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Quick Migration Guide: Transitioning from LE-TRA to SAP TM

Executive Summary

In a globally connected world customers now have the advantage of ordering anything with a single click, our supply chains are working harder than ever. But they are also facing a "new normal" of geopolitical shifts and environmental unpredictability that the old rules didn't account for.

Despite this, many companies are still steering through this advanced landscape using **SAP LE-TRA**—a system built on 30-year-old architecture from a time when the world felt much smaller and more predictable.

As **SAP LE-TRA** nears its sunset, we shouldn't see it as just another IT deadline. Instead, it's a chance to trade in "how we've always done it" for a more resilient way of working. Moving to a future-proof **Transportation Management (TM)** system isn't just a technical upgrade; it's about giving your team the tools to stay agile in a volatile market. By planning this migration now, you aren't just keeping the lights on—you're ensuring your business is built to thrive for decades to come.

But why now, you ask:

1. **Hard Deadlines:** Mainstream maintenance for ECC ends in 2027. The "compatibility scope" allowing LE-TRA to run on S/4HANA expires strictly in 2030. Let this shift not catch you off guard. Prepare in advance to use this transition as an opportunity to move in the direction most suitable for your business needs.

2. **Resource Scarcity:** As thousands of customers rush to migrate before the deadline, skilled TM consultants will become scarce.
3. **Strategic Upgrade:** Moving from LE-TRA to TM is not just a technical swap—it is a strategic upgrade. You move away from working in silos to unifying the supply chain. SAP TM provides you an effortless way to collaborate with external partners and lastly with SAP TM there is a landscape simplification, with transition from multiple Z codes for customization to standard configuration or flexible BRF + Rule.

Architecture and Deployment Options

You have four realistic paths to transition from LE TRA:

1. continue using LE-TRA temporarily, till 2030, however start from planning for transition.
2. move to **Basic TM** embedded in S/4HANA,
3. move to **Advanced SAP TM** (embedded or standalone), or
4. replace LE-TRA with a **third-party or SAP TM Public Cloud**

Deployment Models:

- **Embedded TM:** Runs directly inside the S/4HANA core.
 - *Best for:* Most shippers. Eliminates data redundancy (one Business Partner, one Material Master) and removes the need for OTR/DTR (Order/Delivery Transfer Requests) documents.
- **Sidecar (Side-by-Side) TM:** A separate TM instance connected to one or multiple ERPs.
 - *Best for:* High-volume scenarios, performance-critical 24/7 operations, or companies managing multiple **disparate** ERPs. (reference point :Do the distribution/transportation flows have high volumes?)
- In case volumes are low/medium, option #1 (embedded) can be chosen.
- For High volume driven distribution, option #2 (side-by-side) will be more suited.
- **Multiple ERP's:**
 - ERP instances which are not yet converted to S/4HANA must be integrated to SAP Transportation Management as part of S/4HANA.
 - There are multiple S/4HANA instances in a system landscape which must be integrated to SAP Transportation Management as part of S/4HANA.
 - In this case option #2 (side-by-side) is advised.)
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Licensing Tiers:

- **Basic TM:** The direct functional replacement for LE-TRA. Covers manual planning, execution, and output management. Often included in S/4HANA Enterprise Management licenses.
- **Advanced TM:** Required for automated VSR optimization, strategic freight procurement, and complex consolidation.

The right choice depends on:

- Your functional gaps vs. LE-TRA
- Your S/4HANA migration timeline
- Whether you want an **all-in-one** S/4 landscape or a **dedicated transportation system**

Your Options explained

1. Continue Running LE-TRA (Short to Medium Term)

You may continue using LE-TRA in ECC or S/4HANA under SAP's compatibility/extended-use agreements.

However, this is a bridge strategy only—SAP has defined end-of-maintenance dates. Use this time to assess your future TM architecture.

2. SAP Basic Transportation Management ("Basic TM") — Embedded in S/4HANA

Basic TM is included with S/4HANA and covers the **core LE-TRA footprint** for standard road transportation.

Best for: Companies with relatively simple, LE-TRA-like processes.

Characteristics:

- No additional license
- Supports basic planning, execution, and settlement
- Strong S/4-native integration
- Migration is typically a **re-implementation**, as data models are new
- Right fit if you want a cost-neutral move with modernized S/4 processes

3. SAP Transportation Management — Advanced (Full) TM

The full TM solution for organizations with complex transportation networks.

Deployment options:

- **Embedded in S/4HANA:** best for tight process integration with minimal interfaces
- **Standalone/side-car:** suitable for multi-ERP or global logistics hubs

Designed for:

- Multi-leg and multimodal planning
- Complex rate structures and charge management
- Global freight settlement
- Freight forwarding, carrier collaboration, capacity management
- Optimized routing and load consolidation (VSR optimizers)

Ideal if you have high transportation complexity or want an enterprise-grade TM platform.

4. Third-Party or Cloud TMS / Hybrid Architectures

You can replace LE-TRA with a partner TMS or a cloud-based logistics network (e.g., SaaS TMS, LBN-based solutions).

Why choose this path?

- Faster time-to-value
- Cloud-first operations
- Modern UX and strong collaboration capabilities
- Ideal for niche industries or fast-growing supply chains
- Integrates with ECC or S/4HANA via APIs

This can be attractive if you prefer a managed cloud solution with minimal on-prem complexity.

Choose Basic TM if:

- Your existing LE-TRA footprint is relatively standard
- Cost minimization is important
- Advanced planning and optimization are not required
- You want a straightforward migration during S/4 transformation

Choose Advanced TM if:

- You operate complex, high-volume, global transportation

- You need optimized routing, advanced rating, or multimodal planning
- You want a scalable TM backbone for multiple ERP systems
- Freight forwarding or complex scenarios are part of your business

Choose a Third-Party or Cloud TMS if:

- You prefer SaaS, rapid innovation, and network-based collaboration
- Your priority is visibility, carrier connectivity, or faster deployment
- You want minimal infrastructure and a cloud-first operating model
- Your planning needs are moderate but collaboration needs are high

Benefits of SAP TM versus LE TRA

1. Unifying the Supply Chain (Breaking Silos)

The LE-TRA Problem: In the legacy world, the Warehouse (WM/EWM) and Transportation (LE-TRA) system were speaking different language. 'LETRA' had shipment and EWM 'Transportation Units' which relied on complex interfaces to stay in sync.

The TM Basic Strategic Value: With the Advanced **Shipping & Receiving (ASR), Freight order** is the single point of truth where the Warehouse and Transportation teams work and updates are done in real-time.

- Strategic Win:* Elimination of "black holes" between the warehouse dock and the truck. Any update in the handling unit in EWM is directly updated in Freight Order instantly.

2. "Future-Proof" Scalability

The LE-TRA Problem: LE-TRA is a 30-year-old product and not future proof. Making any investments in the same can contribute to technical debt.

The TM Basic Strategic Value: TM Basic runs on the same technical architecture as "Advanced TM".

- Strategic Win:* You are building on the platform of the future. If your business grows and you suddenly need **VSR Optimization** or **Strategic Freight Procurement** (Advanced features), you do not need a whole new implementation project. You just need to buy a new licence and configure the new requirements.

3. Data-Driven Agility (Embedded Analytics)

The LE-TRA Problem: Reporting in LE-TRA is static or with table dumps. Data needs to be downloaded and then analysed using Excel or other tools. A simple

question on average freight spend per carrier, requires data extraction and then working on the data.

4. **The TM Basic Strategic Value:** TM Basic leverages **S/4HANA Embedded Analytics**.

- a. *Strategic Win:* In SAP TM , your analysis begins in the FIORI dashboard itself. You can also easily work understand the spend at granular level, like base charges, fuel surcharge, toll etc.

5. **Native Connectivity to the Logistics Ecosystem**

The LE-TRA Problem: Connecting to external carriers usually required building custom EDI connections (EDI 204/214) for each partner. This is expensive and brittle.

The TM Basic Strategic Value: With BN4L, TM can directly into the **SAP Business Network for Logistics (BN4L)** and easily collaborate with external partners.

- a. *Strategic Win:* You gain "Plug and Play" connectivity. With direct connection with your carrier, you can easily tender loads (even manually in Basic) and receive tracking updates from thousands of carriers who are already on the network, without building individual point-to-point connections.

6. **Land scape Simplification (Clean Core)**

The LE-TRA Problem: Over the last 20 years, most companies heavily customized LE-TRA with Z-code to make it work. This makes S/4HANA upgrades painful.

The TM Basic Strategic Value: TM Basic is feature-rich enough to replace most custom LE-TRA developments with **standard configuration** or flexible **BRF+ rules** (e.g., for printing output).

- a. *Strategic Win:* A "Clean Core." You reduce your custom code footprint, making future S/4HANA upgrades faster, cheaper, and less risky.

Our Offering

NAV IT supports your entire journey from the "Why" to the "How." Starting from assessing your current situation and requirement to enabling your teams to adopt the new change we are there for you through it all

- **Assessment:** We review your LE-TRA landscape and map it to S/4HANA TM, helping you choose the right license (Basic vs. Advanced) and deployment (Embedded vs. Sidecar).
- **Roadmap:** We design a transition plan that minimizes risk, aligning with your 2027/2030 deadlines.

- **Implementation:** Our experts handle the full build, from "Basic Shipping" setups to complex multi-modal networks with **SAP Business Network for Logistics (BN4L)** integration.
- **Support:** Post-go-live Hypercare and continuous improvement services.
- **Change management:** Our change management is embedded at each step of the project. We work with your team to understand and identify resistors and champions early. We know if the change comes from the team, adoption is quicker and smoother. Cause for us one size doesn't fit all, we do not believe in general user manuals to guide through the transition. Our communication and guidance is role specific, for user to relate with the training.
- Our ATTAIN methodology is a proprietary project framework blending Agile, Waterfall, and Activate approaches for efficient SAP implementations, structured across six phases: Identify, Prepare, Explore, Realize, Deploy, and Run