I think, 78 regional and sub-regional libraries asked for some. Now, there was a change and we thought at first that there were 300 per box. It actually is being shipped with 400 in a box – so we adjusted the number of boxes we’re shipping to each library. We will send an email once we get confirmation that they’ve been shipped. We’ll be asking every library to reply to an email to verify when they receive it. How many they receive and the date. Hopefully by the end of next week you all will have received a shipment. The mailing containers are also in the works and we’ll be adjusting those for the numbers you have because they come in 150 (per box). We hope by mid-summer to be shipping the mailing containers for the peach cartridges. ...With that we can open it up for questions.

Question: (Mitchell Small – PA8)

We're in the middle of trying to expand our braille label printing here in Pittsburgh and we've run across a very serious roadblock, and that is the Romeo LE printer. We found that these are no longer being manufactured by Enabling Technologies – I contacted them today. Apparently, the way PBL is set up, it will not work with anything else. So, we're all wondering here in Pittsburgh, how we can get around this. How can we use PBL with something like...we do have a spare Juliet, but I was all over the menus on that and there's no way to duplicate what the Romeo LE does. How can we find a replacement for that Romeo LE?

Answer: (Michael Martys - NLS)

We're going to have to research that and get back to you.

Comment: (Mitchell Small – PA8)

Okay. Now I did contact Enabling Technologies prior, and I wasn't aware that the LE was that specific. They do have a newer printer called the "Cyclone" which is replacing the Romeo line in general, so just to give you a little 'heads-up' there is a platform that is possibly adaptable. Again, I don't know from your side what actually needs to be done. I presume this is some kind of firmware that needs to be modified to get to the specifics of the NLS labels.

Comment: (Neil Bernstein - NLS)

Yes they have an NLS label mode in that machine and we need to find out about them moving it forward to something new.

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

Thanks for the information Mitch.

Comment: (Mitchell Small – PA8)

I had a phone call from another library for the blind not 2 minutes after I hung up from Enabling, and they were also very surprised to find out that there is no substitute. So I would say that this is a very hot issue on everybody's mind.

Question: (Unidentified Caller)

Hello. My question is about a Copy Allotment issue. One of my librarians here had a question (and) they wanted me to present it. They apparently went in to assign the allotment for April and, what happened was, when they went back in the next day to submit it and make a couple changes, they noticed that 10 more books were added to the list for the allotment – and they hadn't seen that before, so they were curious as to if this was just a one-time thing, or if it is something that will be recurring – but it was an anomaly that they normally don't experience.

Answer: (Michael Martys - NLS)

We're going to have to get back to you on that one, too. My instincts are that that is probably a special case because there were a few Copy Allotment cycles where there have been some last-minute adjustments to it, and probably the best thing to do is that if you could email me directly and I'll have to have someone research your particular allotment and get back to you on this question – but my instincts say that it was probably a special case where they made a last-minute adjustment.

Question: (Michael Katzmann - NLS)

Do you know what date – or when that occurred?

Answer: (Unidentified Caller)

This just happened – I guess – the last allotment day, which was maybe a week or a week and a half ago.

Comment: (Michael Martys - NLS)

We'll just have to get back to you after we research this case – but like I said, I don't know of any systemic problems with the process, and that's why my instinct is that there was a special adjustment made to this allotment.

Question: (John Mugford - NM)

Recently...we've been getting comments from Reading Specialists or Therapists in school systems who are looking to qualify (dyslexic patrons). The person referred then has to go to a medical physician. So, I did a little research on the subject and it is a fact that the particular diagnosis allows for a very limited subset of certifying authorities. The regulatory opinion dates back to 1974 and it would seem as though what happens – in practice – is that the Reading Specialist or Therapist will make the diagnosis, but will then have to refer the diagnosis to a medical physician or a Doctor of Osteopathy who is willing to sign off. It's... a relatively cumbersome process which may actually discourage use of the program on the part of some people who might reasonably qualify. I'm wondering if there is any interest in revising regulatory opinion on that particular matter.

Answer: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

That is a complicated issue and we are aware of that issue. We have heard these complaints often, and we are also aware, John, of the reality that there are about 15 million people out there who qualify. We are a bit hesitant to do anything about that at this moment in time because it would come without additional resources, and we are concerned about the influx of patrons that you would be serving – that you would maybe have some difficulty with the uptick so, we are looking at it but we are loathe to open our legislation up for many reasons, and actually, that is the concern – it's the resources.

Question: (John Mugford - NM)

So Karen, if that 15 million figure is accurate – we'll say it is for the sake of discussion – if some people aren't qualifying under the 'dyslexic' definition, why would broadening the certifying authorities open up the floodgates to that extent?

Answer: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

What we have now – since 1974 – we understand it's outdated, but we also understand that making a change is difficult and comes with realities. If you look at the people that are served by Bookshare and Learning Ally, you will see that about 70% of them are people with learning disabilities. That 70% number is one that's a lot higher than what you're serving. We are serving nationally a much smaller percentage of that. Whether we should be serving that much larger number of people or not is a question that is on the table and I understand that.

Question: (John Mugford - NM)

Who actually is qualifying in that area in the National Library Service at this time?

Answer: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

Anybody that a doctor says is qualified.

Question: (John Mugford - NM)

Okay so it essentially becomes a matter of the motivation on the part of the applicant – to go through the regulatory steps?

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

There are many ways of looking at it.

Question: (John Mugford - NM)

One other question I had - somewhat related to the number of registrants we have. It's a reporting area in the work-related information when we report data – and it lists the number of persons establishing, and the number of persons discontinuing the service. However this data does not get published, generally. I was wondering why that is not being...

Apologies are in order! Technical issues resulted in approximately 1 minute of missing audio.

Answer: (Richard Smith - NLS)

...We expect before the end of summer. How's that? They tell me to be a little vague up here and not exact. Basically they claim that once they get the specs and the mold going, it only takes two weeks to get them all made – but getting the specifications takes a while.

Question: (John Mugford - NM)

One final question: I don't have it right in front of me but there was a concern about having to remove some type of password authentication that was coming with the cartridges? Is that still the case?

Answer: (Richard Smith - NLS)

No. We're actually working on an update to the Write Protect software and basically it will be embedded in that write protect software for the peach cartridges – so, you'll just update your write protect software and it will be transparent. It will automatically unlock and lock the peach cartridges as you use them. Michael Katzmann here might elaborate...

Answer: (Michael Katzmann - NLS)

At the moment, the program allows you to choose from one of two passphrases that you can enter in by hand from the configuration. This will have a third password that you will be able to select for the peach cartridges so, as Richard was saying; it's embedded into the program. You'll select either passphrase 1, passphrase 2 which are one of the passphrases you would have used for your local cartridges – the green cartridges – or, the peach passphrase, and that will allow you to write and erase from those peach cartridges.

Comment: (John Mugford - NM)

Okay, so there really won't be a great deal of additional input or steps required as let's say, compared to the write protect on the green cartridges...

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

You're right, John – and Paula has mentioned that the updated software is more intuitive than the write protection software of the past, so you'll see a new, improved and easy, right Paula?

Comment: (Paula Bahmani - NLS)

Yes and I just wanted to add that I put together some step-by-step training instructions that will be available from the BARD training area, on how to use the modified write protect software with peach cartridges and green cartridges.

Question: (John Mugford - NM)

Okay and so the peach cartridges are cartridges that we will be allowed to retain indefinitely, correct?

Answer: (Michael Katzmann - NLS)

This is correct, yes.

Question: (John Mugford - NM)

Is this viewed as an ongoing supply? Or as a one-time or every once-in-a-while... What type of scheduling of availability is in mind?

Answer: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

We don't know yet, John. It depends on how you guys use them and what you want and how things go.

Question: (Tyler Kottmann - CO)

We switched over to Gutenberg last year, in order to avoid some of the 'red x' issues that we were having in duplicating, so we've been using that for about 6 months. We were just doing a run of audio newsletters on a batch of smaller cartridges that were relatively new, so...on our last newsletter, we used cartridges for the first time so, this run is the second time. Out of about 800 cartridges, 50 or so were coming up with the "bad passphrase" error. I was just wondering, Is 50 out of 800 'par-for-the-course'? Is there anything we should be doing differently?

Question: (Michael Katzmann - NLS)

There should be no problems. One question I have for you: In the passphrase dialogue box, there is a checkbox that says "Smart Reuse." Do you have that checked or not checked?

Answer: (Tyler Kottmann - CO)

I believe we have it checked.

Answer: (Michael Katzmann - NLS)

Okay. You might try those cartridges with it unchecked. What happens is, the "Smart Reuse" is for when you have two passphrases so your cartridges are enabled with one passphrase and you are write protecting them with a different passphrase, then the next time they go through, the system recognizes that they've been through once and uses the second passphrase for enabling. So, sometimes – perhaps if they weren't duplicated properly or for some other reason – that fingerprint never went onto the cartridge or, was duplicated with a different duplicator then, maybe it's not recognizing that it had already gone through. So try unchecking that box (and) trying both passphrases in the computer and seeing whether that makes a difference.

Comment: (Tyler Kottmann - CO)

Okay, and for whatever it's worth, we were using that single passphrase for locking and unlocking.

Comment: (Michael Katzmann - NLS)

Well in that case, you don't need to use the Smart Reuse check (box).

Comment: (Mike Marlin – CA9)

This is not a question but just a reminder that we're going to be hosting the NLS Western Conference here in Sacramento in a couple of weeks and, there are still plenty of slots for those of you who would like to attend. We will gladly take your payment and gladly welcome you with open arms to what will be an excellent, informative and fun time.

Question: (Richard Smith - NLS)

What are the dates, Mike?

Answer: (Mike Marlin – CA9)

Thank you Richard. The dates are May 12, 13 and 14 – Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. There will be some extracurricular activities but mostly lots of good information. I don't have our website address memorized but there should be emails going around and we'll send out another one as well. Anyone from around the country is welcome. You don't have to be in the west.

Question: (Mary Jane Kayes – CA9)

My question has to do with the fact that we are starting to get questions about the new braille. People are starting to ask whether or not the old stuff will be converted and I'm thinking probably not and, will there be a different designation in front of the book number – in other words will it have an extra letter on it or, how will we know when something is UEB and when something is not. I know the cut-over is not going to happen immediately but how will we tell the difference?

Answer: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

Good questions. First of all, the first question you had... Will everything be converted? No. Nothing will be converted. That, we're real sure of. As far as how will you know anything that you get – we are not planning to change the BR designation – at least I don't think we are. So, our contractors will start delivering when, Michael?

Answer: (Michael Katzmann - NLS)

The books that are assigned to libraries at the end of this year will be required to be UEB so, they will actually be delivered in 2016.

Comment: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

So we won't be able to tell you that books after this number are probably in UEB. We'll give you that information when the time comes. We will be publishing information about UEB in Braille Book Review in the latter part of this year, so that patrons can take a look at it. It's just a 4-page insert that shows the changes and, we hope that everybody will understand that - for literary braille - this is not a big deal. People will pick it up very quickly. The changes that are going to be the most obvious are the fact that some of the contractions are not going to be used and obviously you can read A-T-I-O-N easily enough. It will look a little odd at first, but there are about 9 contractions that aren't going to be used. The punctuation will look a little different but it won't take long, I think, to get used to that.

Comment: (Mary Jane Kayes – CA9)

Okay. I was concerned because I'm on a listserv called Braille and Teach – or the library is – and there was a teacher who posted that he was giving away all his old braille novels and such because he was only going to teach UEB going forward, to his students, and I thought "Wow,

we could all get inundated with requests to take older braille if that teacher gets imitated by other teachers.” It seemed to me like overkill, but I didn’t know what our plans were.

Comment: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

All of the 20,000 titles we have (are) still going to be in the old (braille).

Question: (Mary Jane Kayes – CA9)

And somebody who learns UEB will still be able to read them

Answer: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

Yes. I don’t think they’ll have any trouble.

Question: (John Mugford - NM)

I noticed from my notes that I had one other question. This is a technical question, probably not readily answered. It pertains to the increasing tendency to put multiple titles onto one cartridge and the ramifications in respect to circulation count, as well as to the enumerating of the series. For example, In Keystone, there is one series that has 3 titles on 3 different cartridges and, strictly from an entry into the catalogue, we need to put a number into the ‘series’ field, so we’re putting in the number of the first on that particular cartridge, so cartridge 1 has number 1, cartridge 2 has number 4 and cartridge 3 has number 7. I think Keystone is working on the circulation count side of things, but I’m wondering if there’s any genius on the cataloging side that can figure out a way in which a series can be properly enumerated.

Answer: (Robert Axtell - NLS)

In lieu of a genius... (laughter) Currently in the series field we’re numerating them serially... We can handle that (in) other ways. That’s what works for us.

Question: (John Mugford - NM)

I’ve got an example in front of me here, of – this is somewhat random – DB079683, “Myth-O-Mania” series. What’s happening with Keystone, at least in the ‘series’ field, three question marks are showing up, which creates a bit of an error when we go to the record, and one way for us to rectify that error is to put a number in there. I’m wondering if there’s a possible better way that might be conceived for the future.

Answer: (Robert Axtell - NLS)

It might be something that has to be settled with the programmers on one end, and us on the other. I could propose things, but I don’t know how they’d work out – what effect they would have.

Comment: (John Mugford - NM)

Okay. I think that it’s a semi-important subject and presumably, there will be an increasing tendency toward putting multiple titles on cartridges – especially with these peach cartridges having 4GB of space.

Comment: (Danielle Miller - WA)

We’ve had people that are frustrated if they have a Standard player with a multiple-book cartridge – and rather than being able to do ‘Bookshelf’ or something, they just have to fast-forward.

Comment: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

You can do Bookshelf on a Standard player.

Comment: (Danielle Miller - WA)

They're saying with an NLS multi-book cartridge, that won't work.

Comment: (Steve Prine - NLS)

The NLS books, that is the only way to do it because the titles were put on under one book number. So, the Bookshelf feature wouldn't be required.

Comment: (Danielle Miller - WA)

All the more reason to only make Advanced players.

Comment: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

Give them an Advanced player, Danielle.

Comment: (Danielle Miller - WA)

That's the only thing we try to give out.

Question: (Linda Montgomery - AZ)

Just a quick magazine question. We have patrons who are still receiving Newsweek and Reader's Digest on cassettes and asking are those going to be on cartridges soon?

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

They're not ours.

Answer: (Michael Katzmann - NLS)

Probably APH. I don't think they have any plans on supplying cartridges.

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

Okay. I think we had a good Question and Answer session. We've got the Western Conference we'll go to and then we'll talk to you at the end of May, and after that, I think we go to Indianapolis for the Tri-Regional. So talk to you next month. Thanks for all the questions! Have a good day.

No more questions or comments.