

**WSC Ad Hoc Committee on N.A. Service
Report to the 1991 World Service
Conference**

The following is our report to the 1991 annual meeting of the World Service Conference of Narcotics Anonymous. Since the last conference, we held six multi-regional workshops on our work, and have made significant changes to the Twelve Concepts for N.A. Service. As a result of our discussions and the input we have received at the multi-regional workshops, we have also revised our schedule for the completion of the *Guide*.

This year, the committee was chaired by Reuben Farris, who has served four years on the committee. Others on the committee were Chuck Lehman (four years on the committee), Dave Tynes (five years), Debbie Ott (three years), Becky Meyer (two years plus), David Taylor (two years plus), Walter Johnson (one year), Jon Thompson (one year), and Mario Tesoriero (one year). David Taylor and Mario Tesoriero attended one meeting each. During the rest of the year, they were corresponding members of the committee. Leo Smothers, a member of our committee for three years, stepped down after last year's conference. We extend our appreciation for his years of dedication to our work.

The committee held seven meetings and six multi-regional workshops this year. Six of the seven committee meetings were held in Van Nuys, and one was held in Arlington during the first quarterly meeting of the conference. The following lists our meetings and workshops: **(Note: The dates for which no location is listed represent committee meetings held in Van Nuys.)**

1990: June 16-17, July 13-15 (Arlington), August 24-26 (Philadelphia Workshop), September 7-9 (Columbus Workshop), September 14-16 (Seattle Workshop), September 21-23 (Atlanta Workshop), October 5-7 (Kansas City Workshop), October 12-14, October 26-28 (Southern California Workshop), November 17-18, December 8-9.

1991: January 12-13, March 22-24.

We have worked very hard this year. The workshops and the input received have given us much helpful guidance in revising the Twelve Concepts. This has been a year for us to reconsider some of our previous decisions, and to reaffirm some others.

Progress of our work

During this past year, we have received a considerable amount of input on the Spring '90 edition of *A Guide to Service in Narcotics Anonymous*, including the Twelve Concepts. In keeping with the schedule contained in last year's version, we focused primarily on the Twelve Concepts. Our task was to **consider** the input we've received and prepare the approval version of the concepts. In doing so, we quickly saw that a fairly major revision was in order. This revision would not only affect the essays accompanying the concepts, but the wording and order

of the concepts themselves. We realized that, with those changes, we could not in good conscience release this draft as the approval version. We felt strongly that the fellowship needed to have another chance to review the Twelve Concepts and provide input prior to our **preparing** the approval form. As a result, we are releasing the Twelve Concepts for fellowship review and comment until September 1, 1991. After that date, we will **consider** in the input received and **prepare** the approval version for the January 1992 *Conference Agenda Report* for action at the 1992 World Service Conference.

Other sections of the *Guide* that we discussed at some length included the regional and world chapters, and the issue of metro-services. We will discuss the world services chapter later in this report. We have not as yet had the opportunity to address the input on the group, area, and national sections of the *Guide*.

Some of our discussions about regional service centered on regional assemblies, the need for some regions to have subcommittees, and specific terminology for trusted servants at the area and regional level. As a result of the input received, we realized that the Spring 1990 chapter appears to discourage regions from having subcommittees. We still strongly believe that regional committees should be essentially a forum for the exchange of information by the various areas within that region. However, there are instances where subcommittees would have to exist on a regional level to deal with the coordination of state or provincial relations and, in some cases, to offer direct services where the delivery of such services may not be handled by area subcommittees. Another example not previously mentioned is that of services being provided in rural and geographically isolated territories. In those cases, a regional outreach committee may need to be formed to provide services that the member-areas may not be able to provide.

Our discussions regarding terminology for trusted servants at the regional level focused on the input received from the workshops and other sources, which stated that many of the participants at the workshops and other respondents were either confused about the terminology or objected to the similarity between these terms and those used by other fellowships. **We will continue to review the appropriateness of the terminology used in our future discussions regarding this section.**

On the topic of **delegate recognition by a national conference**, we held to our original thought of having geopolitical boundaries. **For example, it would be possible to form** state assemblies and state committees **in the U.S.**, with these entities having the same general purpose as the regional level of service described in the current draft of the *Guide*. In regard to the recognition of conference delegates, one option discussed was that each state would have one delegate, and those states which have very large numbers of groups would have more than one conference delegate. We felt that the manner of determining which states would qualify for additional delegates, and how many delegates they may be entitled to, would be determined by the **American national** conference. **However, these discussions were of a preliminary nature. We will need to have extensive discussion on this and other areas before completing the regional chapter.**

In discussing the revisions to **this** chapter, we talked at some length about metro or shared services. We discussed the idea that, if state assemblies and committees were to be formed, then metropolitan areas could go ahead and form "regions" for the sole purpose of delivering direct services citywide. However, we still do not feel that we have sufficient information to provide answers to those areas and regions that are experiencing difficulties in this area. Some of the questions that have come up include: How do you provide services in a metro area when there is more than one ASC? How do you deal with ASC meetings that have in excess of 60-100 GSRs present? How do you meet the needs of groups in such areas? The primary answer thus far has been that when N.A. grows in large areas, a split occurs. However, the way to coordinate services among all the areas involved has not been answered sufficiently. **We feel that the problem experienced by such areas is one of the major problems facing our service structure today, and will need to be focused on at some length.** As a result, we are proposing to have a workshop later in the **1991-1992 conference year**, and invite representatives from six or seven of these areas and regions to provide us with information. **Additionally, if you have any information that may be helpful to us in this area, please mail it to us in care of the WSO.**

World services

One of our tasks for this past year was the completion of this section of the *Guide*. However, as we started to address the world services chapter, we came up against some questions that we could not answer ourselves, questions that needed to be answered before we could proceed with our work. The primary questions were listed in the November 1990 *Fellowship Report* and the 1991 *Conference Agenda Report*. In this report we will list those questions again and discuss some of the difficulties we experienced in trying to answer them.

1. *What do we want world services to do?*

Some of our discussions included the purpose, function, and composition of various proposed world service bodies and their relationships to the proposed national entities as well as with each other. One major area of discussion about this topic that we were divided on is the function of the proposed World Service Assembly. Some of us held that the Assembly should be a sharing session, a place where national delegates can discuss with one another their experience in administering services in their respective countries. There were others of us who held that in addition to being a sharing session, the World Service Assembly should also be the body which provided direction and oversight to the World Service Board of Trustees. They held that if the World Service Assembly was a deliberative body as well as a sharing session, then they would have to meet more regularly than triennially to fulfill their function.

In other discussions, some committee members held that the new World Service Board of Trustees would be essentially a body holding philosophical discussions, while some members felt that world services had a responsibility to **actively** carry the message worldwide. When the discussions turned to the functions of a national/world service office, the committee ran into some of the same difficulties it faced in the past. One area was the responsibility of production

and sale of literature--is it the function of a national service office or a world service office? This brought up some aspects of the next question.

2. *What "control" is the U.S. fellowship willing to give up?*

In our discussions, we did not know whether the N.A. community in the U.S. would be willing to have the World Service Office control the publishing, and distribution of N.A. literature and therefore the control of the funding for the majority of world services, without having a significant presence in the World Service Assembly and on the World Service Board of Trustees. Would the American N.A. community be willing to be equal to other national movements? Or would the N.A. fellowship in the U.S. want a representation-by-population type of administration in world services? Would the American N.A. community still wish to oversee the process that maintains the integrity of the N.A. message during translation of existing literature or the development of new pieces of literature, **regardless of its origin**? Would the term "conference-approved" mean U.S.-approved or World Service Conference/Assembly-approved? Would the N.A. fellowship in the U.S. be willing to pay royalties for **the right to publish** literature?

We recognized that answers to these questions could only come from the WSC or the American N.A. community, and probably only after considerable discussion about their implications.

3. *What financial support is the U.S. fellowship willing to provide to emerging N.A. communities?*

In discussing the world services chapter, we reached consensus that one of the functions of the proposed world level of service should be the coordination of fellowship outreach to developing N.A. communities. We also felt that **some** national communities **may never** reach the point at which they could contribute financially at the same level as the U.S. The U.S. community **will** need to provide the **majority of the** funds necessary for development services, such as providing literature at reduced or no cost to emerging N.A. communities, coordinating development workshops, and assisting in the translation of literature, among others. We did not, however, know how to proceed in this area, as it has not been discussed at any length by the WSC or the fellowship.

4. *What do we all understand as "self-support?"*

This question arose out of discussions about "self-support" as implied by the Seventh Tradition. Does this tradition apply to the fellowship as a whole, including the service structure, or **only** to individual groups, areas, regions, and national communities? **Is each group, area, region, and national community supposed to fund itself only? Or, does this tradition just simply mean that N.A. at any level ought not accept contributions of any type from non-N.A. sources?**

5. *Should one N.A. community subsidize another?*

As we talked about "self-support," we began to discuss the propriety of subsidization of one N.A. community by another. Should an N.A. group subsidize--that is financially support--another N.A. group? What about areas, regions, and national entities? **Does the fulfillment of our primary purpose**

imply that we are supposed to subsidize one another to help carry the message? In some sections of the fellowship, it is generally held that non-financial support of an N.A. entity by another is acceptable, but that subsidization is not in keeping with the Seventh Tradition. What is the opinion of the WSC and the fellowship on this issue?

In discussing the previous questions, it soon became obvious to us that we needed to ask the following question:

6. *Is a structural change needed for the WSC, or merely a change in format?*

We have had lengthy discussions during the past few years about this section of the *Guide*, particularly at our November and December '89 meetings. Some of us felt that, until the N.A. community in the U.S. forms a national conference, a structural change for the WSC would be unnecessary, and that a **change in the format of the agenda, separating U.S.-specific and non-U.S.-specific issues for deliberation**, would be sufficient. Others felt that we needed to write a world services section that would show how a new structure may be configured with a separate U.S. national conference. During our meetings this past year, when our discussions focused on the world services chapter, this same question came up. And once again, we could not arrive at a consensus. Therefore, we ask the conference to discuss this, and the other questions listed above, to help us complete our work on this chapter. We are hopeful that the International Development Forum hosted by the World Service Board of Trustees will also provide some much needed input on these questions.

Another major reason that we did not complete the world services section is related to the Twelve Concepts. Many of us felt that until the fellowship **made a decision through the WSC** about the ideas contained in the concepts--such as delegation, single point of decision, and final group authority--we would only be guessing about the type of structural arrangement the fellowship wants implemented at both the national and world levels of service.

Next year's schedule

The following list, presented here in its order of priority, contains our tasks for the next conference year:

1. Complete the approval version of Twelve Concepts for N.A. Service, in time for conference action at WSC 1992.
2. **Continue** our work on metropolitan services.
2. **Continue our work on** the approval version of the group, area, and region chapters of the *Guide*.

We feel very strongly about this list of priorities. We hold that the Twelve Concepts are the foundation upon which the Guide is based. As a result, it is extremely difficult, perhaps even presumptuous, to continue working on the Guide until the fellowship has made a decision about the Concepts. Additionally, we feel that the issues surrounding metro services have a great impact on the area and regional chapters.

In order to accomplish these tasks, we are proposing to have seven meetings. **These meetings include two meetings with the World Service Board of Trustees and the WSO Board of Directors to discuss the Twelve Concepts, a workshop on metropolitan services, and an open forum at the first WSC quarterly meeting.**

We do not, at this time, feel that we can **continue our work** on the national and world services chapters until there is a considerable amount of discussion on the questions raised in the report, and the conference acts on the Twelve Concepts in 1992. At that time, those chapters as well as a transition plan can be completed.

Conclusion

Our fellowship is undergoing incredible growth inside and outside of the U.S., and our service structure is experiencing corresponding growing pains. We see an explosion of N.A. groups in urban settings, with nothing in print to guide them in their growth. We have N.A. communities with trustees but no area level of service. Various national and continental N.A. communities are engaging in discussions vital to their growth and development, once again with no written guidance. Should we be proactive or reactive in our approach to these issues? Should we present guidance to these entities, or follow the old attitude of "Go ahead and do it, and let us know how it turns out?" Should we write a guide for our service structure that is visionary and takes into account these problems, or a guide that reflects a historical perspective, written after the struggles have occurred? We ask the conference to consider these questions in its deliberations about our work.

The Twelve Concepts for N.A. Service are in their final review stage. We plan to start working on the approval version at our September 1991 meeting. Please provide any and all input on the Concepts by September 1, 1991. We are hopeful that the level of interest we have witnessed and the nature of the comments and input we have received will continue.

We look forward to meeting you at the annual meeting in April, where we will be able to discuss the progress of our work, **and the questions raised in this report**, in a more detailed manner. We wish to take this opportunity to thank the conference for the confidence it has shown in allowing us to continue our work through completion.

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