

Mission Priorities

**National Library Service for the
Blind and Physically Handicapped**

Library of Congress

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Executive summary

In August 2009 the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS), Library of Congress, reached a milestone in the two-decade-long period of exploration and planning for the transition from analog to digital technology: the first shipment of digital talking-book players arrived from the manufacturer in Japan, ready for distribution to the NLS network of cooperating libraries. As delivery of digital talking-book players accelerates over the next several years, the production and distribution of digital talking books on flash cartridges will increase and distribution of titles on analog cassettes will decrease.

Throughout this historic transition, the overall mission of NLS will remain constant: to provide books, magazines, and music scores and texts in braille and recorded formats to blind and physically handicapped individuals in the United States and U.S. citizens living abroad. But specific activities on which the mission depends must change to enable NLS to provide improved service to patrons during the transition and after the digital talking-book system is in place. An example of such activities is the NLS Braille and Audio Reading Download (BARD), a service that allows patrons to download digital talking books and magazines.

This report presents the current priorities for several major NLS functions and operations.

Priorities imposed by law

- Continue to give preference to blind and physically handicapped veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces as required by law (2 U.S.C. 135b, March 3, 1931); give preference to not-for-profit organizations when soliciting contracts for audio, braille, and print production; and solicit contracts for production from nonprofit agencies employing blind persons or others with severe disabilities, as appropriate, in accordance with the Javits-Wagner-O'Day Act (JWOD, 41 U.S.C. 46-48c, 1971).

Users

- Continue consumer advocacy on behalf of NLS patrons and all eligible blind and physically handicapped individuals and ensure that user perspectives are considered in all aspects of the program, including procedures, selection and distribution of materials, and machine design and technology.

Collection development

- *Book collection:* Continue to acquire new titles to produce in audio, braille, and print/braille; continue to identify books from the analog collection for conversion to digital format; maintain the magazine program; develop the foreign-language collection; and improve the shared masters program.
- *Music collection:* Convert analog cassette and open-reel tape masters to digital format; process existing digital titles for use on the new player; secure permissions to make commercial titles available on NLS BARD; and digitize braille scores for NLS Web-Braille, an online download service offering braille materials.

Production of equipment and books

- *Playback machines:* Produce and maintain a reliable talking-book player that is consistent with the goals of public law and that provides good value for the government; keep the limited stock of cassette machines in good working order during and after the transition; upgrade digital talking-book technology for improved performance and functionality; and investigate additional applications of the digital player to improve service to patrons.
- *Mailing containers for audio and braille books:* Ensure timely production and recycling and provide libraries with technology and supplies to support their storage and distribution of materials.
- *Machine repairs:* Maintain the serviceability of talking-book machines by using warranty repair service, volunteer organizations, contracted service, and network repair capabilities; and improve the reliability of equipment to increase the average time between failures.
- *Contracts:* Solicit competitive bids in accordance with public law and federal regulations to produce high-quality materials and equipment for the NLS program; evaluate emerging technology and products to improve the efficiency and quality of the program's service; and practice superior quality control through site visits and inspection of submitted samples.
- *Quality assurance for equipment and accessories:* Ensure the quality and performance within established standards and specifications; recommend improvements in NLS specifications; and respond to patrons' and librarians' queries and complaints.
- *Quality assurance for audio and braille books and magazines:* Ensure the quality and performance within established standards and specifications; recommend improvements to NLS specifications; and respond to patrons' and librarians' quality complaints.

Distribution

- *Distribution of analog and digital machines:* Prioritize distribution of digital players during the rollout, ensuring that U.S. Armed Forces veterans and centenarians are served first, and provide a sufficient number of digital players to libraries to ensure that patron needs are met.
- *Distribution of digital talking books:* Continue oversight of digital audiobook production to ensure timely delivery of new and retrospective (i.e., converted from analog) titles to the network of cooperating libraries.
- *Distribution of music materials:* Provide requested music materials in an accurate and timely fashion to NLS patrons; develop and implement strategies to maximize the capacity of music stacks; and migrate music materials from the Reader Enrollment and Delivery System (READS), a free library circulation system developed and maintained for participating network libraries, to Voyager, the system used throughout the Library of Congress and at other research libraries.
- *Distribution of materials through NLS multistate centers:* Provide an enriched collection of audio and braille books and magazines in current and historical formats and extra copies of books in multiple formats for direct service to patrons through interlibrary loan and indirectly through libraries.

- *Distribution of materials through the NLS Excess and Redistribution System (XESS) and digital XESS:* Determine whether the Web XESS process can be used to track digital talking books returned by network libraries and provide more accurate cartridge accountability.
- *Distribution of materials to meet patrons' needs through interlibrary loan and overseas service:* Foster increased use of collegial interlibrary loan among libraries that do not have duplication capabilities.
- *Distribution of materials through the Union Catalog:* Catalog national program titles in all formats; create MARC bibliographic records for newly selected titles and update them as books proceed through production and distribution; enable direct access to downloadable books by adding links to NLS bibliographic records and, where possible, records for digital books from non-NLS collections; and monitor new features and technology related to catalog searches, cataloging systems, and union cataloging.
- *Distribution of materials through BARD:* Maintain and modify the web site, resolve patron issues as they arise, improve infrastructure, and implement new features; merge Web-Braille and music services with BARD; and form a duplication-on-demand project team within NLS.
- *Other distribution issues:* Explore ways to increase national production of braille; research ways to compensate for decreased national narration capabilities and increased distribution costs; and implement a strong reuse system to keep unit costs of flash cartridges low enough to continue the present level of service.

Engineering

- Develop specifications for materials and equipment for the NLS program and provide technical expertise for book production and duplication programs at network libraries.

Computer technology

- *In-house systems:* Maintain and support major NLS information systems by updating systems to support digital book data and information in the Network Division database and NLS Integrated Operations Support System (NIOSS) reports; review major automation systems for suitability to the NLS mission during the digital transition; implement Workstation Configuration Management and Windows XP upgrades; maintain and support the upgrade of NLS web sites, including support for the BARD system, monitoring and adjusting to increasing patron usage, and merging Web-Braille with BARD; and develop in-house capability to support the Production Information Control System (PICS) and NIOSS.
- *Security:* Ensure major data systems are in compliance with Library IT security regulations; perform additional certification and accreditation processes on NLS data systems; and resolve PICS IT security deficiencies.

Research and development

- Complete development and testing of software and documentation for print/braille cartridge labels; investigate and implement (if feasible) solutions for the problem of physical distribution of digital magazines; and research technologies necessary for a duplication-on-demand system.

Reference and selective dissemination of information

- Provide reference services to NLS staff in anticipation of and in response to specific needs or questions; provide network libraries, public libraries, professional groups, and the general public a national reference and referral service on blindness and physical handicaps, except in the fields of medicine and law; create reference tools for finding resources in the fields of blindness and physical handicaps and make these tools available to network libraries and the general public; and facilitate access, via online search aids and resource guides, to the resources on blindness and physical handicaps in the Library of Congress general collections and in its twenty-four reading rooms.

National outreach

- *Publications and exhibits:* Develop the 2008–2010 poster series and release the first of six posters; update brochures to include digital products; plan an outreach campaign for the digital program; and coordinate recognition activities for the Louis Braille bicentennial.
- *NLS web site:* Ensure that a comprehensive Web presence is a portion of the complete communications plan and redesign the NLS web site using standard NLS policies and approval processes.

Overview

As the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) begins the rollout of its digital system, some mission priorities have shifted. Identifying these priorities is critical not only to successfully complete the transition from analog to digital technology, but also to support a smooth transition within the NLS network of libraries, machine-lending agencies, and patrons.

Beginning in March 2009, NLS staff members, under the leadership of deputy director Robert Fistick, conducted a series of meetings to review the priorities of the NLS program. The group setting allowed key managers and staff officers to discuss the most important aspects of each element of the program and ascertain how these elements must coordinate to carry out the NLS mission. The meetings concluded in August 2009.

This document synthesizes the results of these meetings and sets forth the mission priorities for major activities of the NLS program at this time. The document identifies the goals of the program and will serve as a tool to help refine program functions and develop future management plans.

All mission priorities identified by NLS staff are included in this report. Those that appear in bold type were determined to be the most urgent.

1. **Priorities imposed by law**

- **Continue to give preference for library service to blind and physically handicapped veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces (2 U.S.C. 135b, March 3, 1931).**
- **Continue to give preference to not-for-profit organizations when soliciting contracts for audio, braille, and print production; and, when appropriate, adhere to the Javits-Wagner-O'Day Act (JWOD, 41 U.S.C. 46-48c, 1971) by soliciting contracts for production from nonprofit agencies that employ blind persons or others with severe disabilities.**

2. **Users**

- **Continue consumer advocacy on behalf of NLS patrons and all eligible blind and physically handicapped persons.**
- **Ensure that user perspectives are considered in all aspects of the program, including procedures, materials selection, and machine design and technology.**

3. **Collection development**

3.1 Books and magazines

- **Select and acquire new print book titles for braille, print/braille, and recorded production (including out-of-print titles).**
- Select titles already in the collection for reissue or replacement.

- **Develop and refine an analog-to-digital book conversion list, including identification of missing series titles for reissue or rerecording.**
- Create and update initial database tracking records for all titles selected, noting special instructions and recommending navigation levels.
- Prepare and edit annotations of selected titles for NLS catalogs.
- **Maintain the NLS magazine program.**
- **Develop foreign-language and other special collections for the national program.**
- Plan and conduct the annual meeting of the Collection Development Advisory Group consisting of patrons, librarians, and consumer group representatives.
- Respond to inquiries on collection development from librarians, readers, and other interested persons.
- Request copyright clearances for books produced in special media, such as commercial audiobooks, or published outside the United States, as needed.
- Plan, develop, and maintain the NLS Kids Zone web site and coordinate with the LC Young Readers Corner.
- Compile and maintain monthly NLS bestsellers list for the Network Library Services web site.
- **Maintain, develop, and improve the shared masters program.**
- Monitor changes in book and magazine publishing, including collection resources, new and discontinued magazines, and developing copyright issues.

3.2 Music

- **Digitize and process analog audio music titles for use on the digital player, specifically analog-to-digital conversions of cassette masters and of ¼-inch open-reel masters.**
- **Process existing digital titles for use on the new player, specifically CD titles (CDA files) and audio files (WAV files) to cartridges.**
- Process and transfer selected digital titles to cassettes for circulation to patrons still using C-1 machines.
- **Arrange for permission to make commercial titles available on BARD.**
- **Continue to digitize braille scores for Web-Braille.**

4. Production of equipment and books

4.1 Machines

- **Produce, distribute, and maintain a reliable and safe talking-book machine that is consistent with the goals of the public law and is a good value for the government.**

- Understand and incorporate patrons’ needs and suggestions in the design, development, evolution, and improvement of equipment and machines.
- Maintain current and accurate inventory of talking-book machines using the Batch-Oriented Inventory Control System (BPHICS) and other databases, as appropriate.
- **Maintain the limited stock of cassette machines in good working order now and after the digital transition is complete.**
- **Continue to update digital talking-book technology to improve performance and increase functionality.**
- **Investigate and develop additional applications for the digital player, such as electronic delivery of books, to improve timeliness and service to patrons.**

4.2 Containers

- **Ensure the timely production and recycling of audio and braille book containers:**
 - Identify a back-up manufacturer in case of loss of the current sole supplier.
 - Research ways to offset the increase in unit costs caused by lower production levels and increased web-based distribution.
 - Develop a new “dual process” recycling or reuse system for both containers and flash cartridges.
- **Provide libraries with technology and supplies that support their storage and distribution processes:**
 - Add a durable bar code to each audio container to enhance copy-specific collection management.
 - Provide different colored containers without the Library of Congress logo for locally produced or purchased materials.
- Examine ways to reuse containers to offset increasing costs of plastic resins.

4.3 Repairs

- **Maintain serviceability of talking-book machines by utilizing warranty repair service, volunteer repair organizations, contracted repair service, and network repair, as necessary.**
- Keep an accurate inventory and maintain an adequate supply of spare parts for the repair of NLS equipment.
- Promote and encourage volunteer repair organizations through training workshops and other educational opportunities.
- **Improve the reliability and serviceability of equipment to increase the average time between failures.**

4.4 Contracts

- **Solicit competitive bids in accordance with the public law, Federal Acquisition Regulations, and Library of Congress regulations to produce high-quality reading materials and associated equipment for NLS patrons.**
- Contract for the production of audio and braille books and magazines, talking-book machines, and containers, giving preference to nonprofit institutions or agencies.
- **Continuously evaluate emerging products and techniques to improve efficiency and quality of service consistent with the program as defined in the public law.**
- Work cooperatively with the Office of Contracts and Grants Management and other Library organizations to ensure procedures and practices adhere to Federal Acquisition Regulations and applicable Library of Congress regulations governing contracts and acquisitions.
- Maintain precise and up-to-date records of materials produced by contractors to facilitate warranty replacement, repair, or contract enforcement, as necessary.
- **Practice superior quality control of materials produced by contractors through site visits and inspection of submitted samples.**
- Maintain an in-house studio as a means of testing new and/or developing techniques and equipment related to audiobook production.

4.5 Quality assurance

4.5.1 Equipment and accessories

- **Assure the quality and performance of all equipment and related materials in conformity with established standards and specifications.**
- Perform lot sampling of equipment and accessories to ensure compliance with NLS specifications.
- **Recommend improvements in NLS specifications for all equipment and accessories.**
- Conduct lot inspections at contractor facilities to monitor production of NLS equipment, equipment repair, and related services.
- Develop new techniques and equipment for quality testing of NLS equipment and accessories.
- Evaluate manufacturers' quality control programs for compliance with NLS contract requirements.
- **Respond to quality complaints from patrons and network librarians.**
- Monitor warranty returns.

4.5.2 Audio and braille books and magazines

- **Assure the quality and performance of all books and magazines in conformity with established standards and specifications.**
- Review samples of audio and braille books and magazines for compliance with NLS specifications.
- Evaluate control copies (cassette, cartridge, braille) of all mass-produced audio and braille books and magazines.
- **Recommend improvements to NLS specifications for books and magazines.**
- Develop new techniques and equipment for quality testing of books and magazines.
- Evaluate manufacturers' quality control programs for compliance with NLS contract requirements.
- Review for approval all voice auditions for personnel who will record NLS audio materials.
- **Respond to quality complaints from patrons and network librarians.**
- Monitor warranty returns.
- Monitor quality of web audio and braille materials and data.

5. Distribution

5.1 Equipment

5.1.1 Cassette machines

- Continue to provide a sufficient number of cassette machines to meet reader needs.
- Prioritize distribution of the limited supply of cassette players, as transition to digital proceeds, ensuring that veterans and centenarians receive top priority.

5.1.2 Analog and digital machines

- **Prioritize distribution of digital players in the initial stages of the digital rollout, ensuring that veterans and centenarians receive top priority.**
- **Provide a sufficient number of digital players to meet reader needs when the transition is fully underway.**

5.1.3 Machine distribution quotas

- Continue distribution of cassette players, based on the formula compiled and approved by members of the National Audio Equipment Advisory Committee.

- **Use the same formula to distribute digital players that is used for cassette players, factoring in the fact that digital players will be produced at four to five times the rate that the cassette players were produced.**
- Notify machine lending agencies (MLAs) of the quantity of digital players they can expect to receive in a monthly machine allotment.

5.2 Materials

5.2.1 Mass production for network libraries

- **Continue oversight of digital audiobook production to ensure timely delivery of new and retrospective (i.e., converted from analog) titles to network libraries.**
- **Explore ways to increase national production of braille.**
- Address the issue of how to increase the number of qualified transcribers and proofreaders for braille production.
- **Research ways to compensate for decreased national narration capabilities and increased distribution costs.**
- Identify another in-house expert on the digital talking-book system.
- Develop a plan to determine the number of older analog and digital titles to produce and distribute on flash cartridges.
- **Implement a strong reuse system to keep unit costs of flash cartridges low enough to continue the present level of service.**

5.2.2 Direct circulation of music materials

- **Provide requested music materials in an accurate and timely fashion to NLS patrons and institutions in the United States and abroad.**
- **Develop and implement strategies to maximize the capacity of the music stacks.**
- **Migrate music materials from READS to Voyager:**
 - Acquire bar-code scanner.
 - Acquire bar codes.
 - Bar-code the collection as items circulate.
 - Train staff in the circulation mode of Voyager.
- Provide music materials for Web-Braille and BARD download.

5.2.3 Local duplication/duplication on demand

- Evaluate issues related to local duplication, specifically:
 - Increased workload, associated costs, and required supplies for network libraries.

- Uneven duplication capabilities from state to state.
- Need for additional equipment in each network library.
- Difficulty in predicting annual needs.
- **Form a duplication-on-demand project team within NLS to evaluate issues related to duplication-on-demand center(s):**
 - Transfer of cost from network libraries to NLS.
 - Requirement for design and construction of facilities to handle large distributions (contract).
 - Requirement for enhanced automation to handle orders, deliveries, etc.
 - Requirement for increased staff at NLS to monitor/control centers.
- Release Request for Information to solicit companies interested in contracting to perform duplication on demand.
- Form a committee of network libraries and user groups to plan and release information on duplication on demand.
- Incorporate Automation Office priorities into planning/prioritizing:
 - Local duplication—modifications to library systems.
 - Local duplication—modifications to statistics collection.
 - Duplication on demand—administrative logistics of ordering titles and confirming orders as requests come through different system.

5.2.4 Multistate centers

- **Provide an enriched collection of audio and braille magazines and books in current and historical formats, and extra copies of books in multiple formats for direct service to patrons through interlibrary loan and indirectly through libraries.**
- Provide materials requested by foreign libraries through interlibrary loan and direct service to eligible NLS patrons who are American citizens living abroad.
- Provide duplication of a limited number of NLS-produced books to network libraries to replace books that have been lost or damaged.
- Provide patrons with services close to their homes, thus lessening expense and mailing problems.
- Provide collections and logistics services that cannot be provided from the Washington, D.C., headquarters because of congressional mail-security limitations.
- Provide storage for less-used collections and materials at a reduced cost.
- Relieve NLS of storage and circulation of the national collection and provide less-costly space for collection growth.

- Provide storage space for publications, player accessories, and batteries that can be acquired in bulk and supplied to network libraries to increase the effectiveness of the service.
- Fulfill network requests for publications, players, batteries, and other supplies.
- Provide a quality assurance program to review network-produced materials and to improve the technical and narration quality of volunteer-produced recordings, thereby enhancing quality standard of recorded materials distributed to network library subscribers.
- Provide logistical and service support for NLS through special assignments such as the project for screening C-1 players to verify that the labeling on the package reflects the actual condition of the player. Provide temporary storage in emergencies and logistical support in special situations, such as recall collection.

5.2.5 Subregional/deposit collections

- Continue to provide deposit collections on cassettes.
- As the digital collection grows at regional libraries, transition to small collections of digital talking books.

5.2.6 Excess and Redistribution System (XESS)

- Ensure procedures are in place for network libraries to dispose of federal property in accordance with federal disposal guidelines.
- Maintain monthly XESS cycles while ensuring all network libraries have multiple opportunities to dispose of books throughout the year:
 - Rotate through the four conferences so libraries in each conference have three opportunities per year to offer unneeded braille and cassette books.
 - Enable out-of-cycle requests to participate after reasonable justification.
- Allow each network library full-time access to Web XESS and the ability to add or delete titles from its “wants” list. (Library “wants” are compared to library “offers” on a monthly basis and offering libraries are notified where to send unneeded copies.)
- **Determine whether the Web XESS process could be used to track digital talking books to be returned by network libraries.**

5.2.7 Digital XESS

- **Provide more accurate cartridge accountability, as part of the long-range plan for reuse of flash cartridges.**
- Recall for reuse from each network library a yet-to-be-determined quantity of digital books by 2011 or 2012. (Current problems getting digital books from book producers approved by the NLS Quality Assurance Section and then shipped to network libraries have delayed discussion of recall of digital books.)

- Once current production has stabilized, focus on the quantity of books to be retrieved from each network library and how the returns can be tracked to ensure the cartridges are returned.

5.2.8 Interlibrary loan and overseas service

- Provide multistate centers with one-copy collections of digital talking books for loan to network libraries to duplicate for individual patrons.
- **Foster increased use of collegial interlibrary loan to libraries without duplication capabilities to meet patrons' digital talking-book needs.**
- Continue to provide interlibrary loan of braille and audiocassette materials.
- Provide digital materials on cartridges.

5.2.9 *Union Catalog*

- **Catalog national program titles (BR, DB, and RC), creating MARC bibliographic records for newly selected titles and updating them as books proceed through production and distribution.**
- Distribute MARC records for national program titles to the network.
 - Distribute brief MARC record sets available for titles in copy allotment.
 - Distribute full MARC record sets available for:
 - books in copy allotment.
 - books for which the cataloging has been completed.
 - revised records.
 - Supply record set for national collection on request.
- Maintain existing bibliographic and authority records and keep NLS records aligned with LC name and subject-heading practice.
- Develop and communicate NLS cataloging policies to network libraries as needed.
- Catalog NLS music collection scores and books.
- Catalog Special Foreign Library Collection books.
- Catalog gift books and special acquisitions.
- Maintain a union catalog of books in special format for blind and physically handicapped readers:
 - Create catalog records for locally produced network books submitted to NLS.
 - Process and load records from other *Union Catalog* contributors.
- **Enable direct access to downloadable books by adding persistent links to NLS bibliographic records. Where possible add links to records for non-NLS digital books.**

- Stay abreast of the development and adoption of the new cataloging code (*Resource Description and Access*) and other cataloging standards.
- Implement standard changes in NLS cataloging policies and practices as needed.
- **Monitor new features and technology related to catalog searches, cataloging systems, and union cataloging. Recommend promising developments relevant to NLS goals to senior management and the Automation Office.**

5.3 Braille and Audio Reading Download (BARD)

- **Maintain and modify web site, resolve library and patron issues as they arise, improve infrastructure, and implement new features, when appropriate.**
 - Transition responsibility for branded web pages and accounts from Automation Office to the network.
 - Improve infrastructure to support anticipated load:
 - New, more robust database.
 - Faster language.
 - Implement new and improved features as deemed appropriate, based on demand, cost, and opportunity.
- Provide support to contractors and network:
 - Oversee and support current contractor.
 - Transition frontline support responsibility to network.
- Assist with training:
 - Assure accuracy and suitability of training materials.
 - Provide subject-matter expertise, as needed.
 - Review materials as produced.
 - Review site periodically for possible enhancements and/or corrections.
 - Coordinate training materials with online help sections of the web site (FAQ, instruction pages).
- **Merge Web-Braille and music services with BARD:**
 - Work with Music Section to make all of its electronic materials available on BARD.
 - Work with the consumer relations officer to combine Web-Braille with BARD.
- Work with device manufacturers in support of implementation of technologies required to read NLS digital talking books:
 - Digital Rights Management (DRM).
 - Adaptive Multi Rate–WideBand Plus (AMR-WB+).
 - Z39.86.

6. Engineering

6.1 Specifications

- **Develop specifications for materials and equipment for the NLS talking-book program.**
- Certify preproduction equipment for compliance with NLS standards.

6.2 Research and development

- Support maintenance and repair operations for talking-book machines and accessories.
- **Provide technical expertise for network libraries' book production and duplication programs.**
- Research new technologies.
- Evaluate equipment continuously and recommend improvements.

7. Computer technology

7.1 In-house systems

- **Maintain and support major NLS information systems, updating systems to support DB data and information in the Network Division's database and NLS Integrated Operations Support System (NIOSS) reports.**
- **Review major automation systems for suitability to NLS mission as it evolves with the digital transition.**
- Maintain and support NLS desktop systems, ensuring they allow staff to do their work.
- **Implement Workstation Configuration Management and Windows XP upgrades.**
- **Build a network for testing that is separate from the LC network.**
- Implement production test network for NLS Engineering Section.
- Continue book production:
 - Meet yearly production targets.
 - Maintain and support book specification validation utilities, developing new utilities as required.
 - Complete CD processing of old DB titles.
 - Update and complete DB archive.
 - Ensure that book documentation is documented and stable.
- **Maintain, support, and assist in the upgrade of NLS web sites:**
 - Provide technical support to web manager, as needed for www.loc.gov/nls.

- **Provide automation support for the BARD system, monitoring for patron load (modifying as necessary to accommodate load) and merging Web-Braille with BARD.**
 - Facilitate end-user BARD support (training and development).
 - Develop, maintain, and support Retrospective Copy Allotment.
- **Develop capability to support PICS and NIOSS with Automation Office personnel instead of outside contractors.**
- Develop Automation Office capabilities and services:
 - Implement General Review of Workforce (GROW) committee recommendations, specifically staffing to accommodate the digital transition.
 - Implement trouble-ticket tracking system.
 - Implement project-management tracking system.

7.2 Security

- **Ensure major NLS data systems (primarily PICS and BARD) are in compliance with Library IT security regulations, as funding allows.**
- Ensure NLS desktop environment is in compliance with Library IT security regulations, as funding allows.
- **Perform additional certification and accreditation processes on NLS data systems as required by LC Chief Information Security Officer, as funding allows.**
- **Resolve PICS IT security deficiencies, as funding allows.**

8. Research and development

8.1 Print/braille labels

- **Complete development and testing of software and documentation for print/braille labels:**
 - Secure blank label stock.
 - Distribute via the network library web site.

8.2 Magazines

- **Investigate and implement (if feasible) solutions to the problem of physical distribution of digital magazines.**

8.3 Coordination of library systems

- Harmonize/coordinate library systems, including:
 - Circulation
 - BARD
 - Web-Braille

- Labeling
- Duplication
- Comprehensive Mailing List System (CMLS)

8.4 Standards, technology/software

- Remain active in standards bodies relevant to NLS mission:
 - Z39.86
 - DAISY Online
- Continue to improve and support NLS Digital Rights Management (DRM) application.
- Continue to monitor changes in the DRM landscape that may affect NLS.
- Participate in the formulation of requirements for duplication on demand.
- **Research technologies that will be needed to implement duplication on demand.**
- Continue to stay informed on changes in nonvolatile memory technologies and their possible application to NLS.

8.5 Services for librarians and patrons

- Improve the reading experience for patrons who are reading analog-to-digital books.
- Simplify the process of downloading, unzipping, storing, and retrieving books and magazines from BARD.
- Design and implement a document-storage and sharing system at NLS.

9. Reference and selective dissemination of information (SDI)

- **Provide reference services to the staff of NLS in anticipation of—as well as in response to—specific needs or questions.**
- **Provide network libraries, public libraries, professional groups, and the general public a national reference and referral service on blindness and physical handicaps, except in the fields of medicine and law.**
- Develop a collection of materials on blindness and physical handicaps by acquiring and cataloging new and retrospective materials for the NLS collection.
- **Create reference tools for finding resources in the fields of blindness and physical handicaps and make these tools available to network libraries and the general public.**
- Provide current and accurate program data to NLS and the network as obtained from network library agencies via CMLS/BPHICS and the Network Library Database.

- Maintain an archive of NLS program information and ensure easy access to both hard-copy and electronic documents.
- Ensure that appropriate titles on blindness and physical handicaps are acquired for LC's general collection.
- **Facilitate access, via online search aids and resource guides, to the resources on blindness and physical handicaps in LC's general collections as well as in LC's twenty-four reading rooms.**
- Remain informed about resources available from LC by actively participating in reference roundtable meetings and other appropriate discussions at LC.

10. National outreach

10.1 Publications and exhibits

- **Revise brochures to include information on digital projects.**
- **Develop the 2008–2011 poster series, release the first of the six posters, and publish posters at six-month intervals, as funding allows.**
- **Begin planning outreach campaign for digital program.**
- Work with NLS managers to ensure accuracy, consistency, and proper syntax of external communications:
 - Review and edit weekly batches of book annotations.
 - Review and edit weekly correspondence in the form of bulletins.
 - Review and edit reference and other materials as required.
- Announce availability of braille and talking books to patrons and network libraries as they are shipped; ensure that publications announcing books are produced in braille and recorded formats:
 - Compile and publish *Talking Book Topics (TBT)* (large print, recorded, and Web).
 - Add audio version of *TBT* to public web site.
 - Compile and publish *Braille Book Review (BBR)* (braille, large print, and Web).
 - Research viability of *TBT/BBR* diskette (text file).
- Provide a comprehensive periodic listing of annual special-format book releases to patrons and libraries; ensure that these publications are produced in braille and recorded formats:
 - Publish *Braille Books* catalog of braille books biennially (braille, large print, and Web).
 - Publish *For Younger Readers* catalog of audio and braille books biennially (braille, large print, recorded, and Web).

- Publish *Digital Talking Books Plus* catalog of audiobooks annually (large print, recorded, and Web).
- Publish newsletters to advise stakeholders of NLS projects and initiatives, especially the transition to digital talking books:
 - Publish *Flash* as required.
 - Publish *News* quarterly.
- Conduct the national exhibits program:
 - Develop the FY 2010 exhibits schedule.
 - Handle logistics for national exhibits program.
- **Set goals and objectives for and coordinate the Louis Braille Bicentennial recognition activities.**
- Continue to coordinate outreach efforts with Library Services and the LC Public Affairs Office:
 - Ensure approval of *Flash*.
 - Coordinate release of press notices.
- Continue administration activities:
 - Maintain staffing levels to meet goals and objectives.
 - Hire a GS-12 senior writer-editor to handle high-level editing assignments, to ensure that the newsletter *News* and the annual and biennial catalogs remain on track, and oversee training of PMS and CDS staff in annotation writing.
 - Hire two GS-9 writer-editors to support the editorial and publication workload;
 - Create a production position to assist writer-editors with the publication workload, which increased when the responsibility for typesetting was taken on by the section.
 - Identify options for desktop publishing software.

10.2 Web site

- **Ensure that a comprehensive web presence is an important feature of the complete communications program.**
- **Redesign the NLS web site using standard NLS policies and approval processes:**
 - Implement a content-management system.
 - Write a web-accessibility policy.
 - Create an appropriate “look and feel” for the site; create prototype style sheets.
 - Design front- and back-end site architecture, obtaining support at all levels of the organization.
 - Create site prototype.

- Launch a pilot similar to that used for the digital player; include field testing with a variety of users in their home or work environments.
- Launch the redesigned site.

11. In-house communications

- Review the use of systems and equipment to ascertain whether access by staff and the public is as required.
- Evaluate access to copiers and color printers to ascertain the efficiency of their use.
- Encourage staff, as opportunities arise, to receive instruction in the use of systems that could facilitate their work.
- Monitor and maintain NLS systems; provide staff training and updates, as needed:
 - Momentum
 - eManagement
 - Empower
 - Federal Reporting System (FRS)
 - LC Automated Time and Attendance System (WebTA)
 - NLS and LC Intranet
 - E-mail
 - National Finance Center (NFC) Employee Personal Page

Glossary of acronyms and terms

AMR-WB+	Adaptive Multi Rate–WideBand Plus
BARD	Braille and Audio Reading Download
BBR	<i>Braille Book Review</i>
BCS	Bibliographic Control Section
BPHICS	Batch-Oriented Inventory Control System
CD	Compact Disc
CDA	Compact Disc Audio
CDS	Collection Development Section
CMLS	Comprehensive Mailing List System
DAISY	Digital Accessible Information System
DB	Digital Talking Book
DRM	Digital Rights Management
FRS	Federal Reporting System
GROW	General Review of Workforce
LC	Library of Congress
MLA	Machine Lending Agency
MSC	Multistate Center
NFC	National Finance Center
NIOSS	NLS Integrated Operations Support System
NLS	National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress
PICS	Production Information Control System
PMS	Publications and Media Section
READS	Reader Enrollment and Delivery System
SDI	Selective Dissemination of Information
TBT	<i>Talking Book Topics</i>
WAV	Waveform Audio Format
WebTA	Library of Congress Automated Time and Attendance System
XESS	Excess Book Redistribution System
Z39.86	Specifications for the Digital Talking Book: DAISY Digital Accessible Information System