

**SLA Transportation  
Division: TALENT  
Subcommittee**

Library Connectivity Pooled Fund  
Study Annual Meeting  
October 22, 2008

# Background

- Similar to 2003 effort for support of the NTL in SAFETEA-LU
- Grass-roots organization
- Led by SLA Transportation Division, but including representatives from other groups

# Objective

- Gather political and user support for increased funding for the National Transportation Library and National Transportation Knowledge Networks in the next federal transportation authorization

# Strategies

- Develop a position paper, cover letter, gather endorsements
- Develop key messages/talking points
- Editorials/letters to the editor (SLA HQ and others)
- Letter-writing campaign (Congress)
- Article(s) in transportation publications
- Podcast or Webcast

SPECIAL LIBRARIES ASSOCIATION  
**TRANSPORTATION DIVISION**  
Established 1943

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Statement in Support of the Development of a Sustainable  
National Transportation Information Infrastructure

Our transportation system is a complex and integral part of the nation's economy and security. Immediate access to information about the system is more critical now than ever, especially as technology advances and the transportation workforce undergoes dramatic changes, including massive retirements.

Information and knowledge are strategic organizational assets. Proper management of information assets greatly enhances organizations' ability to best use the knowledge of current and former employees, generate innovative solutions to problems, and save time and money. The current approach to managing transportation information assets is ad hoc and decentralized, and the transportation sector urgently needs to create a sustainable national information infrastructure to gain these advantages.

#### Background

Over the past decade, several reports from all sectors of the national transportation community presented mounting evidence supporting the need to coordinate transportation information management efforts. Building on this body of research, in 2006 the Transportation Research Board, a division of the National Academy of Sciences, issued the policy study *Special Report 284: Transportation Knowledge Networks: A Management Strategy for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, which further documents the need for coordinating efforts to effectively manage transportation information. In addition to regional and federal transportation knowledge networks (TKNs), the report recommends that a national coordinating body located within the USDOT's Research and Innovative Technology Administration provide leadership, infrastructure, support, and coordination for the TKNs. The report also recommends sustainable funding for the TKNs through RITA.

The Transportation Division of SLA supports the recommendations of TRB Special Report 284, and believes the best way to develop the needed information infrastructure is to create transportation knowledge networks and coordinate their development through RITA's National Transportation Library.

#### Benefits of Transportation Knowledge Networks

- Create expanded access to knowledge bases and specialists
- Leverage specialized collections and hidden information
- Enable exceptional customer service
- Save time and money
- Facilitate better use of information for decision-making
- Drive innovation

<sup>1</sup>TRB Special Report 284, *Transportation Knowledge Networks: A Management Strategy for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Transportation Research Board of the National Academies, <http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/sr/284.pdf>, accessed 9/10/2007

# Next steps

- Reconstitute committee/add new members and schedule conference calls
- Revise position paper based on NCHRP 20-75 outreach and results
- Gather endorsements
- Contact Doug Newcomb of SLA for assistance with advocacy
- Begin other campaigns

# Contact

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