

Bob Cullen: The major accomplishments and activities that they have pursued over the past year just to give everybody a snapshot, if you will, of what's been happening and, for that matter, also what lies ahead.

It is always worthwhile and, in my opinion, the perfect way to finish up our year together with respect to the TLRs. Starting off, as you probably recall, I included the list of our speakers in the more recent emails. We'll have Rosalyn go first with her own overview there. Without further delay on my part, I'll go ahead and again hand the microphone back to Rosalyn. Floor's all yours, Rosalyn.

Rosalyn Alleman (OST): All right. Thank you, Bob. One moment please.

Alright, so a little bit off the top about BTS activities in general this year. One of the things we worked on was generating and providing copies of the items in the ROSA P database to both the Internet Archive and the Federal Highway Administration Library as part of our contingency planning. We feel really good about that. We also did a lot of preservation on things like standard operating procedures, statistics, and other information, FAQs, LibGuides, and so on to make sure those are preserved.

We did have four staff departures in 2025. I think the person who's on the phone needs to mute their line if possible.

Rosalyn Alleman (OST): So, we lost David Gansz, our director, in February when he retired. We also had Xin Wang retire; he was our web librarian. In April, Jesse Long, our data curation librarian, took what they're calling the deferred resignation program—a sort of buyout for federal employees. In August, our data curation fellow Peyton Tvrdy got a new job at another organization. So we lost both of our data curation people, whom we miss very much.

But we're keeping things going and doing what we can do, and we feel good about our position at the moment. This is the big year for Surface Transportation reauthorization. That bill is due to be passed by September 30 of this upcoming year. Hopefully, that's the every-five-year transportation bill that pays for, in addition to the Bureau of Transportation Statistics and the National Transportation Library, a lot of state highway projects and other activities that could be defined as surface transportation.

We're also going through a BTS modernization initiative. We've had focus groups and discussions, and that will continue into 2026 with some reorganization. I'm looking forward to representing BTS and NTL at TRB in January. I hope I'll be able to see some of you there.

So this is the order we're going in: I'm going to talk more about reference and outreach; Tyler's going to talk about acquisitions; Eden's going to talk about archives and special collections; and Beth is going to talk about cataloging metadata and ROSA P.

Regarding reference and outreach: we respond to about 2,700 questions from the DOT staff and the public in a year. About two-thirds of those are web form emails, but it also includes live chat, phone calls to our 800-line, and voicemails. Most of those are handled by Charlotte and Vicki, and they do a great job. I do some of the questions here and there and consult with them on others.

One other thing I do is respond to research and literature review requests from DOT staff on a wide variety of topics, searching TRID, EBSCO, and ScienceDirect. Charlotte and Vicki also filled 262 interlibrary loan requests from DOT staff for the year ending November 30. That fluctuates quite a lot—we had over 400 last year.

I always do a presentation to DOT staff during National Library Week about what services DOT offers. I also manage a Twitter/X account for the National Transportation Library, and I usually feature one of our new publications in ROSA P every week. In terms of knowledge management, we had three new FAQs this year, 23,000 hits on our knowledge base, and I edited 39 FAQs. I've also been updating the "Finding Transportation Statistics" brochure.

The Transportation Librarians Roundtable is also something I've been involved with for quite a while. I update the LibGuide with webinar information each month. I also record the webinars and take attendance. They now have their own collections in ROSA P.

It's been four years now that I've been the coordinator of the National Transportation Knowledge Network (NTKN). I handle scheduling meetings, managing the calendar, and hosting the coordinating committee. We also have an NTKN monthly meet-and-greet, which is a low-pressure opportunity to meet other transportation librarians.

Lastly, I work with the GLAM (Government Libraries, Archives, and Museums) career fair hosted by the University of Illinois Library School. It's an opportunity to advertise open positions when we have them.

So, I'm going to stop sharing here and turn it over to Tyler, our acquisitions librarian. Go ahead, Tyler.

Tyler Evans (OST): Hold on. OK. Do I just click "present" in Teams?

Rosalyn Alleman (OST): Click the share button up at the top right, next to the leave button, and then click your screen.

Tyler Evans (OST): OK. Can you see it now?

Rosalyn Alleman (OST): Yep, I see it.

Tyler Evans (OST): Excellent. All right. So this is for acquisitions. I'm sure everybody's excited to hear about contracts; that's always a crowd-pleaser.

Acquisitions is a very cyclical process. Unless you have new requirements or new procedures put in place, you typically work within the same framework as previous years. Having been here a little less than a year and a half now, the first year can be hectic, but the second year you kind of know how things work. After that, you work within the same rhythm year after year.

For this presentation, I figured I would just explain our acquisition methods and give examples of what we acquire using each one. This isn't a comprehensive overview of what we purchase, but more of how it's purchased, and I've arranged these methods from most desirable to least. We also have some upcoming items that we're planning for.

First up is the **Government Purchase Card**. The program was implemented a few decades ago to simplify small purchases. It provides the fastest turnaround and least amount of paperwork. For many years, the limit was \$3,500, which really limited how much you could purchase for library resources, but around fiscal year 2017, they increased it to \$10,000. There's a proposal to increase it to \$15,000. I'm a cardholder, so I gather documentation for the purchase and submit it for approval. We use this to purchase anything that falls within that micro-purchase limit, including OCLC, Springshare, LibSafe software, and an archive management system, as well as supplies.

Next is **FEDLINK**, the Library of Congress program which turned 60 years old this year. FEDLINK awards IDIQ (Indefinite Delivery, Indefinite Quantity) contracts to vendors for books, electronic resources, library support, preservation, digitization, and serial subscriptions. They

have the IDIQ contracts in place, and we submit our requirements, which they then compete among those FEDLINK vendors.

We can utilize their expertise on the products and services they contract. This year, we awarded a digitization contract through FEDLINK. I had never worked on one of those before, and it quickly got out of hand. It's very difficult to come up with an independent cost estimate for something like that when you've never worked on it before. Without the FEDLINK staff's help, I wouldn't have been able to complete the paperwork. It's nice to have people who are knowledgeable about the product you're purchasing.

One of my previous positions was with the Air Force, where new airmen entering the contract field would rotate in every year. In the first year of that job, I had 16 contracts to renew at one time and was dealing with four to five different contracting specialists. With each one, I had to explain what a database was and that it wasn't a software purchase. Since the airmen rotated out every year, it played out that way year after year. So it's nice to be able to have a conversation with someone who knows what we're actually purchasing. We use FEDLINK for commercial databases and the new digitization contract.

Next are **Interagency Agreements (IAAs)**. I cheated a little here because FEDLINK is actually an interagency agreement, but if we have the option, we use FEDLINK first to streamline things. IAAs use existing contracts or services performed at other government agencies to utilize expertise already in place. We use IAAs for our Digital Object Identifiers (DOI), support for CENDI (which runs the Science.gov website), and for the hosting and management of ROSA P.

Finally, we have **DOT Contracts**. These are DOT-awarded contracts used for anything not available by other methods. It's the most labor-intensive method. We probably pay market rate since we're less likely to receive a discount, and there's always the risk of a bid protest. While not common, they can be very time-consuming. We use DOT contracts for our library support services contractors and for databases not fully available through FEDLINK.

Regarding **future items**: with the DOGE reviews earlier this year and continued scrutiny of purchases, new procedures have been put into place. This increases the time to submit requisitions due to additional approvals. We also have contracts approaching their final year. Most are awarded as a base year plus four option years. We have some database subscriptions entering the final option year, so we'll need to evaluate usage and see what else is available on the market that might meet our requirements at a lower cost.

For our library support services, we'll need to evaluate staffing and duties for the next five years. We are also continuing digitization. Almost every contract I've worked has included option years, but we didn't include them for the digitization project since we have to define exactly what will be digitized. Since these are archival materials, there's a lot of variation in dimensions and formats.

Finally, regarding DOT management of ROSA P, we're exploring ways to host and manage ROSA P within DOT. We're early in this process and gathering information from other federal libraries that have digital collections. That does it for me, and now I will send it to Eden.

Eden Orelove (OST): Sorry, I need to unmute myself. Can everybody see this?

Tyler Evans (OST): Yes.

Rosalyn Alleman (OST): Yep.

Bob Cullen: Yeah, seeing it fine.

Eden Orelove (OST): Great. Thank you.

Eden Orelove (OST): So I am going to talk about the archives and special collections and some of the efforts I've made in the last year. For those of you who don't know me, I'm the archivist and historian here at the library.

I've actually been working a lot with the FAA lately, which represents 80% of the DOT, so I always feel like I have to include them in every conversation. This year involved a lot of sorting, figuring out what we have, and prioritizing. Walking in, there really wasn't a list of anything; I was simply told there were a whole bunch of boxes out at a warehouse. We didn't know how many or what they were, so I spent some time going through them. There were hundreds.

I sorted them by administration or mode. For example, I spoke to the Maritime Academy, and they said they'd be willing to take their materials. I'm managing all of this myself—I don't have the room, and I can't do it alone. I also pulled out materials for the Coast Guard and sent them to their respective administrations, sorting everything else by mode so we can prioritize—especially if we can get funding. For example, FHWA has their own digitizing project that's going to be amazing, so we can work on those first. Much of this consists of technical reports, so it's not necessarily original material, but there is a lot of other stuff as well.

I took possession of the FAA archives when it closed about a year and a half ago. That was about 700 boxes of stuff that I packed up and sent to the warehouse because there really wasn't any archive space here at the DOT. I'm still going through those at the warehouse. I've taken a break for a little while because it's cold and I don't have a car, but I'm continuing to pull out certain things for digitization. They have a lot of original material—much more than I have here for the rest of the DOT—so it's been exciting uncovering things that aren't anywhere else in the world.

A big part of this year was just getting collections online. Tyler has been a huge help; for the first year, I tried to get things digitized and nobody knew how to do it. Having Tyler this last year has enabled us to get a good contract going. Right now, we have several boxes of stuff being digitized that should be back by April. We'll have a huge amount of material available online, including all news releases from the history of the DOT's founding for most of the modes. It's not just the main DOT newsletter; it's also FHWA, MARAD, and the Coast Guard.

I also focused on sending out newsletter collections that aren't anywhere else, primarily FAA materials. Another focus was the DOT administrator speeches and writings. I've been able to digitize about 50 different administrator speeches, on top of all the Secretary speeches we focused on last year. I estimate about 2,500 speeches are now online.

Regarding America 250—the upcoming celebration of the country's 250th anniversary—I've decided to work on creating content about our transportation history. I'm trying to focus on interactive digital content. There's a picture there of a web exhibit I did focusing on the different Secretaries of Transportation; every page includes a link to their speeches in ROSA P.

Our social media took a hit with the new administration, as there wasn't a lot of support for continuing what we were doing. However, I am going to start picking up my "On This Day" social media campaigns again. The digitization contract Tyler mentioned is in process, and we should be done by April, which is good because the official America 250 date is in July. That's it from me—this is my cat, Persephone; she says thank you! I'll turn it over to Beth.

Beth Burnett (OST): Thank you, Eden. I'm Beth Burnett, metadata librarian, and I am delighted to highlight some technical services, cataloging, and ROSA P updates from 2025.

ROSA P—the Repository and Open Science Access platform—is NTL's open-access digital library. These metrics cover January 1st through yesterday, December 10, 2025. So far this

year, we have cataloged over 7,500 new records, which is about 3,000 more than last year. I want to highlight the efforts of our team: Sean and Nellie, who manage the national digital submissions inbox; Eden's archival materials; Dawn Reinhardt with the FHWA library; and two contractors with the Federal Transit Administration.

In terms of usage, there were over 200,000 full-text downloads and over 856,000 unique visitors in 2025. The most downloaded item was the 2024 Transportation Statistics Annual Report (TSAR).

We added four new collections this year:

1. **Autonomous Vehicles:** Over 800 items.
2. **BTS Data Spotlight:** Static stories capturing specific moments in time.
3. **OSTR Data:** A curated selection of data sets funded by OSTR.
4. **SMART Program:** Research outputs from the SMART grants program.

We also had major updates to ROSA P's functionality. We use the **Stacks** platform, which is managed by the CDC through an interagency agreement. We deployed Stacks 3.28 in September with a new design, including a banner indicating it is an official US government website. The search functionality now allows you to select multiple values for a facet (like selecting multiple publication years at once). We also added **Altmetrics**, which tracks online engagement, mentions in news outlets, and social media for items with a DOI or ISBN.

One of the most exciting accomplishments for 2025 was ROSA P becoming a **CoreTrustSeal** certified repository. This means ROSA P has the core characteristics of a trustworthy and sustainable data repository, covering organizational infrastructure, digital object management, and IT security.

Finally, we implemented **ORCID iDs** in ROSA P. These are unique identifiers for researchers that ensure research outputs are correctly attributed to the right person, even if they change their name or affiliation. If you are a researcher with work in ROSA P and don't see your ORCID iD, please reach out to me. We've achieved a lot this year despite staffing changes. Bob, I'll turn it back to you.

Bob Cullen: Great, come full circle.

Bob Cullen: Thank you, Beth, and thank you as well to all of our speakers today from NTL. Excellent presentations from each of you. We do have some time for questions and comments, so please use the electronic "show of hands" and I'll be happy to call upon you. Feel free to unmute and let me know if you have something to ask.

As I said before, one of the trademarks of an excellent presentation is that you not only learn a lot about a subject, but you also end up with a sense of curiosity. On that note, I'm going to call on Gabi. Go ahead, Gabi.

Gabi Hysong: Yes. Are you able to hear me?

Bob Cullen: Yes.

Gabi Hysong: I just wanted to thank you. I have learned so much attending these meetings. I'm not part of DOT, but we librarians all have the same types of duties. What you have done, even with limited staffing, is an inspiration to me. Thank you very much.

Rosalyn Alleman (OST): Thanks, Gabi.

Bob Cullen: Well stated, Gabi. I have a couple of questions for Tyler. First, I was wondering if you get nostalgic at all for those days back in the Air Force dealing with that rotating lineup of contracting specialists?

Also, on the general subject of procurement: you walked us through the process and the moving parts so effectively. Did you start off pursuing a career in procurement, or has this been intertwined with your interest in being a librarian? In other words, did you have a professional background in contracting or did you learn as you went along?

Tyler Evans (OST): Well, no, I have not yearned for those days of the Air Force; I don't think that's ever crossed my mind. I didn't necessarily set out for acquisitions, but it makes sense because prior to library school, I managed bookstores, worked for a book publisher as a sales rep, and worked for a book wholesaler. There were many aspects of acquisitions I was already familiar with from a trade perspective. It just worked itself out that way.

Bob Cullen: Thank you, Tyler. I appreciate it. Great presentation. Any other questions or comments?

Eden Orelove (OST): I was about to raise my hand because I just want to say thank you to my team. I work with every single one of you regularly and I couldn't have done my job without you. With just four of us left, we are running a library the best way that we can. So, thanks guys.

Rosalyn Alleman (OST): Thanks, Eden.

Bob Cullen: Thank you, Eden. I do want to check with you regarding what you mentioned about our country's 250th anniversary. It sounds like you've hit the ground running in terms of how to commemorate that. Are there any particular programs, exhibits, or events underway closer to July 4th of next year?

Eden Orelove (OST): I'm working mostly with the FAA and we're charting it out right now. They have a lot more funding and interest in this. At this point, there isn't a lot of "firm ground," but we do have a website up. If you look for "FAA America 250," I'm sure you'll find some of the things we've started doing.

Bob Cullen: Great, looking forward to that. Beth, regarding the upgrades to the search function and being able to search for multiple years: is it a matter of selecting the years only—for example, 1990 to 1995—or can you get even more specific with dates, like January 2nd to April 1st?

Beth Burnett (OST): That's a good question. It's actually just years. One thing that may be different from other databases is that instead of a slider for a range of years, you select each individual year that you want. It doesn't go any deeper than the year.

Bob Cullen: Very good. Thank you. Those upgrades are going to be very helpful to a lot of people.

All good things must come to an end, and we are bumping up against the end of the hour. Again, I want to thank our four speakers for sharing their insights; we're very lucky to have you in our community. On behalf of myself and Rosalyn, we appreciate all of you taking the time to be here.

Quick announcements: the first TLR for 2026 will take place on **Thursday, January 22nd**. Please note it's the fourth Thursday instead of the second. Our speaker will be Amanda Carter, the librarian with the Oregon Department of Transportation.

Rosalyn, is the NTKN meet-and-greet still on track for Wednesday of next week, the 17th?

Rosalyn Alleman (OST): Yes, it's usually the third week of the month.

Bob Cullen: Great, I'll be there too—and I'll bring cookies! Those meet-and-greets are very worthwhile, and I strongly suggest joining if you have the time. Beyond that, I expect I'll see some of you in Washington, D.C. next month for the TRB meeting. In the meantime, I hope you all have a great holiday season and a Happy New Year. Thank you again, take care.

Rosalyn Alleman (OST): Thanks, Bob.