

**W.S.C. AD-HOC  
COMMITTEE  
ON: N.A. SERVICES  
IN THE  
UNITED STATES**

**REPORT TO:  
W.S.C.  
1990**

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Dale S. WSC 1990

**WSC Ad Hoc Committee on N.A. Service  
Report to the 1990 World Service Conference**

Dale S. WSC 1990

The following is the report from this committee to the 1990 annual meeting of the World Service Conference of Narcotics Anonymous. Since the last conference meeting, we've completed a fairly well-developed draft of 90% of *A Guide to Service in Narcotics Anonymous*, and have made significant changes in the former Twelve Principles of Service, now called the Twelve Concepts. The latest draft of the *Guide* is included under the same cover with this report. On page xxi, you'll find our schedule for completing, reviewing, and approving the *Guide*.

This year, the committee was chaired by Reuben Farris, who has served three years on the committee. Others on the committee were Mark Daley (four years on the committee), Ed Duquette (four years), Chuck Lehman (three years), Becky Meyer (one year plus), Debbie Ott (two years), Bob Rehmar (six years total), Leo Smothers (three years), David Taylor (one year plus), and Dave Tynes (four years). Mark Daley and Bob Rehmar resigned from the committee in February 1990, and were sorely missed in our two most recent sessions. We extend our appreciation to Messrs. Daley and Rehmar for their years of faithful service on the committee.

The committee had thirteen meetings this year. Two of those were meetings of small working groups, two were input sessions conducted with the world service leadership in Albuquerque, and nine were full committee meetings. The following lists our meetings:

**1989:** May 12-14. July 7-9. July 14-16 (input session). August 5-6 (small working group). August 18-20. September 15-17. October 27-29.  
November 10-12 (small working group). November 18-19. December 9-10.  
**1990:** January 26-28 (input session). February 16-18. March 3-4.

We've worked very hard this year, with meetings held on an average of every four weeks, but we are closer to completion than we've ever been before, with material in hand that's more substantial than anything we've previously presented to the conference. We are confident that we can complete the project within the framework described on page xxi.

**The Guide, so far**

Included with this report is the entire body of *Guide to Service* material completed to date by the committee, including:

- \* a brief introductory chapter;
- \* the Twelve Concepts;
- \* a chapter written especially for developing N.A. communities in new countries;

- \* chapters on the group, area, and region;
- \* a general chapter on national services; and,
- \* an addendum specifically focussed on American national services.

We've included all of it under one cover, to make it easier for you to see the full scope of the project.

Only one chapter of the *Guide* has yet to be completed: the chapter on world services. We'll talk later in this report about where the committee's discussions stand, so far, on some of the basic elements of world services. We intend to complete the chapter in the coming conference year.

### **Major differences between current structure and the Guide**

There are four major differences between the N.A. service structure as it operates today and the kind of structure described in *A Guide to Service*, foremost being the Twelve Concepts for N.A. Service. Too often we've fought in N.A. service over matters of participation, leadership, authority, accountability, and the right to be heard. The Twelve Concepts spell out, simply and directly, the kinds of things that should be considered in establishing the extent and limits of delegated service authority in Narcotics Anonymous. The new descriptions of N.A. service units, operations, and participants provided in the *Guide* spring from the Twelve Concepts. The concepts give clear, sharp philosophical focus to what N.A. service is all about, and comprise the most significant innovation offered by our committee.

This is not, however, to undercut the significance of the *structural* innovations offered in the *Guide*. The *Guide's* regional service committee, for instance, may look like an entirely new kind of service body to some people, functioning as a service resource pool for the region's areas and groups, rather than as a committee delivering direct services like phonelines, H&I panels, or P.I. coordination. In many places today, the region functions more like a "super area," with just as many subcommittees as you'll find at the area level, often duplicating services best delivered by the ASCs themselves. We've tried to provide greater clarity to the N.A. service model by describing area and regional committees as having distinctly different functions. The area committee, closest to where most direct local N.A. services are actually used, is defined as the body most capable of effectively administering those kinds of services. The regional committee, on the other hand, serves in the *Guide* model as a place where each individual area's experience in these services can be collected for easy access by all the other areas in the region. The regional assembly, conducted by the RSC, pools the experience of all the *groups* in the area, bringing it to bear on national service issues.

The third new *Guide to Service* feature is the division of national and world services. Today, organized N.A. service committees operate in over fourteen countries. The *Temporary Working Guide*, however, offers no guidance whatsoever for administering services on a national basis. All it offers is the "world" service

structure, which expends better than 85% of its budget and manpower on services to the fellowship in one particular country, the United States. The *Guide's* description of *national* services provides a framework within which well-developed national N.A. communities can take responsibility for their own internal affairs. In addition, the ad hoc committee is working on material describing the kind of *world-level* services which could address issues relevant to the entire fellowship, services able to focus energy on assisting young, developing N.A. communities in new countries.

The fourth major difference between today's N.A. service structure and the *Guide* is in the configuration of national services, and particularly the configuration of American national services. But first, you might ask, why has an ad hoc committee of the World Service Conference developed a specific design for national services in one particular country? The reason is that, when we began to look at a truly *world* level of service, we realized such a system would cut off 85% of the world's groups--those in the United States--from services administered by today's world services. If we were going to responsibly propose a distinct international level of service, we would have to come up with something alongside it capable of administering the American services *not* provided by N.A. World Services. At the same time, we developed simple, solid material describing national services in general, appropriate for use in any country, not just in the U.S.

The difference between the way *A Guide to Service* describes national services--and particularly American services--and the kind of system presently administering services in the U.S. can be summed up in one word: *focus*. Today's service system has three distinct service bodies whose defined responsibilities conflict with one another, and no one agency authorized to focus all of them together on a single set of coordinated goals. The *Guide* description of national services, on the other hand, offers a single national service board, able to clearly focus all its energy in administering national conference-established priorities between the conference's annual meetings.

All of these structural differences between today's N.A. services and those described in *A Guide to Service* are based on the foundation in clear, sound principle provided by the Twelve Concepts for N.A. Service. The absence of that sort of foundation in our services to date has not served us well.

### **Service without guiding principles--literature development**

The clearest and most significant example of how a lack of service principles has crippled our service abilities is in the area of N.A. literature development, and particularly in the development of our step-and-tradition book, *It Works: How and Why*. The World Service Conference Literature Committee began developing a first draft of the book immediately after the approval of N.A.'s Basic Text in 1982. The material published early in 1985 as the blue-covered review form of *It Works* was a good place to start from, perhaps, but nothing close to what our fellowship needed

in the final product. Shortly after it was released, the world service leadership approached the leaders of the literature committee with the idea of using a new process to complete the project: a small group of some of our most experienced trusted servants, chosen from each of the three service arms, would guide a professional writer in producing the book. The idea was accepted.

Such a process, however, was not sanctioned in the applicable guidelines of the day. The literature development guidelines in place at that time were long on complicated, binding regulations, but short on practical guiding principles. Rather than abide by those guidelines, world service leaders chose to take matters into their own hands and do what was necessary, in their judgment, to produce the best-quality book they could for our members. They did not consult the World Service Conference on all aspects of the project before proceeding.

The completed book was released to the fellowship in 1986, and was rejected by the conference in 1987. The book's quality was not particularly at issue; the white-covered approval form of *It Works* was rejected because the leadership had acted willfully in developing it. It seemed apparent that the overly-restrictive literature development guidelines were the source of the problem. But, rather than fix the guidelines, the World Service Conference made them even more restrictive.

The basic problem our trusted servants have encountered in developing literature for N.A. is the absence of clearly defined, universally recognized principles of leadership, delegation, and accountability. The literature committee had *laws*, but not the sort of *principles* that would allow trusted servants, once given a job, to effectively fulfill their responsibilities. The trusted servants involved in developing the white-covered approval form of *It Works* acted as if clear principles of leadership and delegation were already in place, before any such principles had been agreed upon by the World Service Conference. Today, eight years after the project began, Narcotics Anonymous still does not have a book on the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. Perhaps it's time to start looking at the kinds of service principles needed for our structure.

The Twelve Concepts spell out a series of sound principles about delegation, quite appropriate for application in the development of literature. The multitude of N.A. groups, clearly, cannot together write a book. They delegate that responsibility to a smaller, carefully selected group of qualified trusted servants; that group is charged to develop a book on behalf of N.A. as a whole. So that these trusted servants can get the book written, their responsibility is matched with the kind of authority needed--not more authority than is needed, nor less, but a carefully defined, balanced service authority.

To prevent confusion, only *one* group of trusted servants is assigned responsibility to develop the book. Everyone may be interested in the project, but if the book is to be completed, not "everyone" can take part in the decisions involved in creating it. After all, if *everybody* is responsible for the project, *nobody* is accountable for it.

Substantial authority must be delegated to the trusted servants responsible for this book, including the authority to exercise the good judgment for which they were chosen. Unexpected problems may arise, and unexpected questions may occur, leading these trusted servants to consult with those who've delegated them their authority. But, once we've given these trusted servants a job, and the authority needed to do it, we must trust the judgment *we* exercised in selecting them, and give them the leeway to determine for themselves which decisions fall within their own defined authority and which will be brought back for further guidance. Our only other option is to constantly look over their shoulders, questioning everything they do and forcing them to progress at a snail's pace, never sure of their authority to proceed.

The idea that *this* kind of delegation may be what is needed in order to develop literature and other services will frighten some of us; but, given careful selection of trusted servants, careful definition of the amount of authority being delegated them, and carefully crafted checks and balances in place in our service structure, we should be able to proceed confidently. This kind of understanding of service, spelled out point by point in the Twelve Concepts, by itself, will go a long way toward untangling the knots we've tied for ourselves in such areas as literature development. But more is needed, particularly at what we now know as the world level of service--we need *one* service structure, not three.

#### **A structure divided--how and why**

The Narcotics Anonymous service structure did not really begin to function as a whole until the late Seventies, when the World Service Conference first met. Prior to that time, our fellowship existed only as a loose association of groups, with no pressing need for a complex structure or extended organization. Our message was carried primarily by word of mouth, from one addict to another. We had five pamphlets, a little white booklet, and no basic text. Our World Service Board of Trustees was the only service body responsible for encouraging the development of the fellowship as a whole.

Our first service manual was called *The N.A. Tree*. Developed in the mid-Seventies, it was a very simple outline of how groups, areas, regions, and world services could work together. The primary service agency for N.A. as a whole would be the Board of Trustees, according to *The Tree*. They would meet throughout the year, working through their committees and the World Service Office, which they were to manage. The plan called for them to get together once a year with regional delegates at the World Service Conference. At the conference, trustee committees would meet with delegate panels to review each field of service, and the conference as a whole would give the board guidance for the coming year's work. The plan described in *The N.A. Tree* was put into limited effect when the World Service Conference first met in 1976, as a business meeting held in conjunction with N.A.'s

World Convention. In 1978 the conference met for the first time as an event in its own right, and has been meeting annually ever since.

The plan described in *The Tree* was simple, except that there wasn't any money. Our young fellowship was unable to fund the trustees, the World Service Office wasn't generating a penny beyond its immediate expenses, and the trustees could not continue funding the work from their own pockets. Because of the lack of resources, the *Tree* plan, with working trustee committees supported by a trustee-administered office, could not be effectively implemented at the time. The conference altered the plan in 1979, shifting primary responsibility for development of services affecting the whole fellowship from the non-functioning *trustee* committees to the new *conference* committees. Drawing on volunteers from across the United States, the conference committees set about creating new service materials on a wing and a prayer.

The trustees' responsibilities for administering the World Service Office were also diminished, though not by actual intent of the World Service Conference. In the course of printing up the 1979 conference-approved revision of the service manual, language describing the World Service Board's authority over the office was not included. In its place was a description of an independent WSO board, entirely responsible for office operations. The oddest part of that bit of history is that nobody—including the trustees—remarked upon the changes, at least at the time. And so by the end of the Seventies, N.A. had gone from having a single primary world service agency to a system with three separate arms.

Conflicts developed among those arms over a variety of issues, pitting the conference committees sometimes against the trustees, sometimes against the World Service Office board, sometimes against other conference committees, and sometimes against all of them all at once. Those conflicts and misunderstandings continue to this day. Our current service structure, and our current understanding of service itself, suffers from what a diagnostician might call *systemic dysfunction*. By its very design (or lack thereof), it is unable to do what must be done. The need for fundamental change, not superficial bandages, is indicated.

We have a confusing system. Each of our three world service arms—the World Service Conference, the World Service Office and its board of directors, and the World Service Board of Trustees—is responsible for various services, but oftentimes nobody knows *who* is responsible for *which* particular area of service. The amount of authority delegated to each body does not match the responsibilities assigned them. And the degree of accountability each of these bodies is held to is all out of proportion with the authority delegated them. One body—the group of *conference committees*--has large responsibilities for developing and maintaining services, and highly detailed guidelines describing the degree of accountability they are to be held to. Yet the conference committees have almost no authority when it comes to making decisions concerning allocation of the resources necessary for fulfilling those



services. A second body--the *World Service Office Board of Directors*--also has large responsibilities, but its fiscal authority far exceeds those responsibilities. WSO directors, despite their substantial responsibilities and authority, are the most distant from the World Service Conference of the three service arms. Only one member of the board--its chairperson--is a conference participant, and only three of its twelve members are directly elected by the conference. The third world service body, the *World Service Board of Trustees*, has only the most vaguely defined responsibilities, and no authority whatsoever. Yet all the trustees are voting members of the World Service Conference, and all are elected by the conference, as if the conference believed them to be in positions requiring substantial participation and accountability.

### The inherent potential for conflict

A whole slew of problems exist in our service system today, and straightening them out is not going to be as simple as making a few minor adjustments in the *Temporary Working Guide to our Service Structure*. Here are just a few of the conflicts, and potential conflicts, which arise from our current service arrangement.

**Between WSC committees and WSB committees.** Of the three service arms, the Board of Trustees has the fewest responsibilities in today's system. The *Temporary Working Guide* says only that "the purpose of the Board of Trustees is to contribute to the continuation and growth of Narcotics Anonymous and to serve as a primary resource for the Fellowship of N.A." Though that language rings with high purpose, it hasn't helped much in directing the trustees toward what they're actually supposed to do.

In its struggles to find an effective purpose for itself, the World Service Board of Trustees recently reactivated the trustee standing committees. Those trustee committees, you'll recall, were originally designed as the *primary* world service committees, but were replaced in 1979 by the newly-active World Service Conference committees. Revised trustee guidelines approved by the conference in 1984 restored the trustee committees, at least on paper, but it was not until 1988 that they actually began meeting again. The World Service Board currently has three active standing committees: internal/external affairs (I/E); policy, structure, training, and education (PST&E); and literature review.

The problem is, the areas of responsibility now being addressed by these three committees have, since 1979, been addressed by conference committees. Therein lies the potential for conflict. If the WSC Public Information Committee is responsible for developing an active, effective public relations policy for N.A., what can the trustee I/E committee do in that area? The conference already has a policy committee; it has an ad hoc committee examining the service structure; and the four standing conference committees (P.I., H&I, literature, and policy) already have responsibility for training and educating members of local service committees in

each conference committee's area of expertise. What, then, does the trustee PST&E committee do? The trustee literature review committee can *review* the WSC Literature Committee's work--but can the trustees *revise* it, or write new material themselves?

**WSC Administrative Committee.** "The *only* thing I'm sure of," one conference chairperson has said, "is that I have to chair the meeting in April." The WSC Administrative Committee is asked to make a lot of decisions in the course of the conference work-year, yet has very little in the way of clear, specifically defined authority. It's certain from the *Temporary Working Guide* that the administrative committee is responsible to manage the budget for conference committees. But is it also supposed to administer the World Service Board of Trustees budget, as it currently does? If so, doesn't that put the conference administrative committee in a position of authority over the WSB?

And what of the fiscal decisions made at the World Service Office regarding financial and personnel support for conference activities--who coordinates committee needs with office resources? No one; and certainly not the WSC Administrative Committee. While the conference literature committee, for instance, is held responsible to develop new books and pamphlets for our fellowship, the fiscal and personnel resources necessary for actually doing so lie with the World Service Office, completely out of their hands. No single body in our current structure has the authority necessary to match the one with the other.

**Coordinating public relations.** To accommodate the existence of three separate service arms in P.I. decision-making, a contingency plan has been developed. The plan provides that whenever a significant contact is received from the media, a professional organization, or some other agency, the leaders of all three arms are to be notified so that they can agree on a response. Yet the communication and coordination necessary to make the plan work have not occurred. The result has been, on the one hand, an unwillingness to push forward vigorously in public relations, or, on the other, one service arm pushing forward too vigorously on its own without adequate authority to do so.

**Coordinating international development.** With the expansion of international development activities over the past year, new conflicts have arisen between the three arms of world service, particularly when trips outside the United States have been organized. The questions have been, who goes? What do they do when they get there? Why? Who pays for it? And, again, with three separate service arms, even communications concerning these questions have been difficult, not to mention the difficulty in establishing priorities for such visits. No single point of decision for such issues exists; no one body in the current model is capable of coordinating priorities.

**The election process.** Today, the conference has no effective means of getting to know everyone nominated for service positions; voting participants are sometimes left to go only on hearsay when electing committee chairs, conference officers, and trustees. The elections themselves further highlight the imbalance in our current service system: those in the most responsible positions require the least support from the World Service Conference in order to be elected, and those with the fewest responsibilities require the largest margin for election.

The directors of the World Service Office have what some consider to be the most substantial responsibilities of any world-level trusted servants: they hold the legal rights to our fellowship's name and literature, including the Basic Text, and are responsible to publish and distribute our books and pamphlets. The WSO board also has hefty fiscal authority: complete control of all literature sales income, amounting to about \$5-million this year, twenty times the amount contributed to the World Service Conference in 1989. Yet the large majority of members of the WSO Board of Directors--nine out of twelve--are elected by the board itself, not by the World Service Conference, to three-year terms. The three conference-elected directors serve only one-year terms.

The World Service Board of Trustees is in quite a different situation. As we've noted already, it has no specific responsibilities, yet the entire membership of the WSB is elected directly by the conference. In order to serve on this board, trustee candidates must receive the approval of two-thirds of all voting conference participants. This, when compared with the election requirements placed on the WSO directors, seems imbalanced.

**No single point of decision.** In our current world service system, conference committees are left, for the most part, to establish their own priorities, or to establish no priorities at all; there is no single body with the authority to coordinate, on behalf of the conference, the overall priorities of our world services. One of the results of this situation has been the WSC Policy Committee's lack of direction and low level of productivity. The only project left on its agenda, the development of guidelines for the seating of new regions, is one the committee thought up for itself a few years ago, yet which the committee has consistently been unable to come to agreement on.

The World Service Conference has not seen fit to redirect the policy committee or to disband it. The Joint Administrative Committee, established in 1986, has nominal responsibility for coordinating the various individual conference committees, but no explicit authority to redirect a committee.

The WSC Policy Committee has received next to no coordination from either the WSC itself or the JAC in recent years, and has little internal sense of direction. It is left open for exploitation as a lobbying ground, serving not the interests of the fellowship as a whole but those of the regions who can afford to pay someone's way to the committee's meetings. The same situation--or the potential for such a

situation--exists, to a greater or lesser degree, in all the conference committees, not just the policy committee.

### **Unified, coordinated services**

Today, Narcotics Anonymous has no single, central agency for prioritizing, coordinating decision-making, or cooperatively determining the need for resource allocation throughout its world service system. The result has been the development of very little in the way of actual services. We need coherency in our service administration, and what the committee offers in the chapter on national services and the addendum, "National Services in the United States," is a unified service system which provides such coherency. The *Guide* describes a model wherein priorities for *all* national services are determined by the conference; allocation of resources for *all* national service projects is coordinated by a single national service board; *all* national service resources are available to high priority projects. A *single* point of decision and accountability is clearly defined for service responsibilities--not three.

The service model described in the *Guide* eliminates the current potential for conflict between the conference committees and trustee committees in service development; between the three current service arms in developing our public relations and international development policies; and between the WSC Administrative Committee, the World Service Board of Trustees, and the World Service Office in matters of resource allocation and budget management--it accomplishes all this by creating a single active service board. Each National Service Board committee or subsidiary corporation would be the only body at the national level with responsibility for developing and administering services in its area of expertise. Priorities and expenses for each would be balanced against one another by the whole board. Through the screening provided by the *Guide's* conference nominations panel, we would be better assured of having qualified service candidates to select from in choosing trusted servants, and all but two members of the single board--those two trustees filling the NSB seats specially reserved for nonaddicts--would be elected directly by the conference.

A single point of decision and accountability, clearly defined for each responsibility, is necessary for effective, coherent service administration. The Twelve Concepts and *A Guide for Service* provide the theoretical and practical means for such administration, particularly at the national level. But national service is only one part of the structure described in the *Guide*; what about local services?

### **The Guide and the fellowship's grassroots**

In the course of our fellowship's growth, some basic problems have developed in the delivery of local services. Our committee has identified a few of them, and has

incorporated solutions to those problems into the *Guide to Service* chapters on the group, area, and region.

**The ultimate authority for N.A. services.** In the First Concept, we talk about both the responsibility and the authority for N.A. services--the responsibility to fund the service structure, and the authority to elect delegates to serve in the structure. Today, that kind of responsibility and authority resides in the regional committees, not in the N.A. groups. Our "fund flow" system of passing surplus funds on from the group, to the area, to the region, to the World Service Conference, creates a situation wherein the regional committees are almost exclusively in control of how well the conference is funded, and, hence, what projects it is able to undertake. And the election of RSRs by regional committees means that, in practice if not in theory, the RSCs, not the groups, control the majority of conference participants.

*A Guide to Service* proposes two specific measures to remove that kind of responsibility and authority from the regional committees and restore it to the N.A. groups. First, it recommends that group surplus funds--the original source of most service contributions in N.A.--be divided up by each N.A. group itself, as each N.A. group sees fit, and contributed directly to the area committee, the regional committee, and national services. Second, as we noted earlier in this report, the *Guide* establishes regional assemblies, attended by representatives of all the groups in each geographical territory, which elect conference delegates.

**The role of the group service representative.** In theory, today's GSR has great responsibility; in practice, though, group service representatives have only a limited role in our service structure. They show up at the area service committee, take notes, report back to their groups, and return to the ASC with their groups' comments. It's no wonder that, according to our own experience and what we hear from others, many if not most GSRs are elected with about six months clean and don't follow through on their full term of commitment.

*A Guide to Service* describes a new world of service, both for the N.A. group and for the group service representative. Narcotics Anonymous groups would be much more directly involved in N.A. services which directly affected all groups; proposals affecting the basic identity of the fellowship, and new N.A. books, would be submitted directly to all N.A. groups for approval. At the area level, GSRs would be considered area committee participants in their own right, delegated by the groups with the authority to take a responsible, substantive role in the committee's activities. The group, through its GSR, would be tied directly into the national service system through the annual regional assemblies; GSRs would not only discuss national service affairs face-to-face with their conference delegate, they would elect that delegate. All of this would call for more careful selection of GSRs than currently takes place, but the benefits in the quality of service and communication would more than make up for the extra effort, we believe.

**Areas and regions.** In today's service structure, there is no clear delineation between the responsibilities of the area committee and the regional committee. In many places, regions perform the same kinds of service as those fulfilled by their local areas, even though most direct services are best fulfilled by the area committee, closest to where those services will be used. The result, all too often, is that regional committees draw the people with the most experience in direct service administration away from the area committees, leaving the ASCs unable to adequately fulfill their responsibilities.

By clearly delineating between the roles of the ASC and the RSC, *A Guide to Service* allows for the kind of pooling of experience that serves all areas well in their direct service efforts, but leaves most of the people actually fulfilling those services in place at the area level.

### **National and world service division**

Today, organized N.A. service committees operate in Australia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, India, the Irish Republic, Israel, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Portugal, Spain, the United Kingdom, and perhaps elsewhere as well. Some of these national communities have only an area committee; others, a national region; three have organized their own national conferences or assemblies. But the *Temporary Working Guide*--created in 1983, when very few N.A. service committees had been organized outside North America--doesn't even mention national services, much less give them guidance. When these countries' *national* representatives take part in the World Service Conference, they find themselves on an equal footing with fifty-eight *local* U.S. representatives--the American RSRs--because the *Temporary Working Guide* does not account for national representation at the WSC. The *Temporary Working Guide* is not sufficient to meet the needs of our fellowship today, not to speak of our needs in the future.

Our fellowship's "world" service units were created when Narcotics Anonymous was an almost exclusively American phenomenon, when no separate national service system was needed in the United States. However, with N.A. communities now organized in over a dozen countries, it is not appropriate for those world service units to continue to spend the great majority of their time, money, and personnel resources on the N.A. Fellowship in the United States, as they do today. Nor is it appropriate for the American community to use our world service agencies to meet the internal needs other national communities must meet for themselves. We need to change the way we organize our world services.

The idea of dividing responsibility for specifically national services from those affecting the entire fellowship worldwide, and assigning those responsibilities to different levels of service, is not a new one. As early as September 1987, the proposal has been seen in publications such as the *Fellowship Report*. This committee took the idea one step further in its report to the conference last year,

and was met with encouragement by the gathered RSRs, particularly those from regions outside the United States. *World services*, as this committee understands them, are those which affect us all, performed on behalf of the entire fellowship--services which, by their very nature, should not be administered by one nation alone.

The WSC Ad Hoc Committee on N.A. Service has not yet achieved a consensus on how an N.A. world service body should be configured, but we have agreed on the general aims such a body would pursue. First, it would coordinate assistance for emerging N.A. communities, either by linking those young communities with more mature ones, by coordinating development workshops, or by making translation and production services for N.A. literature available to those communities not capable of supporting their own. Second, as the agency charged with holding N.A.'s registered trademarks and copyrights in trust for the entire fellowship, it would safeguard the integrity of the N.A. message, both in the course of reviewing translations of existing N.A. materials, and in reviewing new materials developed by autonomous national communities. And third, it would serve as a liaison between N.A. as a whole and other international organizations, whether they be professional, voluntary, business, government, or press agencies.

Our committee is also agreed on a proposition designed to protect our fellowship's identity: "Any proposed change in our fellowship's name, Narcotics Anonymous, or in N.A.'s Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, or Twelve Concepts for Service must first be approved by a three-quarters majority of all N.A. groups registered with all of N.A.'s various national service offices." This provision would be included in whatever world service charter is developed in conjunction with future materials.

The primary difficulty we've had in agreeing on what kind of structure to recommend for world service is the fact that, today, the American N.A. community is far more developed than any other national community. Could we set up an international board to administer services on behalf of the entire fellowship worldwide, fill that board with experienced N.A. leaders, and have any greater than token representation on that board from any other community than the United States? And, regardless of being expressly established to serve the worldwide fellowship, wouldn't almost all of such a board's financial resources be provided, at least for the foreseeable future, by the American N.A. community? We've considered two options:

- 1) drawing the board with equal numbers from each country with a national service structure, depending on principles to guide the board toward the right course of action; or,
- 2) drawing members proportionately from each national community, based on the number of members or groups in each country, creating a strong American presence on the board until other national communities develop further.

We've also considered the idea of continuing to support a service conference composed of representatives from *regions* worldwide, meeting every two years to

provide guidance to a single service board and office for the entire fellowship. This conference, however, would have a separate *section* meeting once a year, composed only of American representatives and dealing only with American services, providing guidance to the board on their American activities. No one on the committee sees this as a long-term solution to our problems, but it is seen by some as a viable plan that could be put into action in the short run, until the fellowship outside the U.S. is developed to the point where it can take an equal partnership role in a more completely distinct world service structure.

### Conclusion

The service structure we have today has developed haphazardly. Each year, changes have been implemented in the structure without any long-term vision in mind--and the structure shows it. Our current service manual, the *Temporary Working Guide to our Service Structure*, was offered seven years ago as a transitional source of direction, and was not expected even then to meet our need for a firm, all-encompassing service framework. Our committee has been six years in developing *A Guide to Service for Narcotics Anonymous*. After releasing two earlier, less comprehensive drafts--one in 1985, another in 1987--the committee has now developed material based on a realistic assessment of the needs of our growing, worldwide fellowship, offering sound, consistent, principled solutions to our developmental problems.

There is one point, however, which needs to be made crystal clear: we are *not* proposing any of this material for approval at this year's World Service Conference meeting--not the Twelve Concepts, not the chapter on the group as it appears here, not *anything*--and we will stand unanimously against any proposal to do so at this time. The work, even on the drafts presented with this report, is not yet complete.

In the coming conference year, and in the year following that, we plan to conduct a series of multi-regional workshops. At those workshops, we will present the current material and listen to what the N.A. membership has to say about it. We will incorporate members' responses into final drafts of the Twelve Concepts and the remainder of the *Guide*, and seek additional review periods for those final drafts. Without that kind of lengthy, thorough, fellowshipwide review of a project of this magnitude, none of us on the committee or in the conference itself can responsibly suggest that the material is ready for implementation.

We welcome your comments on the work of this committee to date, and look forward in the coming year to meeting those of you interested in the project but unable to attend WSC'90. Until then, Godspeed to us all.

In service to Narcotics Anonymous,  
WSC Ad Hoc Committee on N.A. Service



<b>Completion and approval plan</b>
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- March 1990** .....distribution of *Guide* draft, less world service chapter
- April 1990** .....*World Service Conference annual meeting*
- May 1990**  
**through April 1991** .....complete world service chapter;  
 resolve other topics noted for additional attention (see  
 pages xxii through xxiv, immediately following);  
 encourage fellowshipwide review of the *Guide*,  
 including the Twelve Concepts;  
 multi-regional workshops
- April 1991** .....*World Service Conference annual meeting*:  
 approval form of Twelve Concepts for N.A. Service  
 released for twelve-month review period
- May-September 1991** .....continued review and comment on *Guide*;  
 make necessary adaptations to finish the *Guide*;  
 develop plan for transition to *Guide* model for national  
 and world services
- September 1991** .....approval form of *A Guide to Service in N.A.* released for  
 eighteen-month review period;  
 draft transition plan released for six-month review  
 period
- April 1992** .....*World Service Conference annual meeting*:  
 approval sought for Twelve Concepts;  
 straw poll taken on *A Guide to Service*;  
 approval form of transition plan released for twelve-  
 month review period
- April 1993** .....*World Service Conference annual meeting*:  
 approval sought for *A Guide to Service in Narcotics*  
*Anonymous*, and the transition plan;  
 if approved, both the *Guide* and the transition plan  
 would be implemented immediately

### Topics for further attention

In addition to the material describing world service arrangements, four other unresolved matters will be carried over from this conference year's work to the next:

1. Delegate recognition
2. Administration of services in large multi-area cities
3. Status of the proposed National Magazine Corporation
4. Special workers

#### **Regional division, state assemblies, and delegate recognition**

Questions related to the division of existing regions and the recognition of new conference delegates have been troubling us for some time now. When the N.A. service structure was first forming, it was recommended that regional or state committees be developed, mostly for the purpose of electing delegates to the new World Service Conference. Since then, new regions have been created out of existing ones in the United States for a variety of reasons--some good, some not so good--and new regions continue to be created every year.

In many countries, this situation will not create a major problem, since it's likely that national services will draw in many places directly from the area level for conference delegates. But in the U.S., where multi-area regions are a necessity, the continued proliferation of regions could create substantial problems, especially if delegates are selected at regionally-organized assemblies.

Two possible solutions have occurred to us. The first is to wipe clean the current U.S. regional slate. New regions would be organized on a state-by-state basis, except in the most heavily-populated or geographically farthest-flung states. This would give each state a service unit capable of interacting on behalf of the fellowship with state agencies and voluntary organizations. It would also limit the number of conference delegates to a viable number.

The other possible solution is that, rather than organize assemblies on a regional basis, we recommend they be organized in each state, regardless of how many regions may serve the various portions of any given state. The only problem the national conference would have to consider, then, would be that of *delegate* recognition, not *regional* recognition.

Both ideas have a number of serious complications yet to be resolved by the WSC Ad Hoc Committee on N.A. Service. Our final proposal in this matter may represent a variant of one of the above proposals, something entirely different from either of them, or a renewed commitment to the material currently appearing in the draft *Guide to Service*. We will keep you informed as our discussions progress.

### **Metropolitan services**

The provision of direct services--H&I panel coordination, phoneline administration, public information activities, and the like--can be handled fairly simply in smaller cities by a single area service committee. But in larger cities, particularly in the U.S., we've encountered problems when local N.A. communities have grown beyond the point where a single ASC can accommodate all its GSRs. The point is, when a single city is served by more than one area committee, how are services affecting the *entire* N.A. community in that city coordinated in an effective, equitable way?

In the conference year prior to the one now concluding, this committee held a "brainstorming" session with trusted servants from cities in just such circumstances. This conference year, we've talked much about a variety of tools for coordinating metropolitan direct services, but have not yet resolved on a single set of proposals for inclusion in *A Guide to Service*.

In the coming year, we plan to again consult directly with service committees in large metropolitan cities, sharing with them the ideas we've had so far, and learning from them what they have found to be most effective. The material we are able to develop from those contacts, and from our subsequent discussions, will be included in the review form of the *Guide*.

### **National Magazine Corporation status**

In Addendum 5 of the *Guide*, "National Services in the United States," we've described three subsidiary corporations which would be attached to the U.S. National Service Board: the National Service Office Corporation, the National Convention Corporation, and the National Magazine Corporation. The committee as a whole is quite clear in its understanding of the legal and administrative benefits of managing the NSO and the national convention through sub-corporations. A substantial minority of the committee, however, is not in such clear agreement concerning the need for a National Magazine Corporation.

Those in support of a separate sub-corporation for the magazine cited their perception of the need to safeguard both the administrative and editorial integrity of the fellowship's monthly journal. The business skills and organization required for a monthly periodical, they said, differed so substantially from those required for other National Service Board activities that a distinct sub-corporation should be established to administer the magazine's affairs. And the different kinds of judgment required to manage the National Service Office and the national magazine, they thought, would make it difficult for an NSO Magazine Department, responsible to NSO management, to pursue the innovative tracks in editorial development necessary to produce a lively, interesting, readable publication.

Those not in support of a separate sub-corporation for the magazine thought that the creation of such an entity would needlessly duplicate administrative structures already projected for the National Service Office. If a skilled editorial staff is hired

for the magazine, and if individuals with appropriate skills and background are appointed to an NSB Magazine Committee to guide editorial development, the national magazine should have all the creative integrity it needs to develop a quality periodical for our members.

The committee will look again in the coming year at whether or not the national magazine should be managed by a separate sub-corporation of the National Service Board.

### **The role of special workers**

Conspicuously absent in the current drafts of the Twelve Concepts and *A Guide to Service* are references to special workers and their role in our service structure. This omission warrants further explanation, especially since the first draft of the Twelve Principles of Service mentioned them repeatedly.

After hearing input from other world-level trusted servants at a session in Albuquerque, New Mexico, the ad hoc committee was unable to reach any sort of consensus on the appropriate role of the special worker in the N.A. service structure, particularly with regard to decision-making. The basic question we are faced with is, do the Twelve Concepts imply that special workers with significant responsibilities ought to take part in the decision-making process at their level of service, or does the nature of the employer/employee relationship preclude such participation? Discussions of this issue within the WSC Ad Hoc Committee on N.A. Service have run the gamut of possibilities, from full participation of special workers as voting conference participants, to *no* participation whatsoever in decision-making processes, to allowing a degree of participation equivalent in some way to the degree of responsibility each special worker is charged with, to simply leaving the decision to the best judgment of each individual service committee faced with the issue.

Discussions have been extensive, but the committee has still been unable to reach a consensus all of its members could support. Since our current work on *A Guide to Service* and the Twelve Concepts stands independent of any decision to be made regarding the role of special workers, all references to special workers have been dropped from the drafts for the time being.

We hope to gain whatever additional guidance may be available on this subject from the World Service Conference and from the fellowship at large. However, the committee expects that we will all have to spend more time actually utilizing special workers, gaining more experience and perspective as we go, before a conclusion to this discussion will be possible.