



Conference Report

World Service Translations Committee

Our primary goal is that every local NA community should have at least one or several pamphlets translated so that addicts can recover with our NA message in their own language.

Greetings to all. As usual, the WS Translations Committee has been fully occupied with work since the conference in Greensboro, North Carolina. But we were quite busy during the conference week, too. Besides having two business meetings with the full committee, we met with representatives of many language groups: Italy, Israel, Sweden, German-speaking, Brazil, Portugal, and the French-speaking communities, as well as the Asian Pacific Forum delegates. During the Pan American Forum meeting, the representatives from all Spanish-speaking communities reaffirmed that the centrally coordinated translation process for Spanish publications has been most successful. So, when the conference ended, most of us were really tired and worn out, facing long travel and substantial jet lag and looking forward to getting home, something most of you know all too well.

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We have made contact with local members for two new languages: Maltese and Punjabi. Malta is a group of islands south of Italy in the Mediterranean Sea, and Punjabi is the language of Punjab, a state in Northern India on the border with Pakistan.

When it comes to current production, we have several new items available (hot off the press!!): the Castilian version of the NA video, Spanish 10-second PSAs, nine Finnish IPs, the Hebrew IP 1 and the Basic Text, IP 15 and *An Introductory Guide to Narcotics Anonymous* in French, IP 24 in Brazilian, and seven Swedish IPs. All in all, the WSO is now offering over 210 published translated items. (In February 1996, we reported 186 items.)

We also have a lot of work in progress, and here are the highlights: We are assisting the LTCs working on *An Introductory Guide to Narcotics Anonymous* in Bengali, Hindi, Brazilian, Finnish, Swedish, and Nederlands. Several other language groups have numerous IPs going into production, among them are: Nederlands, Turkish, and Italian. There is also draft revision work on book translations in progress, i.e., the Italian Basic Text Book One, *Just For Today* in French, and the Spanish *It Works: How and Why*. Just recently, the Swedish LTC informed us that they have almost completed their Basic Text translation; also, the Norwegian LTC is working on their translation of the book.

Several conceptual evaluations of IP 1 translations are due and need to be organized: Greek, Japanese, Amharic, Farsi, and Bahasa Melayu. Recently we asked a few experienced NA members in Asia to assist us in locating professional evaluators for languages in Asia. This is to plan ahead, because we are aware of translation work going on in Korean, Japanese, Thai, Mandarin, Bahasa Melayu, Vietnamese, Maori, and Tagalog. One of the fastest growing NA translation-hubs appears to be India and its neighbors, with ongoing work in seven languages (Hindi, Bengali, Manipuri, Punjabi, Oriya, Nepali, and Urdu).

As we are approaching the end of the year, the NA message is being carried to farther reaches than we would ever have imagined: NA literature translations are in progress in forty-one different languages, three more languages than in October of last year; in fact, the number has doubled in three years (we had twenty-one languages in February 1993). The number of individual literature items (projects) increased to 309, which is a ten percent increase from 277 in October 1995; (in other words, it's almost triple that of the 112 items we had on our work list in February '93).

The Translations Process: Innovations and Changes to Work Smarter

The evaluation process has not been as effective as we hoped. For instance, we've struggled with making sense of contradictory remarks without having sufficient explanations on the item. We had to look at our side of the process, as well as the people we had been using for the work. It became obvious that our instructions were not clear enough, the presentation of the format wasn't user-friendly for our evaluators, and we needed to explain and illustrate what exactly we wanted by using samples and examples. When we incorporated all revisions, we ended up with a much more streamlined and clarified evaluation "tool set," which we're getting ready to test on several upcoming evaluations. On the other side of the equation, we're improving our process for checking the qualifications of the evaluators (i.e., professionals). This means we set a basic standard to identify qualified professionals who will work with experienced NA members.

The translation process-related information material for LTCs is in the editing stage. Our plan is to give it a "newsletter" lay-out and have several issues, grouping frequently addressed topics Q&A-style together in each issue. As a result, anyone who is interested can gain a better picture of what exactly LTCs, WSTC, and WSO translations are doing-- or in a nutshell: what makes the translations process so resource intensive!

WSTC has also created a set of "tools" related to text content which will help local translation committees with words and phrases that are particularly challenging to translate. It is comprised of a terminology glossary form, along with a list of corresponding text and usage references, clear definitions, and explanations. Also included for referencing are two trustee bulletins: What is Addiction? and On Our Relationship with AA. We are currently finalizing a separate section that we hope will clarify "conceptual fidelity" in regard to translation work. These materials, as well as the "newsletter," will be open for input, revisions, and amendments to improve them.

Presently the auxiliary production for projects outside of our WSTC priority schedule extends to French, Spanish, Brazilian, and Portuguese. We will also notify the WSO BOD

once a year whether the language groups in that queue are still fulfilling the criteria to be eligible, and whether new languages may be added. To refresh your memory, the criteria to identify qualifying language groups are:

1. a successful translations process that has resulted in published translations of the NA message, including the recovery glossary and IP #1,
2. the successful translation of the Basic Text, Book One to the WSTC's satisfaction (published, or ready for publication),
3. an established working relationship with the WSTC/WSO,
4. a degree of continuity and committed membership within the LTC, and
5. a stable service structure with local internal checks and balances.

WSTC Members' Orientation--Helping the New Folks on the Committee

For years now, piles of papers containing tons of information were mailed to the new members of the WSTC. It was up to them to read these materials and to catch up on what was going on in the committee, while attempting to remain standing after this tsunami of undoubtedly crucial project information. Well, we figure that the WSTC has a one-year learning curve, and this method is somewhat ineffective. So, we tried something new this year by conducting an orientation session a day prior to the first meeting. It was designed primarily for the newer members of our committee to prepare them for their three-year term. We welcomed two trusted servants this year and three last year (more than half of our members are rather new!

During this session we discussed basic, yet relevant matters such as: what is the WSTC, the translations process, role of the WSTC members, scope of workload, our policy and internal guidelines, and WSTC vs. WSO staff responsibilities. Also in this session, the committee members and staff were introduced and the office structure, including functions of the teams, explained. Although we didn't have a formal evaluation, the outcome appears to have been quite positive and will probably become a standard procedure for us.

Amendment to "WSTC Internal Guidelines"

We have also been doing a little house-cleaning and added a vice chair section to our internal guidelines. The changes are to be inserted under the section titled "Committee," and we'll implement them immediately, if there are no objections from the conference. To comply with conference direction we are noting in this Conference Report the following changes or additions:

under the section titled:

2. 'Committee' insert item:

j. Elects, from one of the four appointed members, a chairperson and a vice chairperson who serves for the year.

and after section titled:

3. 'Chairperson'

insert additional section:

4. 'Vice Chairperson'

a) Assumes duties of chairperson whenever necessary.

- b) Assists chairperson in setting agenda for meetings.**
- c) Helps facilitate committee meetings, sorting and familiarizing committee with materials pertaining to the items on the agenda.**
- d) Assists chairperson in drafting reports to the fellowship.**
- e) Collaborates with chairperson and staff in resolving conflicts in between regular meetings of the WSTC.**
- f) Maintains regular contact with chairperson for progress reports on all projects.**
- g) Is contact person for orientation of newer members on committee.**

Travel and Events

One WSTC member also attended this year's European Conference and Convention, held in Lisbon, Portugal. There were two workshops about translations, as well as informal "face-to-face" meetings with people from various European NA communities. As usual, a lot of important information came out of these informal meetings. Another member of the committee made a stopover in Korea on his way from Southeast Asia to our September meeting. He was able to gather useful information on translations and NA Fellowship activity in Korea. One of the trustees assigned to the WSTC recently visited Russia on private business. Of course, he came back with new information on the meetings and fellowship developments in St. Petersburg.

Hellos and Good-Byes in the WSTC

After the WSC, Teresa Alves Mendes left us because her second term was completed, and on behalf of the WSTC, I would like to recognize her willingness to do service on the world service level. She was among the founding members of the WSTC in 1991 and has faithfully served our fellowship through this committee for two full terms. Her personality and experience will be missed, and we hope to see more of her again soon in some form of service to Narcotics Anonymous.

We welcome new members to the committee, Dora De La Serviere from Brasil and Françoise Hoffmann from Israel, and we anticipate that they will bring valuable experience to this committee. They have both been involved in translation work and other service in their local NA communities for years.

The WSTC says thank you as well to Bob MacFarlane, who guided the WSTC through the WSC this year as our acting chairperson. When we had our committee elections during WSC, I was elected as chairperson and Tata Montilla as vice chairperson for this year. After some upheaval within the committee leadership due to mid-year resignations in 1995, it seems that the committee again has stabilized.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the help I have received from the WSO translations staff in putting together this report.

In loving service,

Eddie Eriksen, chairperson

Tata Montilla, vice chairperson