# WORLD BOARD RESPONSE

# TO

# 2002 CONFERENCE AGENDA REPORT ON

# Regional Motion # 6

## Does the United States Fellowship Assembly have the right to meet here in Wichita? Do we have the authority to create a United States Service Conference?

The answer to both of these questions is a resounding
***YES, OF COURSE WE DO!***

The formation of a United States Service Conference is not a new idea. This is something has been talked about for many years in Narcotics Anonymous.

From the very start, when the World Service Conference (WSC) was created and began to meet once a year, the United States Regions used it as a national forum. Over the years as our Fellowship grew and expanded into other countries, the WSC extended it's scope and became a true world service body. Various methods were implemented by world services to prevent the US Regions from dominating the conference. This included not allowing the seating of any new US Regions, which continues to this day.

The creation of a new United States service entity was a part of the Resolution Group proposals back in 1996-1998 when the last round of sweeping changes transformed our service structure. These resolutions which were subsequently implemented by the Transition Group included: the dismantling of the Standing Committees of the World Service Conference (Public Information, Literature, Outreach, H&I, Finance etc.); the dissolving of the Board of Trustees along with the World Service Office Board of Directors; the combining of the WSC and WSO budgets into one unified budget under the control of the new World Board; the creation of the human resources panel and the world pool; all of these changes that the Resolution Group recommended were implemented, however, there was no United States service body formed. This left a gap in service delivery between our members and world services. The US Fellowship no longer had a place to address national issues.

In Europe, in 1984, Ireland and England joined together to form the European Conference of NA, which later became the European Delegates Meeting (EDM). There are over 30 Regions that make up the EDM today. In 1989 the Canadian Regions joined together to form the Canadian Assembly of NA, or CANA. There is the Asia Pacific Forum of NA which formed in the early nineties, as well as the the Latin American Forum of NA, but there is still no national forum for the US Fellowship. Some of the zonal forums within the United States do function but they are disjointed while others are pretty much ineffective as service bodies, especially since the WSC went the two year conference cycle. None of these geographical forums were created by the WSC or world services. They were created by the Regions that make up that particular geographic area.

Finally, more recently, in the 2002 Conference Agenda Report the South Florida Region brought a motion asking NA World Services to facilitate the first meeting of a new Assembly of the United States Regions. Here is the World Board's recommendation from pages 24 and 25 of the 2002 Conference Agenda Report:

***"Rather than even entering into the discussion of this issue and it's history, our belief is that this should not be a responsibility of world services or a decision of the WSC...***
***...Other forums are zonal assemblies, none of which was created by the WSC. If the US regions wish this to happen, they should make that decision and decide how best to achieve it."***

**Motion 6: NA World Services shall organize, host, and facilitate the first meeting of a new Assembly of United States Regions in 2005. This assembly shall be a three day event conducted in the most cost efficient, centrally located city available in the United States so as to encourage as many regions within the United States as possible to attend and participate. This assembly shall be a one-time responsibility of NA World Services. Each region will be responsible for the cost of room nights and food for their respective participants as well as transportation to and from the assembly. Included in the agenda for the assembly shall be the following topics:**

1. **Assembly Guidelines Discussion**
2. **Financial Responsibility for future assemblies**
3. **Mission/Vision discussion**

*Intent:* To provide the United States Regions as a whole with a scheduled forum where they may come together in the spirit of unity to further our fellowship's primary purpose and deal with local issues that are not appropriate at the World Service Conference.

*Maker:* South Florida Region

Financial Impact: There is no practical way to estimate the specific costs for this motion.

Policy Affected: This motion would not directly amend any WSC policies.

Rationale by Region: While the zonal forums within the US fill a much-needed void in unifying our fellowship, there remains no forum for the US regions to come together to address US specific concerns. National forums have been evolving for many years. One group of geographically linked regions, which have not joined together to form a national forum, are the US regions.

"...a majority (about 70%, in fact) of the WSC participants want significant change some time in the future... the one thing that is clear is that, whatever is to occur regarding Resolution A and any changes to representation and participation at a new World Service Conference must arise from the regional delegates and their respective regions... if maintaining our global unity remains one of world services' priorities, then such a process will be essential to the future effectiveness of the World Service Conference" Transition Group Report, Resolution A, March 1998

World Board Recommendation: Rather than even entering into the discussion of this issue and its history, our belief is that this should not be a responsibility of world services or a decision of the WSC. The purpose of the World Service Conference is clearly stated: "Conference deliberations serve the needs of a diverse membership of different languages and cultures and address the challenge of how to provide effective services to NA groups around the world. The conference works for the good of all NA, taking into account both present and future needs."

Other forums are zonal assemblies, none of which was created by the WSC. If the US regions wish this to happen, they should make that decision and decide how best to achieve it. This motion refers to a US assembly, while the rationale refers to Resolution A and participation at the conference. Our recommendation only addresses the motion and does not address what is contained in the rationale.

# FELLOWSHIP REPORT

# SEPTEMBER , 1987

It is gratifying to me to see increasing public awareness of the disease concept of addiction, which N.A. has understood since addicts began recovering in N.A.

I'm planning to go to Australia to participate in a P.I. learning day and some workshops in October. I look forward to this experience.

Keep up the enthusiasm and good work. Please send ~~your input~~ as soon as possible! Thanks and God bless.

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LOOK AT

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To: The Fellowship

From: Leah Goodrich, Chairperson
WSC Select Committee

The Select Committee will again hold an open forum input meeting at the Denver WSC workshop in October. This has been tentatively scheduled for Friday, October 16, 1987, from 6:00 pm-9:00 pm. We will try to focus the discussions on the information presented in the following report. It is very important that members and service committees study this new information and be prepared to give your comments on the proposed concepts. It will be your comments on these proposals that will determine the future direction the Committee will take.

If the proposed concepts are received favorably, this may alter the work schedule for the *Guide to Service in Narcotics Anonymous*. The next committee meeting will be held in November, at which time we will be discussing a possible change in scheduling for the Guide, based on the input we receive. All motions committed by the WSC to the Select Committee will again be reviewed at that meeting and reported in the subsequent Fellowship Report. We will also continue to factor in the input we have received on the current draft. Please continue to send us your comments on the current material.

## FROM THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON SERVICE STRUCTURE

During the past three years, as the Select Committee on Service Structure has been working to prepare a handbook on service in N.A., there have been a great many lessons learned by the committee. The task was much greater than any member imagined it would be. As the committee members began to participate, they found that they were hard pressed to conceptualize the changes in the structure that now seem fairly obvious.

At first glance the task seemed to be to simply rewrite the existing *Temporary Working Guide* and incorporate some of the ideas presented by members in their letters. The learning process that resulted from the lengthy discussions revealed a much more comprehensive task. These past six months have been the most enlightening. They have revealed the need for a comprehensive change in the structure of the world level of service as we currently know it. The report that follows is an attempt to describe the current discussions of the Select Committee on Service Structure. These

discussions are still incomplete at this time and in no way imply any final decisions. This is simply a report on our progress and offers only a single option. Other options will also be examined in the coming months. The Committee invites members to comment on this material by sending written input to the Committee through the World Service Office.

## The Service Structure of Narcotics Anonymous

The basic elements of the service structure of the Fellowship are already proven to work and need little change. The group, the area committee and the regional service committee comprise the structure of service in N.A., and the method for decision making for the Fellowship as a whole. This report includes few changes in that existing service pattern.

Where a major change seems to be needed is at the level of service beyond the scope of an individual region. In earlier service materials it was presumed that the next level of service was the world level. While that was a logical assumption then and has been tried, there have evolved some problems with the quick jump from a region to a truly worldwide conference.

The difficulties involved in that jump include differences in language, culture, distance and ability to provide services. While the Fellowship grew primarily in the U.S. and Canada these problems were not fully visible. Now that the Fellowship is growing strong in places so far away as Australia, South America, Europe and Asia the difficulties of language, culture, distance and self-support, must be addressed.

There are several practical matters that highlight these problems. After three years of trying different techniques for translation of literature written in American English into different languages, no simple or single process has been found to be universally practical or satisfactory. Some language materials have been in the translation process for all of these past three years. Some items have been translated and re-translated several times and a completely satisfactory product has not yet been achieved. In addition to the difficulties of translating the material adequately and ensuring the accuracy of the N.A. message, there is the question of cultural differences making some of the material unsuitable even if translated correctly.

Although our disease is universal, language and cultural differences make it hard, if not impossible, for addicts in many places to identify with the settings, terminology, and experience described in much of the American recovery stories. Addiction in the rural areas of the Philippines, Columbia or Jordan is a real problem, but the patterns of living are so culturaly different that stories of Americans provide little common ground for identification.

The translation of service materials approved by the World Service Conference, for things such as the *Guide to Phoneline Service* or *Convention Guidelines*, is simply not even being addressed. With such vast differences existing in cultural foundations these materials are not relevant in places like India, most of Africa, and parts of Europe or South America.

This non-relevance therefore raises a question of the propriety of calling such materials "World Service Conference" tools. This matter of relevance can be expanded to question why such materials should be sent to places in the Fellowship for "world approval" when actually they are not

relevant to the entire world Fellowship. And of course if they are not relevant, why translate them?

These significant issues have been made more clear as a result of the participation of more non-Americans in the past two World Service Conferences and efforts to participate in various Conference Committees. As a result of these lessons and growing discussions, new ideas for service beyond the regional level have taken place. On the pages that follow are the results of those discussions. The first task was to establish concepts that can form the basis for more detailed discussions. Following refinement of those conceptual discussions, the specific language that can formulate structural options is presented. In order to foster open debate on these options, several options are presented for those elements when more than one option was widely discussed or developed.

## General Concepts

World services should be a term applied to those issues and activities that are generally universal in their application rather than specific to a particular language, culture or geographical area.

Future recovery literature should be developed and approved more along language and cultural lines rather than a universal worldwide basis. Similarly, service materials should be developed and approved more for the setting in which they will be used rather than attempting to evolve a single document on each segment of service.

Both recovery literature and service materials must reflect a consistent application of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of N.A. and should not be changed, altered or modified. The concepts must remain true to our current understanding regardless of language or cultural differences.

Although nationalism has not been a large issue within N.A. discussions, and it generally conveys negative concepts with respect to a spiritual program, there are some situations where our service structure may benefit by taking into consideration the geo-political structure of nations. Some service materials and structures may work more effectively on a nation by nation basis than on the basis of regions as we now know them. An example of this may be the N.A. community in the United Kingdom. They currently have one region covering the greater London area but other regions will soon evolve. In matters of H&I or P.I. service especially, it would be logical that the Fellowship would benefit from a committee that served the UK as a whole. In some ways this has already been accomplished through the formulation of the UK Assembly which will be an administrative unit responsible to handle concerns affecting all of the UK. The London Region, and others as they form, will continue to function as elements of the World Service Conference. But they will also function as part of the UK Assembly, although the UK Assembly will not have a direct relationship to the World Service Conference.

World services need to be practical, affordable and effective. As the Fellowship grows in the years ahead it will eventually have as many meetings (areas and regions too) outside the U.S. as there are inside the U.S. This may mean as more addicts are elected to world service, many may speak languages other than English. This may also mean that an extraordinary financial burden may be involved for the conduct of a World Service Conference. The movement of trusted servants around the globe to attend the Conference meeting or committee meetings alone will be

staggering. Additionally, the cost for translation of even the basic conceptual materials will remain a long, awkward, and expensive process.

A more practical and effective approach seems to be to encourage a system that permits the evolution of N.A. decision making, take advantage of prior experience, strength and hope, but does not require all of that to take place at one World Conference each year. Developing decision making elements like the UK Assembly or Continental Service Conferences seems the most reasonable and practical solution. However, consistency to our basic spiritual principles must be continually assured.

For this reason, an effective worldwide element must exist within the Fellowship. That element should be large enough to be representative of the whole N.A. Fellowship while at the same time small enough to be practical and efficient. Whichever method we choose to accomplish our Fellowship's goals, the responsibilities of our worldwide service element should be wide reaching in some ways but rather restricted in others. For example, it should be the holder of the ultimate copyright and trademarks of N.A., including the name Narcotics Anonymous. It should be able to grant permission to print and distribute literature within continents or countries, it should conduct the world convention, it should be the caretakers of our spiritual principles. It should not, however, involve itself in the approval of specific programs and/or activities that are relevant only to parts of the Fellowship, it should not impede or delay the structural development unless that development affects the Fellowship as a whole and it should not be involved in the development of service tools intended only for limited use within the Fellowship except to check for consistency with N.A. principles.

World services need to be small enough to be practical, but large enough to avoid the stigma of "an elite" or remote circle of members. There must be a practical relationship between world service and other service elements.

Financing of these service units is through the Seventh Tradition. This should include funds sent along through the service structure from funds collected at N.A. meetings, revenue from Fellowship events and sales of approved literature or other materials.

What these general concepts are intended to express is the manner by which the whole Fellowship becomes responsible for the safe keeping of the Narcotics Anonymous principles. To guarantee and preserve the opportunity for all our future members to find the chance for a new way of life, no matter where, who, or when that might be. For this, we are ALL responsible.

*On the basis of these concepts, the following is a first draft of notes upon which the service structure could be developed.*

### Recovery Literature Approval

The basic spiritual principles that are embodied in the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions provide the framework for recovery and unity in Narcotics Anonymous. We believe that these spiritual principles make it possible for an addict, any addict, to arrest the harmful effects of our progressive and incurable disease. Those who have come before us and sustained N.A. when it was young have preserved for us a complete concept for a new life. In order to preserve our own recovery and share that

recovery with others, it is essential that N.A. remain true to the meaning and understanding of these spiritual principles.

In order for us to fully understand these spiritual principles and to share them with others they have been written down and are embodied in the recovery material available at our meetings. So that we adhere to our Twelve Traditions with respect to the use of literature in N.A. we take special effort to abide by several of these spiritual principles that have close relevance to literature. Specifically, the concepts which lead us to turn our lives and our will over to a Power greater than ourselves, strive to maintain N.A. unity and to assure that group conscience has the opportunity to provide guidance for our efforts in literature development and use.

The N.A. experience in recovery has proven that our disease is one that affects people regardless of geography, culture, language or ethnic background. Our N.A. experience has proven that our Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions when understood and applied, can be successful regardless of all other factors that surround an addict's desire to recover.

Our Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, although originally written in the English language, have endured the tests of time and translation into numerous languages. N.A. members have found their vital significance in different cultures in different words and with different expressions, but the spiritual principles, and the bearing they have on our success, have remained essentially the same.

In order to preserve the integrity of these spiritual principles, and therefore their universal application and understanding, a method has been developed to maintain the consistency of these spiritual principles when they are translated or new material is written. The basic elements in this guardian role are the individual members and their participation in N.A. groups who read and use the material. (*The administrative procedure to be used to assure consistency will be specified as this draft is developed.*)

In addition to the members' personal participation for their own recovery, a member also participates so as to strengthen the group's recovery and carry the message to the addict who is still suffering. This participation must always include a watchful eye to important matters presented by assembly or conference, which affect changes in literature and the interpretation of the Twelve Steps and Traditions. While it is not expected that each member spend vast amounts of time studying everything that assembly or conference committees do, when information is available that includes new language that would be used as "recovery literature," attention should be given.

This attention and therefore involvement can then be expressed through the service structure so that our Twelve Steps and Traditions are preserved.

To facilitate this at the assembly, conference and world levels, several practices have been developed that provide for a long and thorough review process. This process has been developed so as to accommodate the translation of the understandings and meanings of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of N.A., including their description and application, into different languages, different cultures and different living conditions.

## Service Literature Approval

This World Guide to Service provides the framework for our evolving Fellowship that includes different languages, cultures and environmental

living conditions. This was done in recognition of the vast differences that exist between members living in different continents whose disease may be the same, but whose language, customs and cultural concepts may be entirely different. The particular elements and organization of the service structure in one culture may be entirely different from other structures. In order to accommodate these differences an element of autonomy has been incorporated into the approval process for service related decisions.

It is anticipated that the primary elements of the service structure will remain as they are described in this Guide. The application of this structure and how it is described in a particular language is best left to those most familiar with the language and culture in which the structure is being developed. Accordingly, groups and area committees, when forming regional service committees, may elect to form an assembly committee to serve certain needs within the structure of N.A. which impacts their own circumstances.

Actions taken by assemblies and continental conferences which approve recovery literature or service materials affect N.A. as a whole. By the nature of such materials they are in effect declaring what N.A. believes and how N.A. is organized. Accordingly, some mechanism must exist to provide opportunity for assurance to the rest of the Fellowship that approval of such materials by an assembly or continental conference is consistent with the common perceptions of N.A. shared by the rest of the Fellowship. (*The mechanics of that process need to be developed and included in this publication.*)

The worldwide Fellowship has evolved service materials that contain general concepts and principles covering each of the fields of N.A. service. These materials provide the framework for most service activities. Continental conferences, assemblies and regions frequently develop addendum to these publications to provide information that is relevant to the circumstances found in the area served by that conference, assembly or region. The approval of these addendum materials rests with the respective conference, assembly or region.

Service materials for use in an area served by an assembly or a continental conference can be developed and approved by that assembly or conference. Examples of such efforts would be the creation of hospital and institution materials by the N.A. assembly of a nation with a single and integrated penal or judicial system. There are enough differences and unique circumstances in different nations that we have found this approach more realistic than a single detailed publication that is expected to cover all countries.

## National Assemblies

Although the regional service committee shall remain as the primary administrative unit for the Fellowship, there are many circumstances where efforts of several regions should be consolidated so as to permit concentrated action for some purposes. The national assembly has been created as a service element for this purpose. The assembly may be created when the N.A. community in a particular area with a common language, governmental agency or cultural background determines that such a service element would provide better serve to the Fellowship.

National assemblies are service forums created by regions to meet specific needs of those regions. The authority and responsibility of the regions and their participation in their respective service conference shall

not be affected by the creation of an assembly. An assembly may exercise responsibility to approve recovery literature and service materials, when such materials are relevant specifically to the area served, consistent with other sections of this publication on approval of literature and service materials.

A service assembly may be formed to accommodate the needs of two or more regions having certain mutual needs. Common bonds for such service conferences are language, geography, political boundaries, and cultural distinctions. In the spirit of our universal principles, the option to create such service assemblies based on these mutual need categories should be exercised in an inclusionary manner rather than an exclusionary one. In order to avoid the violation of our Tenth Tradition such service assemblies should not be created to foster or institutionalize N.A. service according to nationalism, political ideology, racism or other divisive bases.

Service assemblies should be formed for purposes of serving the specific needs of the Fellowship with the common bonds identified. The regional service committees of these same N.A. communities should also be part of a service conference which serves a larger unit of the Fellowship. These service conferences are normally organized along large geographical boundaries such as the North American Continent or Europe. This approach will permit addicts from different languages and customs to learn from one another while they organize and conduct the services that a conference may need to accomplish.

It may be desirable to create specialized service boards or committees with more limited scopes of responsibility and duty. Such limited conferences may also be organized so that their memberships can participate directly in a larger conference setting.

For example, the language and cultural similarities in some geographical areas (frequently along national borders, but not necessarily so) may be large enough to support a service conference to handle such matters as literature development, public information, and hospital and institution work. Frequently such areas are part of a larger land mass geographical feature that facilitates easy communication and travel to adjacent language and cultural areas. Europe is a good example. It may be desirable to have service assemblies that serve the specific languages or cultures separately while having a larger conference serve the whole European Continent for certain needs.

To accommodate this manner of organization, assemblies that serve a portion of a continental service conference may be identified according to national or cultural terms. The use of such terms should be thought of only as an identifying factor rather than as promoting nationalism or differences between members.

Examples of this pattern may be that service assemblies may be created in each of the major language groupings in Europe. These assemblies may meet to accomplish tasks that are common to their language, culture or nation because they may be substantially different from neighboring regions. These assemblies may meet to organize efforts in hospitals and institutions because their national medical delivery system or treatment services are consolidated or substantially different from those in adjoining countries. Similarly, penal systems may operate so differently that a unified approach may be essential. These assemblies may obtain license from the World Service Office to translate, publish and distribute approved literature and use the Narcotics Anonymous name, N.A. logo or other registered trademarks. This may be done to take advantage of single

language units, or unified postal systems, to avoid international shipping difficulties (customs, inspections and delays), or to avoid shipping materials great distances.

## Continental Service Conferences

In order to obtain the benefit of the experience, strength and hope of others, permitting service assemblies to exist in isolation in other respects would be detrimental. Consequently, such service assemblies as may be created to serve single language groups, nationalities, etc., should be unified through a service conference having service responsibilities that are more general and varied. Again, using Europe as an example, there may be service assemblies for each of the major language groupings, English, German, French, etc., while a single European Service Conference exists to serve the larger needs.

Each conference will select a Board of Trustees to serve the needs of the membership of that conference. Each conference will select Trustees according to the general principles outlined in this publication for Trustees. The exact number and duties of the Trustees shall be determined by each conference. Each conference shall further make provision for the participation of some Trustees on the World Service Board of Trustees.

*(The form of world service and what it is called is not certain and will be confusing. In order to avoid conflict the following sections on World Service Conference and World Service Board of Trustees will be expanded through additional work and discussions by the Committee. It may be that a World Service Conference is maintained or it may be possible to reduce the size of the body we currently know as the world body and take advantage of a smaller group, such as a World Service Board of Trustees with members from the Trustees of each continental conference.)*

## World Service Conference

The World Service Conference serves as the focal point of worldwide efforts of N.A. Most N.A. activities occur at the group, area and regional levels. Limited activities occur at the assembly or continental conference levels. As detailed in earlier sections, assembly and continental conference responsibilities give the assemblies and continental conferences authority to develop and authorize most items of literature, structure and procedure and require only a concurrence from the world services.

The focus of responsibility of the World Service Conference is more limited in scope, but universal in its application. The WSC, for example, is vested with the responsibility of reviewing service and recovery materials developed by continental conferences or assemblies. The nature of such review is not for the language or specific details of such materials, but only to assure that they remain consistent with the common understanding of the spiritual principles of the N.A. Program. The nature of the action of the World Service Conference in this regard shall be to advise the originating assembly or conference that no conflicts were found, or if they were found, that they were identified by the WSC in the report returned with the review material. It is the responsibility of the originating assembly or conference to then review the material and make such changes as they believe are appropriate.

The World Service Conference is composed of representatives of each of the continental conferences and selected members from those parts of the Fellowship that are not part of or served by a continental conference. Each continental conference selects fifteen of its members including its Chairperson, Vice-chairperson and three Trustees to serve on the World Service Conference. The World Service Conference meets during each even numbered year.

## World Service Board of Trustees

The World Service Board of Trustees serves as the committee with whom the Fellowship as a whole has vested the responsibility and authority to oversee the international and inter-conference activities and responsibilities of the Fellowship.

The World Service Board of Trustees includes five Trustees from each continental service conference and such additional Trustees as may be selected by the Board. Each continental service conference may elect to have their five world level Trustees serve only these inter-conference and international needs, or may wish to have them perform their world level duties in addition to duties assigned as service to the conference which selected them. The selection of the Trustees and their replacement shall be accomplished according to such procedure and schedule as may be established by each continental service conference. It is requested that each conference provide for rotation in such manner that no Trustee serve less than three years nor more than six years consecutively and that the rotation provide that not more than three Trustees have concurrent terms of office. In order to avoid the additional expense and burden necessitated by multi-language activities, continental conferences are requested to select Trustees that read and communicate in one of the universal languages.

## Service Offices

Service offices have proven to be of value to the growth of the Fellowship and our ability to carry the message of recovery to the addict. Service offices can be formed by service committees within the structure of N.A. There may be area, regional, assembly or conference services. Every office is formed by one of these service committees and the office it creates serves only the membership of its sponsoring committee. In order to avoid confusion and conflicts, offices at some levels of service are restricted from performing certain types of activities.

Some offices of assemblies or conferences enter agreements with the World Service Office that permit the office to publish, print, distribute and/or translate literature and other items within the area served by the office. Such agreements are evolved on a fairly limited basis, in order to minimize the administrative costs associated with such offices, while at the same time making provision for cost effective distribution and access to literature. These agreements provide that each office pay a royalty payment to the World Service Office. This royalty is a small portion of the sales price and is intended to provide the funds essential for the operational responsibilities of the World Service Office to the Fellowship as a whole.

## New World Service Office

The World Service Office has an adequate staff responsible for assisting the World Service Board of Trustees. The Office provides a number of services for the Fellowship as a whole and the general population.

**Public Information Services:** The Office serves as the public information distribution center for our worldwide Fellowship. Primary public information energies of the Office are directed toward coordinating the public information activities of the Fellowship on a worldwide basis. Specific public information efforts include coordinating N.A. participation in international public information projects and activities.

The Office may organize and/or participate in international forums where N.A. participation may be appropriate.

The Office will have direct responsibility to perform the types of public information duties and responsibilities that are described for continental conference public information committees for those areas not served by a continental conference. These activities will include the full range of public information responses and projects that develop understanding and attraction to N.A. The Office will assist the development of public information efforts in these unserved areas so that they can become self-sustaining.

**General Services:** The Office will be responsible for providing general services in geographical areas that are not served by a continental service conference. The Office will encourage the development and growth of N.A. in such areas and assist in the structural development of these new N.A. communities so that they can develop service boards and committees and become self-sustaining.

The Office will hold the worldwide copyrights and trademark rights to specific N.A. properties. These properties include the logos and symbols that are adopted by the Fellowship in their original form and such variations as may be adapted throughout the Fellowship. The copyrights to our literature, the use of the name Narcotics Anonymous, or any items developed for use by the Fellowship throughout the world.

The World Service Office further will be responsible for production and distribution of literature in those geographical areas that are not served by a continental service conference.

The Office will have the sole authority to enter into agreements to license or authorize the use of the Narcotics Anonymous name in any language, N.A. logos, symbols and production of literature. Such agreements will be authorized so that continental service offices may fulfill the needs of the N.A. communities they are created to serve. The Office shall be responsible for the protection of N.A. rights to these properties and, in conjunction with continental service offices when appropriate, take such action as may be necessary to preserve the rights of N.A. in the use of these properties.

The World Service Office will be responsible to provide the administrative services that the World Board of Trustees may require. These services include the financial and planning needs for Trustee meetings and participation of World Trustees in events, meetings or activities in which they are called upon to participate.

The Office will facilitate and arrange for an interchange of information between continental conferences and/or their various boards and committees. This responsibility may include international conferences

or meetings, the exchange of service materials and recovery materials generated by separate conferences.

The Office is responsible for ensuring the integrity of the translation of material into any and/or all languages that are not already served through the activities of an existing continental service conference.

The World Service Office will be responsible for the conduct of the world convention of N.A. The world convention will be held on a periodic basis in different locations which may best serve the Fellowship at large.

The Office will be responsible for the administration of the World Service Conference or other international and inter-conference workshops and meetings.

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To: The Fellowship

From: Bill Zimmerman, Chairperson
WSC Additional Needs Ad-Hoc Committee

Greetings from the WSC Additional Needs Ad-Hoc Committee. I cannot believe that this is the second Fellowship Report already. Though we are the new kids on the block, we have been quite excited with our new mission and we are very busy exploring new frontiers never explored before in Narcotics Anonymous.

In New Jersey, we addressed and handled the following items:

A. Committee membership--The WSC Additional Needs Ad-Hoc Committee has established its membership at a maximum of 15 voting participants with an additional two members: one member of the WSO Board of Directors, one member of the Board of Trustees, for a grand total of eighteen voting participants. At this time, we have three vacant seats.

B. Committee direction and purpose--Much discussion was held on the question of direction and purpose. It was decided that the committee could best carry out the task outlined by this year's conference in the following ways:

1. Becoming a centralized contact for members, groups and committees who wish information about this subject.
2. Establish a base of information for regional additional needs committees to utilize.
3. Pursue suggestions for regions that have a need to establish additional needs committees.
4. Investigate considerations involved in developing specific material or adapting existing literature for blind, deaf and other addicts with additional needs.
5. Develop suggestions for making N.A. meetings accessible to addicts with additional needs.

C. How to enhance communications and raise the level of awareness concerning additional needs--It was decided to use all avenues of

# TO: W.S.C. 1988

# FROM:
# W.S.C. SELECT COMMITTEE ON SERVICE STRUCTURE

WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE
OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS
P.O. Box 9999
Van Nuys, CA 91409
(818) 780-3951

*To:* The World Service Conference 1988

*From:* The WSC Select Committee on Service Structure

During this past year the following members served on the committee: Leah Goodrich, Chuck Lehman, Jack Bernstein, Greg Pierce, Ed Duquette, Dave Tynes, Mary Van Every, Mark Daley, Jim Wymore, Terry Boring, Beth Kuecher, and Leo Smothers. Of the twelve members only two had not previously served on the committee. Continuity of service is important to our committee and will be especially so during this next year.

The committee held two open input sessions at the WSC Workshops in Newark and Denver, and three working meetings in June, November, and March. We also received written input from individuals and service committees throughout the year. Our open input sessions did not produce the kind of participation and discussion that they were intended to. However, the committee felt that the effort to bring greater visibility to their work will engender a better understanding towards the project. The written input we received was sometimes very difficult to understand and combine with the draft. Most of our input seemed to concentrate the majority of its comments to language usage and not to conceptual expressions and ideas. Most Select Committee members felt that this type of effort was more important at a latter stage of development and resulted in some rather inconclusive evidence, as far as judging the support of the Fellowship was concerned. We would like to go on record though that several service committees submitted very useful material in a simple, practical form. It is very obvious from this experience that more time and effort must be put into assisting the Fellowship with the preparation of input material.

At both our June and March meetings the committee reviewed and discussed all the motions that were committed to us by WSC'87. These motions concerned the terms, rotation, and number of WSO Board of Directors, the function of the WSO staff, and the term for Board of Trustees. In our deliberations we felt that any recommendation from us on these issues would be premature, since we were not developing those sections of the Guide to Service at this time. We have notified the appropriate RSC's regarding our deliberations and our intention to give full review to these items during the next Conference year.

Our working meeting were very productive, we just weren't able to have enough of them. Our June meeting brought forth the draft proposal on an evolving International structure. This proposal provided information about the direction our committee believed would be most supportive to the

growing needs of our worldwide Fellowship. There were two ideas presented in that draft that are very important. The first was the recognition of the need for more autonomous flexibility in the development of services within the many cultures and countries existing around the world. The second important concept we wished to express in the proposal was that the responsibility for the integrity of the Narcotics Anonymous program belonged in the hands of the worldwide membership and would no longer be perceived as the property of the American Fellowship. As of this report we have not gone any further with the details of this proposal which we will have to complete during the next year. The actual implementation of this plan would not be taking place until sometime in the early 1990's.

The WSC Literature Committee unanimously recommended that the work in progress, "In Loving Service", be turned over to our committee as input to our work. Each committee member was given a copy to study the possible utilization of this material in whole or partial form. We have discussed this thoroughly and at this point, do not believe it is useable for our purposes. However, we are not recommending any action concerning this material until we move closer to a decision regarding the actual format and the possibility of any additional components of the Guide to Service.

Our November and March meetings concentrated on generating discussion about service concepts designed to provide general guidance to our whole system of services. This came about as the result of our continuos discussions about many of the recurring issues most commonly debated in previous years or those that have gone unresolved. These discussions revealed some interesting observations and startling conclusions. Practically speaking we have actually had very little experience with our own principles in operating as a whole Fellowship. We have also never compiled what past service experience we have learned into a reference form, that clearly discussed and explained the reasons for establishing service policies and procedures. The results of our inexperience with our principles and our lack of written explanations often show up in the form of repeating mistakes. This is usually evidenced in cycles when a turnover in leadership has taken place and takes the value of the lessons learned with them. The service manuals we have produced so far have been more guideline oriented and do not necessarily satisfy the many questions that arise about our service structure and our groups.

The task of producing a comprehensive manual on service has not been an easy one to complete. Even the smallest detail often brings considerable discussion. Our individual understandings of the purpose and function of each service level or unit, has sometimes differed so widely, that it has been difficult to arrive at a consensus among us. At first we were somewhat perplexed at how this could be in a Fellowship whose first principle concerns unity and common welfare. But after much thought and deliberation it became quite evident why we have developed that way. We have not yet established a commonly understood relationship of our basic principles to our services and groups. Without access to the experience we have gained our services will always be somewhat unstable and many singular interpretations and approaches to service will continue to develop.

Our trusted servants on every level need to have a clearly defined understanding of their functional boundaries in the performance of their

duties. The relationship of the service structure to our groups often becomes a question of appropriate authority and responsibility, which has never been stated or defined and universally accepted. This brings to light the conflict we have observed at every WSC meeting regarding group conscience and trusted servants, ultimate and delegated authority, and mutual trust. The Traditions speak precisely to the groups and their purpose but have not been thoroughly developed and expressed in material to guide our services. Our service committees and boards, and especially our trusted servants need to understand what decisions they have the authority to make and which ones are the province of the groups themselves.

We considered the magnitude of the problem this type of inconsistency creates in our services, and went on to examine and explore our Traditions, to see if we could possibly support some type of common understanding in a manner we could, as a committee, be comfortable with. The following statements reflect only a summary of our thoughts and are not intended to be considered final conclusions on these issues:

"For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority--a loving God as he may express himself in our group conscience." The first part of this Tradition recognizes that ultimately, the authority and responsibility for all services is in the hands of the group conscience as expressed in the N.A. groups. This is accomplished in several ways. The service structure is dependent upon the support of the groups, both financially (fund flow) and with the selection of trusted servants. Without that support it cannot and will not function. Secondly, ultimate authority is expressed by the acceptance or rejection of any decision made by a service board or committee. Group autonomy gives each group the right to accept or reject any decision made in its behalf, even if that decision is otherwise supported or rejected by the vast majority of other N.A. groups.

(Having said this, we recognized existing policies in our structure that are contrary to these thoughts such as the N.A. fund flow system which actually places the authority in the RSC's to make most financial support decisions about world services.)

Our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern." A good servant is one who is able to anticipate the needs of those they serve. They are chosen for their experience, their knowledge of principles, and their ability to reflect those principles in their actions. They are not governors or enforcers of rules and regulations. They act for us, and are subject to the same disciplines found in our principles that our groups and members are. It is the principles that we rely upon (mutual respect) and not the personalities. Trusted servants are endowed with the ability to fully participate in their defined service responsibilities, and to make decisions on how best to serve and when they should consult further on important matters with those they serve (mutual trust). A practical balance between the group conscience and trusted servants does exist. (At this point we discussed those things that absolutely need to be brought back for group conscience: any change in the Twelve Steps or Twelve Traditions or the nature of N.A. and the approval of recovery literature. Other things were discussed also but not decided upon.) Even though we understand and accept these as a basis for how our trusted servants function in their defined service responsibilities, the groups retain the right to instruct their representatives implicitly.

(With these thoughts in mind another question about our current structure became evident: Why in the direct line of transference (GSR to ASR to RSR) of delegated authority, does it all of a sudden stop at the RSR and not continue?)

We discussed other basic questions also and developed responses similarly or have simply posed the question.

1. What is the purpose and nature of our service structure?

   The purpose of our service structure is to make the N.A. message of recovery available on a broad scale to the addict who still suffers. (Our groups and members are how we actually carry the message.) It is the natural evolution of our principle of service as stated in our Steps and Traditions. It provides unity and enables our Fellowship to act as a whole upon important matters. It maintains the integrity of the group and its purpose, by doing those things for the group that it cannot or should not do for itself.

2. What is the relationship of the Twelve Traditions to our service structure?

   The traditions protect the groups from distracting or disruptive influences. They also create the service structure and provide the basic spiritual guidance for all N.A. services.

3. How do we define professionalism in N.A.?

4. Are special workers trusted servants?

5. What is group conscience?

   The collective utilization of spiritual principles by members of a group to preserve the common welfare and fulfill the primary purpose of the group.

6. What is meant by the term "direct responsibility"?

7. How do we define self-supporting in relationship to our service structure?

8. What is our responsibility as a Fellowship?

These are only examples of the many basic questions that we have come upon, and there are certainly many more that need to be raised before we are completed with our work. We have included them in this report so you can see for yourself the in-depth nature of our work. Your understanding and participation will assist us in completing our task.

The focus of our deliberations shifted to include the general perception of the WSC, its role, purpose and function. The results of our in-depth discussions of the WSC, pointed out a variety of additional, related items of concern about the operation of the Conference. The WSC guidelines as they

appear in the TWGSS, were meant to describe the annual meeting itself and not the continual year around operation of the Conference and its committees. Consequently, we have spent the last seven years amending this section which was never suppose to fulfill the full responsibilities it has since been required to. This confusion has further been complicated by other misconceptions. Leading the way is the general perception that the decisions made by the WSC are the expression of a collective ultimate authority. Through our investigation of our Traditions we believe that this is fundamentally incorrect. "The WSC is instead the place where the effective voice of our groups from around our Fellowship, through their chosen representatives, come together with those responsible for our world service operations to establish direction and guidance for our worldwide service efforts." This statement more correctly acknowledges the functional reality of the WSC and does not imply any authority with is out of balance with our principles. If we take a step back and look closely we may conclude that the WSC (nor any service body) cannot speak as an ultimate authority. It is only meant to be the collective voice of our Fellowship, determining the mainstream of N.A. experience, which it has properly been delegated to do. The groups, utilizing their group conscience as an ultimate authority, in reality decide the force of any of our service decisions, not the participants of the WSC.

These discussions illuminate the critical importance of our work during this next year. As a Fellowship and as a committee, we have had to overcome many obstacles in the past four years. Our tremendous growth has magnified many problems that resulted in a crisis management approach (concentrating our efforts on immediate situations), rather than having the luxury of an extended evaluation process. Although this has been the case, our committee members feel confident that if the WSC participants decide to support our recommendation and our budget request, we can finish our work and produce an acceptable draft for review. However, as a Fellowship, we must commit ourselves to a wide reaching and in-depth examination of our principles and their relationship to our service structure. The draft we produce may contain many concepts generally unfamiliar to many members, but as a committee we feel it is imperative that this work consists of an exhaustive, thorough effort, to provide the Fellowship with a guide to service based on the integrity of our principles. To this end we have fully committed ourselves. Thank you for allowing us to be of service.

# W.S.C. AD-HOC COMMITTEE ON N.A. SERVICES

# CHAIRPERSON REPORT TO: W.S.C. 1989

## WSC Ad Hoc Committee on N.A. Service
## Chairperson's Report to the 1989 World Service Conference

The WSC Ad Hoc Committee on N.A. Service would like to welcome you all to the thirteenth annual meeting of the World Service Conference. Our membership this year included Chuck Lehman, chairperson, Bob Hunter, Ed Duquette, Reuben Farris, Dave Tynes, Bob Rehmar, Becky Meyer, Debbie Ott, Leo Smothers, Mark Daley, David Taylor, Charlotte MacKean, Beth Kuecher, and Mary Van Every. Unfortunately, in the course of the year we lost Mary and Beth to resignation. We wish to thank them for the sound, thoughtful contributions they made during their tenure.

The committee met four times during the past year, in July, September, December, and April. At our September 1988 meeting we invited members from a number of N.A. communities to take part in committee discussions of local N.A. services. The discussions covered a wide range of subjects, including decision-making, finances, and the service structure. We were very pleased with the results of that meeting, and feel it was one of the most productive of the year. The invited participants settled down and spoke frankly about their experiences in service, and gave new perspective to our work on *A Guide to Service* with the insights they shared. We would like to thank them again for their cooperation, patience, and tolerance. They were a tremendous help.

At our April 1989 meeting, two members from the United Kingdom were added to the ranks of the committee, David Taylor and Charlotte MacKean. They were included at that particular point because the committee was beginning to discuss specific arrangements for national and international service which would appear in the *Guide*. David and Charlotte came to share with the committee the experience of the fellowship in the U.K. with the formation and operation of the first independent national service conference, called the U.K. Assembly, created in April 1987. David and Charlotte added clarity to our discussions of a couple of years ago on international service, and opened our eyes to a number of new issues we'd not yet considered. Their participation was invaluable.

At our April meeting we also finalized our draft of the much talked about Twelve Principles of Service for Narcotics Anonymous. I spoke briefly about the Twelve Principles in my conference chairperson's report, and the committee report, which will be delivered as soon as I'm finished, will describe in some detail their evolution, so I won't go into any further detail at the moment. I will say, however, that the committee has come to this annual meeting of the conference with a great deal of excitement, confident that we're only steps away from a goal we've been seeking for five years now: the creation of not only a service *manual* but a service *system* that

will allow Narcotics Anonymous to carry its message effectively, not only in the United States but across the planet.

The committee had a great deal to accomplish this year in order to keep our promised July 1 deadline, and still has a few miles to go before its members can sleep. But our foundation has been laid well with the completion of the Twelve Principles of Service. Drafts of all the material for *A Guide to Service in Narcotics Anonymous* are rapidly approaching completion. The committee has scheduled two more working meetings, in mid-May and again in late June, to thoroughly review that material prior to release. Once the *Guide* has been mailed out, we'll be meeting with you in a number of workshops across North America, Europe, and the South Pacific to discuss our work and answer your questions.

On behalf of the WSC Ad Hoc Committee on N.A. Service, I thank you for the support and insight you've shared with us these past five years. I trust that when the work is released in July you'll feel as strongly as we do that it was well worth the wait. All of us have considered it a unique honor and privilege to serve on the committee, and we thank you for allowing us this opportunity to serve.

## WSC Ad Hoc Committee on N.A. Service
## Committee Report to the 1989 World Service Conference

By now, you've all read *The Twelve Principles of Service for Narcotics Anonymous*--some of you with great joy, some with anxiety. The principles represent a new way of thinking about service in N.A. They are the core of *A Guide to Service in Narcotics Anonymous,* soon to be completed. I'm going to explain how our committee has come, in five years, to the understanding represented by the Twelve Principles. And in order to do that, we need to talk a little about how our service structure has developed, and we need to talk straight.

Narcotics Anonymous 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 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. Such chaos was in evidence that, in 1982, the conference asked its outgoing administrative committee to "investigate the A.A. service structure as to how the beneficial aspects of its structure might be adopted by N.A."

The 1983 report on the A.A. structure contained no recommendations and was virtually ignored. At the time there was considerable anti-A.A. sentiment, as well as numerous problems that seemed to be of more immediate urgency. N.A. was changing and growing so quickly that there was virtually no time to think in any very specific terms about the future.

A compilation report on the development of N.A. services was adopted in 1983. That report included both the material originally approved in 1979 and all subsequent actions of the WSC. The report, which became known as the *Temporary Working Guide to our Service Structure*, was accurate in describing what had happened up to that point. But it was clearly not sufficient to guide N.A. services into the future. Sensing the need for something considerably different, yet tired of changing things each year, the 1983 conference instructed the WSC Policy Committee "to rewrite the service structure for approval by the WSC." Such controversy developed in the policy committee, however, that they became unable to proceed. In 1984, the conference reassigned the project to a select committee, today known as the WSC Ad Hoc Committee on N.A. Service.

The select committee's first order of business was to look very closely at the A.A. structure. We rejected the idea of trying to adapt that structure to our needs--not because we didn't think it would work, frankly, but because we couldn't believe the fellowship would buy it. The committee came up with a couple of watered down drafts for general review, but for the most part we were at a standstill. We had no

real solutions of our own to the problem of delivering effective services to a fellowship growing by leaps and bounds.

By early 1988, the committee sensed that something vital was missing from our discussions. We began discussing in more detail the development of a set of key principles for our service structure. As our discussions progressed, we again looked to A.A.'s experience, as well as our own, to guide us. While examining A.A.'s *Twelve Concepts for World Service*, we began to identify the basic principles they espoused and to see how they could be applied to our own service activities. We also began to identify some principles of our own, drawn directly from N.A.'s service experience.

We started slow. Our discussions were often long and laborious, but the principles began to unfold in front of us. Not to say that we didn't have our disagreements--we had plenty, and would probably still argue some of the finer points among ourselves given half a chance. Several of the principles came very easily, as we had all had some personal experience with them. Others were much more difficult. The struggle was often not with the principle itself, but with its application: How would *this* principle apply in *that* situation? But as we became more familiar with them, things came into focus. And once our basic principles were clear, we were certain of a fairly straight course to the conclusion of our project, the development of *A Guide to Service in N.A.*

We're aware of the fears the Twelve Principles may raise among some of you: the fear of central control, the fear of N.A. being taken from the hands of the groups, the fear of a tyranny of trusted servants. But the fact is that, *without* them, we have a conference that's been seven years trying to put together a book on our steps and traditions, with *still* no end in sight. Without them, our world services are only barely able to focus on the immediate needs of the fellowship, and entirely unable to look down the road to our long-term objectives. Without them, our world services are actually responsive only to conference politics, and are not capable of evaluating or responding to the real needs of the N.A. groups. Without them, our trusted servants are never sure whether or not they have the authority necessary to do the jobs we've asked them to do. Without them, the three arms of world service compete with one another, none of them able to draw on the full resources available, hence, none of them able to produce the kinds of material our fellowship needs to fulfill its mission.

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.

The time has come to face the facts. If we expect to have quality services administered effectively on behalf of our members, we need to delegate to our trusted servants sufficient authority for them to get the job done. The ad hoc committee knew that a body of such radically new principles for N.A. service would

raise a great many questions, even among reasonable people. Rather than backing away from such principles for fear that "the fellowship wouldn't buy them," we were determined to offer up only the best. If the principles are correct--and we're convinced they are--they'll stand up to whatever questions may be put to them.

*A Guide to Service* will be released to you in early July. It describes in detail an N.A. service structure reorganized in light of the Twelve Principles. The most significant changes would occur at the level we now call world services. We've gone back to the original model described in *The N.A. Tree:* a single board, elected by the conference, would direct service projects which affect the fellowship as a whole. The board would have sufficient authority to effectively administer those services, but would be required to consult with the conference on any questions greatly affecting the fellowship. The board's committees, working with the staff of the board's service corporation, would have primary responsibility for developing new recovery literature, interfacing with national public media and government agencies, creating new service materials, and providing general support for the development of the fellowship. Each year they would meet with regional delegates at the conference, present reports on their activities, describe plans for the future, and ask for direction. Those regional delegates would be elected at annual assemblies of group service representatives, when the groups and their delegates would discuss affairs pertaining to the entire fellowship.

The *Guide to Service* will take an additional step, one we've seen coming since the creation of the first national service assembly a couple of years ago in the United Kingdom. Since its inception, the body we've called the *World* Service Conference has given its attention primarily to services affecting the fellowship in the United States. The conference has done its best to reach out to other countries as well, giving whatever support it could to budding national fellowships. Nonetheless, it has remained a U.S. body that has sponsored some international outreach activities, rather than becoming an international forum. The time appears to be ripe for focussing the work of the North American Service Conference onto its own service needs, and creating a truly international service agency to meet the needs of Narcotics Anonymous worldwide.

The new international agency would hold the rights to the Narcotics Anonymous name, the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Principles, and our Basic Text. It would have two primary functions: to maintain the integrity of the N.A. movement worldwide, and to lend support to new national fellowships. The agency would be directed by a board of delegates from the various national fellowships. The international agency would be funded from royalty fees paid by national fellowships for rights to the Basic Text, and by a "pay as you're able" sort of contribution system from the national fellowships. National fellowships would be free to develop recovery literature, service guides, and a service structure

appropriate to their own needs, customs, and laws, so long as they remained consistent with the steps, traditions, and principles of service.

Between now and the next conference, the WSC Ad Hoc Committee on N.A. Service will be conducting workshops in various locations across North America, and one workshop each in Europe and the South Pacific, to present the *Guide* to the fellowship. When this conference meets next, we hope to go over the *Guide* and pin down the details of the new national/world service arrangement. And when we leave the 1990 World Service Conference, the ad hoc committee believes we will have a plan that assures the effective delivery of the services necessary to carry the N.A. message, ultimately, to any addict on the globe seeking recovery from addiction.

# ADDENDUM 5:

## NATIONAL SERVICES IN THE UNITED STATES

**WSC Ad-Hoc Committee on NA Service Report to The 1990 WSC**

# Addendum 5: National services in the United States

This addendum describes how the general concepts, purpose, and structure examined earlier in the *Guide to Service* chapter on N.A. national services are specifically applied by the N.A. Fellowship in the United States. The American national community is the world's oldest, and, as of this writing, also the largest. Because of that, many of the arrangements described in this addendum will be of use only in the U.S. However, with appropriate adaptation, many of the specifically American elements shown here can be used by any national community in developing and fine-tuning the kind of service structure that will help the country's groups, areas, and (where they exist) regions more effectively carry the N.A. message to the addict seeking recovery.

## American national services--conference and board

The purpose of N.A.'s national services is the same in the United States as in any country: to provide the national community with a collective voice on issues affecting all its local elements, and to coordinate those services administered on behalf of the entire national community. The National Service Conference of the United States, composed of trustees (as National Service Board members are known) and delegates, meets annually to review the work of the U.S. National Service Board, elect new board members, and establish NSB priorities for the coming year. Between conferences, the board is responsible to carry out the actual work involved in administering national services in a way consistent with conference-established priorities.

## NSB, Inc.--accountable to those it serves

Earlier, we talked in general terms about the need to establish a service corporation or some other kind of legal identity when certain kinds of activities are being conducted--handling large sums of money, for instance, publishing literature, or conducting national conventions. A corporation provides continuity for the body engaging in such activities, stability not afforded by the comings and goings of individual trusted servants. It provides a clearly recognizable, legally binding structure of accountability. And it provides protection for the fellowship at large; liability related to actions of the service body is limited to the service body itself, and cannot spread outward to the entire fellowship. For these reasons, the U.S. National Service Board has been registered as a California public benefit corporation.

The level of national services required in the United States is tremendous. Consequently, the U.S. National Service Board is an active, hands-on service body,

administering substantial responsibilities and granted substantial delegated authority by the national community. Because of the nature of corporations, the conference should not make a regular habit of directing the day-to-day details of the board's operations; if it does, the conference will be held responsible for those operations, and not the board. But the National Service Conference does have a number of means of tempering the authority delegated to the National Service Board without itself assuming the board's responsibilities. Conference delegate panels review all trustee activities on a regular basis. Delegates and trustees together establish the board's priorities each year at the conference meeting. The conference itself elects trustees to the National Service Board, and has the ability to either remove individual trustees or replace the entire board. These abilities serve as the American national service system's checks and balances.

## Conference advisory actions--setting priorities for national services

"Policy cannot be created on the conference floor," one former delegate has said, "but priorities can." In the American national service system, the trustees are charged with actively fulfilling services affecting the fellowship nationwide; the conference develops the priorities underlying the board's policy decisions concerning the fulfillment of those services. The conference defines those priorities in motions called *conference advisory actions*. These actions describe the kinds of things the conference wants the board to do, but they do not dictate how the board is to do them. A conference advisory action might say, we want the board to have a book on N.A.'s steps and traditions developed; the action would then leave the details of how to produce such a book to the board and its literature committee. Proposed advisory actions can come from any of a number of sources: a trustee committee or subsidiary corporation, a delegate review panel, the National Service Board itself, or an individual trustee or delegate. However, they generally come either from NSB committees and sub-corporations or the delegate review panels attached to them.

The National Service Board and its committees and subsidiary corporations have substantial authority in their defined areas of service, but not unlimited authority. The Seventh Concept states, "Our service boards and committees ought to be given the ability to determine which decisions fall within their own defined authority and which will be brought back to the delegating body for further consultation." In their regular reports, trustee committees and subsidiary corporations consult with the full National Service Board on questions they may have concerning their "defined authority." Depending on the nature of the question, the board may itself be able to offer the necessary direction. In matters of policy, finance, or N.A. tradition likely to seriously affect the national fellowship community, however, the board will seek the advice of the National Service Conference. Sometimes, that advice will be sought by proposing a conference advisory action.

Before being submitted to the full conference, the proposal will be reviewed by the delegate review panel attached to the trustee committee or sub-corporation involved. The panel may simply agree with the proposal, sending it on verbatim for the conference's concurrence. It may disagree, sharing its reasons with the conference. Or the delegate review panel may modify the trustees' proposed conference advisory action, explaining its reasons for doing so when the modified proposal is presented to the full body. If the panel suggests either rejection or modification, their recommendation will be presented to the conference side-by-side with the trustees' original proposal, leaving the choice between the two to the full conference.

Delegate review panels often propose conference advisory actions on their own. As we'll see later in this addendum, panel members are kept completely up-to-date on the affairs of their related trustee committee or subsidiary board. Being familiar with, yet distant from, the responsibilities associated with their particular service areas, delegate panels often see some of the priorities for those areas more clearly than their related committees do. Panel-proposed conference advisory actions, independently establishing new priorities for the National Service Board, help remedy the shortsightedness which sometimes occurs when a trustee committee gets too close to its work to be able to see the larger service picture. When problems arise which the trustee committees and sub-corporations seem unable to correct for themselves, panel-proposed actions can help the National Service Conference correct those problems for them.

The National Service Conference seeks to establish a substantial consensus among its members when considering whether to approve a proposed conference advisory action. In order to pass such actions, two-thirds of the conference must approve them.

## Approval of literature

The primary purpose of an N.A. group, according to our traditions, is "to carry the message to the addict who still suffers." Both the identity of Narcotics Anonymous and the nature of the N.A. message are fundamentally dependent on our literature. For this reason, it seems appropriate to offer a few words about how new N.A. literature may be approved for use by our fellowship.

Once a new, revised, or translated literary item is completed by the NSB Literature Committee, it is submitted for the acceptance of the National Service Board. At that point, the board must consider whether to ask for a direct ballot of the nation's N.A. groups, to consult with the National Service Conference, or to publish the piece on its own authority. Book-length pieces are always submitted for the groups' approval, while booklets and pamphlets are usually submitted to the conference for its consent prior to publication; only rarely does the board decide to publish an item on its own authority.

## Recall and reorganization of the board by the conference

Earlier, we described the checks and balances built into the American national service system, devices designed to insure that the National Service Board's delegated authority is adequately tempered by the conference. In electing trustees, the conference should choose candidates it feels are worthy of its trust. Regular review of board activities by delegate panels is meant to assure both the trustees and the fellowship at large that board projects cannot go awry unnoticed. Should the trustees not make suitable adjustments on their own, the conference has the ability to redirect trustee priorities by means of advisory actions. And, should all else fail, the National Service Conference has the ability to recall individual trustees from service on the National Service Board, or, in the most extreme circumstance, to replace the entire board with new members.

Proposed recall actions must be approved by two-thirds of all eligible participants attending that year's National Service Conference meeting. In the United States, the National Service Board has half the number of members in any given year as the number of delegates at the conference, up to a maximum of thirty trustees. Since delegates and trustees together compose the voting body of the conference, the delegate block must be in virtually unanimous agreement on a proposal to replace the entire board in order for such a proposal to pass, as is appropriate for such radical action. It is possible for the conference to enforce drastic corrective measures should the National Service Board go completely haywire; but it is extremely unlikely that simple dissatisfaction can severely disrupt the board's administration of its substantial responsibilities.

## The "single board" model in American services

The Fourth Concept for N.A. Service says, "For each responsibility, a single point of decision and accountability should be clearly defined." While the annual conference meeting establishes priorities for national services, the day-to-day responsibilities of actually administering American national services are delegated to the National Service Board. But the board, per se, cannot itself manage all the details of all the projects necessary for responsible administration of those services. To do that, the board has created five committees and three wholly-owned subsidiary corporations, each with its own sphere of responsibility, each with its own Seventh Concept rights of decision, but all coordinated by and ultimately accountable to the full membership of the National Service Board.

The board coordinates the activities of its committees and subsidiary corporations with one another, insuring that the board's total resources can be made available for high-priority services. Just as checks and balances are built into the relationship between the conference and the board, so are they built into the single board model. One of these checks allows the board to maintain responsibility for the composition of its committees and sub-corporations. Each year, the board elects some of its

members to serve as general officers (chairperson, vice chairperson, secretary, and treasurer), others to serve as directors of its subsidiary corporations; two-thirds of the members of each subsidiary corporation's board of directors must be trustees. Following the annual election, the National Service Board chair and vice chairperson together appoint each remaining trustee to a committee; the remainder of each committee's members are then selected by the trustees appointed to that committee. Remaining members of sub-corporate boards of directors, on the other hand, are elected by the full National Service Board. In the course of the year, the board maintains the ability to replace committee members and subsidiary corporation directors.

Non-trustee committee members and subsidiary corporation directors are chosen on the basis of relevant talents, experience, and interest. They may be drawn from anywhere: delegates, former delegates, non-delegate N.A. members, former trustees, former review panel members, even an occasional nonaddict friend of Narcotics Anonymous. The conference nominations panel, described later, is often consulted for additional candidates; they'll know of a number of people with a variety of qualifications. Regional committees are also asked for recommendations. Non-trustee members of NSB committees and subsidiary corporation boards are selected according to the needs of the particular committee or sub-corporation, so that the committee or subsidiary corporation can be of the greatest possible service to the fellowship.

## Trustee committees

Trustee committees handle a large portion of the actual work delegated to the National Service Board by the conference: conducting workshops and creating service aids, developing new N.A. literature, interacting with professionals interested in Narcotics Anonymous, keeping the media and the general public informed about N.A., and serving as the fellowship's contact with federal government agencies interested in our program.

**Committee on the conference and forums.** This committee is responsible for the conference program and agenda. It develops a program of opening addresses, presentation sessions, and mid-week discussion session topics for the annual meeting of the National Service Conference. The committee also considers questions relating to conference policies and procedures, prepares the final report of the annual conference meeting, and reviews conference advisory actions passed at the annual meeting, developing appropriate revisions to all relevant national service documents on the basis of those actions.

Several times a year, *regional forums* bring members of trustee committees together with members of local service committees and other N.A. members for a weekend of presentations, service workshops, question-and-answer exchanges, and open sharing sessions addressing national and local service topics. The NSB

Committee on the Conference and Forums is responsible for developing the programs for these events.

**Literature committee.** The NSB Literature Committee takes a careful look at the needs of the N.A. community in the United States for new recovery literature, and goes about developing that literature for publication. The committee uses any of a variety of practical and appropriate means in developing its drafts, depending on the nature of each project.

**Public information committee (P.I.).** This committee is charged with the broad responsibility of informing the national media, federal government agencies, and the general public of the existence and purpose of Narcotics Anonymous. By doing so, the P.I. committee helps prevent misunderstandings of our fellowship, and encourages the kind of broad-based awareness of N.A. recovery that leads more and more addicts to our meetings nationwide.

**Hospitals and institutions committee (H&I).** This committee focuses its attention on how better to carry the N.A. message into treatment and correctional facilities. The committee serves as the national N.A. community's representative to federal correctional and judicial authorities, national societies of treatment professionals, national correctional and judicial associations, and treatment industry organizations.

**Budget and finance committee.** Budgets for all trustee operations are coordinated through this committee. Chaired by the NSB treasurer, the committee reviews income forecasts, activity plans, and anticipated expenses for each trustee committee and subsidiary corporation, developing recommendations for approval by the whole National Service Board.

The budget and finance committee is also responsible for maintaining communications with local N.A. service committees and with the fellowship at large concerning the needs of the National Service Board. The NSB Budget and Finance Committee regularly provides information on national service finances in the national newsletter, and in mailings to groups, area committees, and regional committees.

## NSB subsidiary corporations

The U.S. National Service Board organizes subsidiary corporations to handle some of its responsibilities, particularly those requiring specialized business expertise and separate financial accounting.

**National Convention Corporation.** This subsidiary corporation is responsible for all the work involved in organizing our annual national convention. Among its tasks are the selection of sites and speakers for upcoming conventions. The National Convention Corporation also provides logistical support for regional

forums, local convention and office workshops, and the annual meeting of the National Service Conference.

**National Service Office Corporation.** The National Service Office serves as home base for all National Service Board operations. The board of directors of the NSO Corporation provides oversight for the business affairs and day-to-day activities of the office, including personnel management and the publication and distribution of Narcotics Anonymous literature in the United States.

The National Service Office also manages four staff departments responsible to assist trustee committees, correspond with local service committees, and produce service aids and periodicals at the direction of their related committees. NSO service departments include:

**Group services.** This department tracks and responds to new group registrations and requests for general information, produces and updates the various group services bulletins, provides liaison and support for local N.A. service centers, coordinates the N.A. Loner Group service, and publishes a newsletter for isolated addicts. The group services department assists the NSB Committee on the Conference and Forums.

**Literature**, assisting the trustee literature committee.

**Public Information**, aiding the trustee P.I. committee.

**Hospitals and Institutions**, which works with the trustee H&I committee.

**National Magazine Corporation.** This subsidiary corporation produces the American N.A. community's fellowship journal, *The N.A. Way Magazine*. The magazine provides a forum in which N.A. members nationwide can share their experience and ideas concerning recovery, unity, and service in Narcotics Anonymous. *For more on why the National Magazine Corporation has been designated as one of NSB, Inc.'s three wholly-owned subsidiaries, see page xxiv in the committee report at the front of this book.*

## Delegate review panels

The conference empowers the National Service Board to perform certain necessary tasks, and provides for sensible review, through the delegate review panels, of how those tasks are administered. Each trustee committee and each of the NSB's subsidiary corporation boards has a corresponding delegate review panel.

To insure that each delegate review panel has enough members to perform its duties, and to assure balance in the membership of each panel, panel composition is determined by appointment of the NSB Committee on the Conference and Forums. Shortly after a conference delegate's election at his regional assembly, he should send a service resume to the trustee committee on the conference, describing the kinds of N.A. service activities he's taken part in. The trustee conference committee selects some delegates for review panel membership on the basis of experience in

particular fields of service, others for broad service exposure, seeking a balance between the two in the overall membership of each panel. Once assigned to a particular panel, a conference delegate will serve his entire delegate term on the same review panel.

The relationship between a trustee committee or sub-corporation board and its related delegate review panel is a relatively straightforward one. The committee or sub-board is charged with the responsibility for administering certain services; the review panel is responsible to carefully review the committee or subsidiary corporation's work, and to report and comment on it for the benefit of other conference participants. This does not mean that their relationship is an adversarial one. Delegate review panel members are often asked for their advice, particularly when questions arise requiring broader perspective than that offered by committee or board members alone. At critical stages in the development of committee or subsidiary corporation projects, panel members may be asked for their recommendations on how the committee or board should proceed. Delegate panels, while providing the conference with independent, objective oversight of NSB operations, also provide the National Service Board year-round contact with a cross-section of Narcotics Anonymous members, each well-informed of trustee activities, yet sufficiently detached to be able to provide a fresh outlook on things.

In the course of the year, delegate review panel members receive comprehensive reports of the activities of their corresponding trustee committee or subsidiary corporation. Between conferences, each delegate review panel meets at least once with its related committee or sub-corporate board to review the group's work. Reports on these meetings, prepared by each delegate panel chair, are mailed to conference participants. And at the annual conference meeting, the panels process the conference advisory actions which ultimately will guide the National Service Board in the coming year.

At the first delegate panel meeting during the conference, panel members select one delegate who will serve as panel chairperson that year. The panel chair will moderate the review panel meetings, and present a report of the panel's conclusions to the full conference.

In the first panel session, delegates meet face to face with committee or sub-corporation board members and related staff. Each panel reviews the details of the annual report of its respective committee or subsidiary corporation. Special attention is given to significant matters which the committee or board felt it could not act upon without clear direction from the conference. Other matters relevant to the subsidiary corporation or committee's work are raised by delegates themselves in the course of the first panel session, while the committee or board members are present to answer questions and share their thoughts.

During the second delegate review panel session, only delegates attend (with the exception of the staff member assigned to assist the panel). The delegate panel

members discuss among themselves the affairs of the committee or subsidiary corporation their panel is attached to. The session concludes when the panel has reached a substantial consensus on the issues at hand.

At the third panel session during the conference, review panel members, committee members or subsidiary corporation directors, and staff come together again to consider the panel's recommendations. If, during its delegates-only session, the panel found itself at odds with either the report or the proposals of its related trustee body, all parties have a chance to discuss those differences before the panel chair makes his report to the full conference.

## The annual conference meeting

In the United States, conference delegates and trustees meet annually to review the state of national services and to chart a course for the coming year. Early in the conference, annual reports are presented to the entire conference body by the trustee committees. These reports cover every aspect of national service work over the previous year: projects completed and problems encountered, with full facts and figures. The complete written reports are mailed to all conference participants before the annual meeting, giving them time to study the reports thoroughly. Summaries of each report are given orally to the conference, pointing up the year's highlights as well as raising subjects for which the board is seeking additional direction.

Following each report, the microphone is made available so that participants can ask questions and offer general comments. The conference dialogue following opening reports gives the entire body a chance to begin forming a consensus on national service issues at the heart of conference deliberations. Thorough discussion of the trustee committee and subsidiary corporation reports follows, when the delegate review panels meet.

The annual meeting of the National Service Conference spends much, but not all, of its time in reports, delegate review panel meetings, elections, and the consideration of conference advisory actions. The conference also gives its time to a variety of sharing sessions, activities designed to help shape the group conscience of the conference. And while "group conscience is not a decision-making mechanism," as the essay on our Fifth Concept for Service reminds us, it "is the spiritual means by which a loving God influences our decisions." Even though these discussions may not always appear to have much of anything to do with the reports and motions that may be on the agenda, the conference values them as much as the specific conference advisory actions approved at the meeting's end. The conference meeting serves, to a great extent, as a channel through which a loving God influences the formation of a direction, a tone, a *conscience* for N.A.'s national services, and the conference sharing sessions do much to facilitate the development of that conscience.

One of the final items on the annual National Service Conference agenda is the election of a current conference participant to serve as the presiding officer for the next year's meeting. The conference presiding officer has a limited, but critical, role. The presiding officer's responsibility is to moderate the plenary sessions of the annual conference meeting, helping the conference proceed through its business in an orderly fashion. A good presiding officer can make all the difference in the world to the quality of discussions and decisions made at the annual meeting. For this reason, the conference considers carefully when selecting the next year's presiding officer.

In the weeks following the annual meeting, a full report on the proceedings is developed by the NSB Committee on the Conference and Forums. The full report is supplied to all conference members. A condensed report--a special issue of the national service newsletter--is sent to all N.A. groups in the country registered with the National Service Office.

## Conference election of trustees

As noted earlier, the U.S. National Service Board has half the number of members at any one time as there are registered national conference delegates, up to a maximum of thirty trustees. Two of those NSB members are nonaddict trustees elected by the National Service Board itself for two-year terms. The presence of these two NSB-elected nonaddict trustees on the board does not preclude the conference from electing additional nonaddict trustees; it only insures that the board has at least two nonaddicts, familiar with our principles, supportive of our aims, bringing a certain objectivity to the deliberations of the National Service Board. These two trustees may serve no more than two terms consecutively. Once elected by the board, the conference may disapprove them. Following their presentation to the National Service Conference, the remaining vacancies on the board are filled by direct election of the conference.

Because of the hefty responsibilities assigned to the National Service Board, and the degree of delegated authority vested in the trustees, N.A.'s Sixth Concept is considered more seriously in their election, perhaps, than in elections held at any other level of service. The conference selects trustees on the basis of some combination of the following qualifications: understanding of N.A. service and principles; personal maturity; in the case of addict-trustees, at least ten years clean; good judgment, objectivity, and the courage of their convictions; sound business or professional background; and availability for vigorous service involvement. To better assure the conference that trustee candidates meet these qualifications, it has created a nominations panel to search out and screen potential candidates.

The *conference nominations panel* is composed of five former trustees, drawn annually by lot from among all former members of the National Service Board who have expressed their willingness to serve on the panel. The nominations panel

consults with the National Service Board to determine what kinds of individuals, with what sorts of backgrounds, talents, and training might be especially needed on the board. During the year, the panel actively seeks the very best potential trustees, not those who simply meet the basic qualifications. The panel accepts individual recommendations of potential trustees from anyone at all--the more possibilities they have, the more likely they are to find the kinds of people worthy of the conference's trust. Especially sought are recommendations from regional committees. Using resumes and personal interviews to assess the background and abilities of those under consideration, the panel is able to nominate trustee candidates it can wholly vouch for. The nominations panel includes its recommendations on trustee candidates with the national service reports mailed to conference participants prior to the annual meeting.

Trustee nominees must be approved by two-thirds of all eligible participants attending the year's conference meeting. Should more candidates gain two-thirds approval than there are trustee vacancies, the top vote-getters will be placed on the National Service Board. Trustees elected by the conference serve four-year terms, and may serve no more than two terms consecutively.

## National service board meetings

The trustees meet regularly to coordinate an overall strategy for the national service responsibilities delegated to them by the conference. First, the trustee committees and the directors of the NSB's subsidiary corporations meet to consider their particular fields of responsibilities. After the committees and sub-boards have met, the full National Service Board comes together. First, they hear reports on the activities of each committee and sub-board. Then, it's on to business discussions, sometimes dealing with matters referred to the NSB for broader discussion by a committee or subsidiary corporation, and sometimes offering guidance, support, or redirection to a committee or sub-board.

## Input to national services

Suggestions for new national service projects, or comments on current projects, can come from individual N.A. members, local service boards or committees, conference delegates, members of the National Service Office staff--anyone, anywhere. They are received at the NSO year 'round.

Once received at the office, each suggestion is forwarded to the staff member assigned to assist the trustee committee or subsidiary corporation which is responsible for the question being asked, and to that board or committee's chairperson. The staff member consults with the chairperson on how to address the suggestion. At the chairperson's request, the staff member may perform additional background research before including the suggestion on the subsidiary corporation or committee's agenda. If, after considering available information, the group feels

prepared to act on the suggestion, they do so, including a report of the action they've taken in the national service newsletter or in their next report to the conference.

Sometimes, the committee or subsidiary corporation feels it needs to seek the advice of others before it can decide what to do with a suggestion. It may ask the entire National Service Board to discuss the suggestion during the board's next sharing session. Or it may consult its delegate review panel. Depending on the review panel's response, the suggestion may end up on the agenda of the National Service Conference. *All* suggestions received by a committee or subsidiary corporation, whether acted upon during the year, rejected, or forwarded for further consideration, are reported to the sub-corporation or committee's delegate review panel. The final disposition of each suggestion is reported to the person or persons who initially took the time to offer it.

# Sample conference agenda listing

**SUNDAY**

**Evening:** Orientation for new participants.

**MONDAY**

**Morning:**
1) Opening roll call.
2) Opening address.
3) First sharing session.

**Afternoon:**
1) Presentation session--2 or 3 short prepared topical talks, followed by open mike time.
2) National service reports, discussion.

**Evening:** National service reports, discussion, continued.

**TUESDAY**

**Morning:** National service reports, discussion, concluded.

**Afternoon:**
1) Presentation session.
2) Delegate review panel meetings.

**Evening:** Delegate review panel meetings, continued.

**WEDNESDAY**

**Morning:** Delegate review panel meetings, continued.

**Afternoon:**
1) Presentation session.
2) Delegate review panel meetings, concluded.

**Evening:** Mid-week discussion sessions on current group-related topics.

**THURSDAY**

**Morning:**
1) Second sharing session.
2) Trustee elections.

**Afternoon:**
1) Presentation session.
2) Delegate review panel reports, conference advisory action proposals.

**Evening:** Panel reports, proposals continued.

**FRIDAY**

**Morning:** Panel reports, proposals continued.

**Afternoon:**
1) Presentation session.
2) Panel reports, proposals concluded.
3) Selection of next year's conference presiding officer.
4) Conference closing addresses.

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

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

Dale S, WSC 90

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

Van Nuys, California

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*

## Completion and approval plan

**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 periodically, 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.

# 1995

# RESOLUTION GROUP

# 'UPDATE'

# Resolution Group Update

August 14, 1995

## Background

NA has experienced explosive growth in the last twelve years since the first publishing of our Basic Text. We have evolved from a struggling fellowship with scattered groups in the United States to a worldwide fellowship in numerous languages and cultures. This growth has been difficult to deal with and has illuminated many problems with the way we do business at the world level of service. Clearly, structures and processes that were inadequate for a small U.S. fellowship become major stumbling blocks when trying to deal with the complexities of geographic size, language, and cultural differences which we now face.

In light of all the problems that continued to surface within our current structure, the WSC decided to take an inventory of NA world services to determine our strengths and weaknesses. The hope was that we would find better ways to fulfill our primary purpose. Surveys and inventory forms were distributed throughout the service structure. Every world service board and committee did a self-assessment. A committee called the Composite Group was formed and consultant services were used to analyze all the inventory materials. They presented their reports at WSC'95 and the conference discussed and prioritized the issues. A committee called the Resolution Group (that's us) was elected to consider and recommend solutions (resolutions) to the problems. The entire process will take several years to accomplish. Our task is simply to begin the job. The members of the Resolution Group are Jeff Baker, Jeff Spencer, Danette Banyai, Ron Hofius, Bob Ferri and Walter Johnson. An RSR Review panel was formed at the same time to give us feedback on our communication and general direction. Also available as a resource is a pool of NA members chosen by the conference.

## Our Original Task and Our Goals

The problems identified in the inventory were prioritized by the conference in the following order:

1. Lack of vision for WSO, WCC, and WSC
2. Lack of a strategic plan
3. Right-sizing of committees and boards
4. Integration of management techniques to world services
5. Bringing the message of hope to the suffering addict more effectively.

The Resolution Process Plan adopted by the conference gave us the task of considering and recommending solutions for these priority problems. We are expected to complete our work by October, 1995 and make a presentation at the World Services Meeting, November 10-12 in Manhattan Beach, CA. These problems are inter-related and don't lend themselves to easy solutions. We could go off in any number of directions and spend much more time than we have been given on any one of them. Rather than just go off and try to do that, we realized on our first conference call, and affirmed clearly in our first meeting, that we would have to carefully limit the scope of our work to something we could realistically hope to accomplish. We developed four goals which we believe, if accomplished, would make a significant contribution toward developing and implementing specific solutions to these problems.

These goals are:

1. To write a vision statement for NA world services.
2. To write a mission statement for the World Service Conference.
3. To create proposals for structural change of NA world services.
4. To create proposals for future work.

We have had three meetings so far. Reports on each meeting are mailed to all conference participants. If you would like copies and haven't yet seen any, contact your RSR, RSR-A, or the WSO who will mail

you a copy on request. Throughout the project we have worked with NA members from around the globe to give us a worldwide perspective and to provide input into what the future of NA world services should look like. It is very clear to us, and we hope it is to everyone else, that we can only make the smallest beginning toward the real solutions to these problems in the time provided. There is no quick fix here, no "magic bullet" that we are going to produce and bring forth easy solutions that everyone can agree to. If a loving God is going to produce the changes needed, all of us will have to allow that by approaching this work with open minds and hearts. We all need to stand ready to work toward our common welfare with all we've got in the years to come. We are really coming from the heart and trying to arrive at some useful proposals that we hope will steer this effort in the right direction, but we urge everyone in world services, the members of boards and committees, RSRs, and staff members to be ready to take full responsibility for actually making the changes that are to come.

## Vision and Mission Work

Our second meeting was devoted to brainstorming about vision and mission statements with additional members invited to this meeting. Each had a unique perspective historically, culturally, and philosophically. Their input was much needed and appreciated. We ended with a draft which has received continued work since that time. We've made a lot of progress on the statements so far and the report from our third meeting contains our latest draft of the vision and mission statements. The work is often difficult, as we struggle through each line, trying to incorporate a sense of joy and fulfillment about experiencing the WSC and being involved in NA world services. The content of the drafts hold true for us; however, we want something to capture a sense of inspiration. We have been cautioned about translation issues and the fact that something that is inspiring in English may not be so in other languages. The biggest help we can be to translations is to keep our sentences short, which seems to be close to impossible for many of us.

## Structure Work

Our third meeting began with each invited member to this meeting giving a presentation about their personal views on what a revised world service structure would look like. The amount of time and effort that they had obviously put into this task was almost overwhelming. We are truly appreciative of their efforts. It is interesting to note many basic similarities in all of the presentations, although unique perspectives were definitely discovered. Following are some of the things we agreed on:

- The WSC needs to focus on the "big picture."
- NA world services needs to focus on world issues.
- Increased & simplified communication is a must.
- The structure needs clear lines of accountability.
- The Twelve Concepts are one basis for resolution.
- Groups have final authority.
- More effective delegation is necessary.
- Better direct support of local services is necessary.
- Some degree of autonomy is desirable for national services.
- Some type of geographic division is desirable/necessary.

## Next Step

Our next meetings are scheduled for the weekends of August 26 and September 29. As always, please write us in care of the WSO to give us your input. If you support our direction, we'd like to hear it. If you have a conflicting viewpoint, we want that too. We can't do this alone.

The Resolution Group will present the finalized resolutions in the *Conference Agenda Report* no later than 1 January 1996 for a five-month approval period. This will provide the fellowship with the formal opportunity to consider all of the options proposed by the Resolution Group, prior to WSC'96.

Your prayers and your partnership in this effort are badly needed and much appreciated.

# 1995 CONTRACT BETWEEN WSO AND J/K ASSOCIATES CONSULTING IN REGARDS TO: 'RESOLUTION GROUP REPORT'

# M E M O R A N D U M

**DATE:** October 25, 1995

**TO:** Kelly Chamberlain
J/K Associates

**FROM:** Stephan G. Lantos
World Service Office

**RE:** Resolution Group Report

Hi Kelly:

This brief memo is to follow up on our conversation today. I believe the following are the points we agreed on:

1. You will review the first sixty two pages of the Resolution Group Report by November 3, 1995.
2. You will develop a report outlining your impressions of those sections of the RG Report, focusing on whether or not, in your opinion, the resolutions outlined within address the problems identified by last year's World Service Conference. If they do, in what way; if they do not, why not?
3. You will deliver the report in hardcopy and floppy disk to the WSO by end of business (5 p.m.) on Friday, November 3, 1995.
4. You will also deliver an invoice for your services not to exceed $500 on November 3, 1995.

I hope this covers the points we discussed. If you have any questions about this memo or the report, please call me at your convenience. My extension at the WSO is 141. Thanks for your willingness to continue working on this project.

# Interoffice
MEMORANDUM

To: Stephan G. Lantos
World Service Office

From: Kelly Chamberlain
J/K Associates

Subject: Resolution Group Report (RGR)

Date: November 3, 1995

The following report is in response to the discussions which took place at a meeting at WSO on October 25, 1995, and the confirming memorandum, which I requested and which was faxed to me on the same date (see enclosure).

I have reviewed the first 62 pages of the subject report and the following are my findings. The findings will be based on the categories captioned on page 9 of the introduction entitled, "Our Original Task and Our Goals." The following problems were identified by the 1995 World Service Conference participants:

1. Lack of vision for WSO, WCC, and WSC.
2. Lack of a strategic plan.
3. Right-sizing of committees and boards.
4. Integration of Management techniques to world services.
5. Bringing the message of hope more effectively to the suffering addict.

Each section will answer the questions of whether the Resolutions Group Report addressed the problems identified by the last year's World Service Conference. The Conference unanimously adopted the consultant's report, so it would seem to make sense to use that criteria for comparison. Certain selected sections of the report are used so this may be a stand alone document. The selections are not exhaustive and should be considered merely a way to capture the spirit of the report.

1. Lack of vision for WSO, WCC, and WSC.

Consultants Report Recommendation:

No Mission Statement for WSO to Provide Corporate Focus

A Description of Each Identified Problem

A mission statement is a daily reminder of why a group of people get together. It could simply say: "WSO is an organization dedicated to support the fellowship and the groups, and help manage NA resources to provide the fellowship with needed products and services."

A Rational for the Determination of Each Problem

WSO is basically a support organization. While the vision of NA is clear to all, the mission of WSO is not clearly understood. The fellowship has a hard time relating to WSO as a provider of needed products and services. They do not understand what WSO does for them. This problem points toward a lack of leadership in the organization, its inability to focus on the mission, and what kind of value added it directly brings to the NA fellowship.

A Statement of Suggestions for Corrective Actions

Develop a mission statement for World Services Office; make sure that everyone throughout the rank and file clear understands what WSO stands for and what it can do for them; make certain WSO can execute (live up to) this commitment to the fellowship by having leadership and an organizational structure committed to supporting the primary mission function.

Note: There are, of course, other sections of the Consultants Report that addressed these problems, this is merely an example.

Analysis of whether or not the Resolution Group Report addressed these problems:

The RGR addressed the "lack of a vision" extremely well. The main thrust of the Consultant Report (CR) was that the main business of NA is to carry their message of hope, "find the opportunity for a new way of life," (RGR 16) to the still suffering addict. The vision stated was somewhat muddied by statements like "one day" and "in their own language and culture." I can understand trying to touch all the bases, but you might consider a short declaration, as stated in the Fifth Tradition, i.e., that no addict need die without hearing the message of hope offered

by the NA Program. The spirit of cooperation is certainly laudable along with the spirit of unity and addressed concerns in the CR. Finally, the statement 1.2.6 (RGR) "is right on" when it states, "Honesty, trust, and goodwill are the foundation of these ideals. In all our service efforts we pray that a loving Higher Power will guide us." He will, because this is a Divinely inspired program. The RCR report goes on to say, "The program of Narcotics Anonymous is not 'ours' to do with as we please, it is a gift from out Higher Power." That speaks volumes and should be the corner stone on which to build for the future.

The mission statement for WSC looks fine and addresses the concerns contained in the CR.

2. Lack of a strategic plan.

Consultants Report Recommendation:

II. Introduction

Organizational structures can be compared to the frame and beams of a house, while a house can potentially stand with a weak frame, a minor adverse condition, such as a strong wind, will bring down the house. A key responsibility of senior management and board of directors/trustees is to ensure that an organization has a strong foundation to grow during prosperous times and withstand adverse conditions during difficult times.

Successful strategy execution depends greatly on good internal organization and competent personnel. Building a capable organization should always be a top priority. Three types of organizational actions are paramount:

- Developing an organizational structure that is conducive to successful strategy execution -- and then execute that strategy.
- Seeing that the organization has the skills, core competencies, managerial talents, technical know-how, and competitive capabilities it needs.
- Selecting the right people for key positions.

There are very few hard and fast rules for designing a strategy-supportive organizational structure. Every firm's internal organization is somewhat different with it's own set of characteristics, the result of many organizational decisions and historical circumstances. Moreover, every strategy is grounded in its own set of key success factors and critical tasks. The only real imperative is to design the internal organization structure around the key success factors and critical tasks inherent in the firm's strategy and mission. This must be tempered with the fact that this is a fellowship not a business, although WSO does have business aspects.

The following five sequence procedures are a useful guide for fitting structure to strategy:

- Pinpoint the key functions and tasks necessary for successful strategy execution.
- Reflect on how strategy-critical functions and organizational units relate to those that are routine and to those that provide staff support.
- Make strategy-critical business units that functions as the main organizational building blocks, and concentrate critical resources on those functions that directly support the NA mission.
- Determine the degrees of authority needed to manage each organizational unit bearing in mind both the benefits and costs of decentralized decision making.

- Provide for effective lines of communication and coordination among the various organizational units, and work as a cohesive team to achieve the organization's common goals.

In summary, the test of successful strategy implementation is whether actual organization performance matches or exceeds the targets spelled out in the strategic plan. In deciding how to implement strategy, leaders of the organization have to determine what internal conditions are needed to execute the strategic plan successfully. Then they must create these conditions as rapidly as possible. The process involves creating a series of tight fits:

- Between strategy and organizational structure.
- Between strategy and the organizations skills and competencies.
- Between strategy and budget allocation.
- Between strategy and internal policies, procedures, and support systems.
- Between strategy and the reward structure.
- Between strategy and the corporate cultures.

The tighter the fits the more powerful strategy execution becomes, and the more likely targeted performance can actually be achieved.

Implementation is a job for the whole management team. All managers have to consider what actions to take in their areas to achieve the intended results. They each need to operate under the proper organizational structure, with the appropriate action agenda, and as a cohesive team.

Note: There are, of course, other sections of the Consultants Report that addressed these problems, this is merely an example.

<u>Analysis of whether or not the Resolution Group Report addressed the lack of a strategic plan:</u>

The issues of a strategic plan are not done using the usual Harvard Business School Method, which was outlined in the "Eleven Steps to Strategic Planning" materials that was sent to you subsequent to the conference and during the deliberations of this fine and dedicated Resolutions Group. This is certainly understandable as it takes special training and expertise. Strategic issues were, however, addressed and a time-line was established to implement their recommendations (RGR 59-62). These are all very good moves. I believe a good first step has been made in addressing a formal strategic plan which is still needed. It will be up to the next working group to formalize that process where you take the vision statement, write a mission statement (based on the vision), establish policies and procedures to be sure the mission is accomplished, and finally have some means of accountability to be sure that people are following the procedures. The process has begun, and this is the hardest part. Don't lose your momentum. Press On! Lean into it!

Note: I will forward another copy of "Eleven Steps to Strategic Planning" next week.

3. Right-sizing of committees and boards.

Consultants Report Recommendation:

IV. A Statement of Identified Problems

*"One of the truly remarkable things about groups is that they can make 2 + 2 = 5; of course, they also have the capability of making 2 + 2 = 3."* (Stephen P. Robbins)

1. Committees

A Description of Each Identified Problem

Committee's do serve a purpose, at the group, area, and regional levels. They are imperative. They ensure that the views, issues, and concerns of a wide spectrum of members are represented down the hierarchy triangle to the WSO organization. However, to conduct what seems to be an infinite number of committees and sub-committee meetings, detracts from the main objective of each department within the organization.

"Committees are notorious for getting lost in their own dust as they stumble down the road of uncertain destiny." (Author Unknown)

A Rationale for the Determination of Each Problem

Committees are not a substitute for leadership and decision making. With the limited human and financial resources of WSO, the committee's have created inefficient redundancies that create a sense of lack of accomplishment, focus leading frustration and confusion in the organization; thus, as an example, there are literature task forces in a number of committees.

A Statement of Suggestions for Corrective Action

Our group believes that the confusion in the WSO organization has resulted in frustrated employees, missed targets and objectives, inability to complete tasks and not being able to reach a greater number of still-suffering addicts.

Recommendations:

Reorganize the WSO organization (see attached chart) to focus on specific mission critical tasks, allowing for committees to operate under the facilitation of manager of communications or human resources or operation, thereby giving the committee a specific task to accomplish under one agenda not multiple ones.

Reduce committee's by 50% and focus on less tasks to be accomplished. However, complete the tasks that were started. We recognize the need for members to have a service function at this level, and efficiency should be tempered with that factor.

*TAKEN FROM THE OVERVIEW OF THE INVENTORY FOR BOARDS/COMMITTEES*

The resources of each committee/board were reviewed from the material (Part II) provided by the Inventory Composite Group, and it was determined that, although issues were identified, the analysis does not give a clear picture of the issues at hand.

In each case, the write-up shows dissension within each committee. No clear short-term or long-term goals are defined.

Most committees feel that there is no trust within the committee structure.

The committees identified have overlapping and/or duplication of work.

There does not seem to be any written procedures, either globally or by committee. If there are any written procedures, they are not thoroughly understood.

The committees feel their strength is in identifying the short-term goals, but there is no clear leadership within the committees. Therefore, objectives are not obtainable.

Communication within the organization is limited. It would appear that each committee works independently, and they interact only as needed. According to some respondents, trust is also an issue between committees.

Some committees/boards seem to receive very little input from the members while carrying out the wishes of the chair.

Note: There are, of course, other sections of the Consultants Report that addressed these problems, this is merely an example.

Analysis of whether or not the Resolution Group Report addressed these problems:

A valiant and laudable attempt to bring order and sanity out of chaos. The Statement of the Resolution (RGR 3.1 37) is excellent and exactly addresses the CR concerns. The architecture (using the building a house analogy) that is proposed is far superior to the present one. If it is adopted, it might be wise to try it on a temporary basis, i.e. for a couple of years, to see if it works before permanently adopting. Flexibility is the key, and it is addressed in both the CR and the RGR.

The World Board and World Pool are excellent alternatives to the present situation. The inverted pyramid concept should always be kept in mind. This was done in the RCR. Bravo! The Human Resource Panel is a fine idea, but care should be taken to avoid elitism and thought given to including the rank and file member whose only qualification is a love for NA and who may have a full time job. The World Board concept will, I believe, solve many of the "turf wars" and streamline the structure.

A military type cap I bought at the recent SCRCNA in Palm Springs states, "The War is Over." Why don't we declare peace and move on toward the next century following our Loving Higher Power?

4. Integration of management techniques to world services

Consultant's Report

Organizational Structure

I. Executive Summary

Having the opportunity to stand in front of the curtain on this project, we need to emphasize the fact that the NA organization shows a lot of drift in its direction as a whole, and people really do not have a clear idea as to where they are going with the organization. The following information is not new. However, as a point of reiteration:

1. The company's earnings could be improved significantly. (Although it is a non-profit organization, earnings appear stagnant.)

2. The fellowship seems to not understand what valuable products and services World Services provides to them -- internal surveys support this claim.

3. World Services incorporates three different activities: (a) publishing, (b) meetings, and more importantly, the healing and self-realization aspect of addicts. The organization needs to make a decision on whether to stay in the publishing business or out-source this activity. We feel that someone else could handle the meetings and conferences on a national level, allowing NA personnel to concentrate their efforts on their core business at the local level.

4. We recommend an immediate injection of "urgency and discipline" at the World Service Organization level. The principles of Total Quality should be applied to NA and must produce bottom-line results. In order for the organization to grow, continuous improvement must be applied. The WSO needs to look outward to satisfy their bottom-line customers (the fellowship of NA).

5. If the message at the WSO is to serve the entire organization, then the people employed (either voluntary or paid) should have a mission statement, measurable goals, be accountable for their actions, and have adequate education and training to do their jobs.

6. A start-up and outreach business unit within the Operations umbrella should be commissioned to review any future expansion and that should be their only charter. According to the literature, there will be a significant influx of new members in the near term.

7. Change is imminent. NA will have to do the same if they want to improve their efficiency in a global environment. We believe that a strategic plan (for 5, 10 and 15 years) is in order.

In our professional opinion, the board members need to be told the truth in plain language of the state of their organization or chance the continued erosion of its members and hard working

supporters. We shouldn't hem and haw about what we revealed, this happened over time and now it's time to change.

Remember, this is not about us, it is about an assignment that we undertook to give our professional observation and analysis. NA's strategic situation is not familiar to us, but we do realize that the goal is to help the still-suffering addict find recovery in NA. We are trying to hold up a mirror, so that WSO can see themselves from our standpoint.

2. Unclear Leadership at the Top

A Description of Each Identified Problem

The concept of two executive directors is an unusual one. However, there are no organizations of this size, which we can identify, that currently function in this manner. As a result, the tremendous amount of effort that individuals put forth go unfulfilled, because there is no one that makes a decision based on the inputs received.

A Rational for the Determination of Each Problem

In all organizations there is only one person that the Board puts in charge. That individual is responsible to provide the leadership necessary to implement the organizations mission and set the necessary steps in place for it's successful execution. The leader must select a competent team (which could include two deputies) to ensure that the vision of the board of directors is carried out, a plan of action is put in place and obstacles are identified and resolved.

A Statement of Suggestions for Corrective Actions

Select one executive director to lead the organization. The new board will have the responsibility of interviewing and selecting the new Executive director.

3. No Mission Statement for WSO to Provide Corporate Focus

A Description of Each Identified Problem

A mission statement is a daily reminder of why a group of people get together. It could simply say: "WSO is an organization dedicated to support the fellowship and the groups, and help manage NA resources to provide the fellowship with needed products and services."

A Rational for the Determination of Each Problem

WSO is basically a support organization. While the vision of NA is clear to all, the mission of WSO is not clearly understood. The fellowship has a hard time relating to WSO as a provider of needed products and services. They do not understand what WSO does for them. This problem points toward a lack of leadership in the organization, its inability to focus on the mission, and what kind of value added it directly brings to the NA fellowship.

A Statement of Suggestions for Corrective Actions

Develop a mission statement for World Services Office; make sure that everyone throughout the rank and file clear understands what WSO stands for and what it can do for them; make certain WSO can execute (live up to) this commitment to the fellowship by having leadership and an organizational structure committed to supporting the primary mission function.

4. Lack of clear objectives for organization or non-execution of stated objectives. No clear objectives for the organization in terms of helping the two main segments which NA was founded on.

A Description of Each Identified Problem

Lack of Clear Objectives for the World Services Office (WSO) organization or not executing Stated Objectives.

This is really a sub-set of the lack of leadership issue which manifests itself in the organization not having clear objectives or goals. When objectives are clearly defined, they are typically left incomplete due to the fact that individuals are "volunteered" into other committees.

A Rational for the Determination of Each Problem

Lack of Clear Objectives for Organization or None Execution of Stated Objectives.

The only two organizations that WSO is to serve are the members and the groups. Due to a lack of leadership, more and more committees are created to address an increasing number of issues. As committees, they can only recommend; they do not have the authority to execute.

Clarify the specific functions that committees and WSO staff perform in their contribution to NA. Clearly establish mission statements for each committee, their goals and objectives, and ways to measure their success (metric) when they accomplish their mission. Clearly establish a team leader and team member with clearly-defined responsibilities. Provide the resources (training, people, dollars) to execute the mission. Be sure each member is made to understand each aspect of the committee before they serve.

5. There doesn't seem to be any stringent requirements for the full time employees. There are too many side activities for individuals; focus is constantly being diverted to participate in activities within committees in which they might not have any experience or training.

A Description of Each Identified Problem

No competency requirement for the full-time employees.

Most of NA is run by volunteers. However, individuals that are full time and reside in WSO must bring a set of skills focused to do their job, or WSO must provide the necessary training. Volunteers should also be selected on the basis of the skills they can bring to the organization.

A Rational for the Determination of Each Problem

In all organizations (for profit or not for profit) individuals must bring expertise to the company. One needs experts in publishing, human resources, information systems, operations, legal matters, marketing and finance. All are considered mission critical tasks, and the management team is responsible for hiring individuals capable of doing the job.

A Statement of Suggestions for Corrective Actions

NA World Services Office needs to establish a Human Resources Organization within their organizational structure to prepare workers' job descriptions and identify the necessary qualifications for each and every position in the organization. If personnel do not have the necessary qualifications to do the job, NA WSO should establish a training program to teach them the skills which are needed.

6. Lack of proper organizational structure.

A Description of Each Identified Problem

As previously stated, committees are appropriate at the World Services support structure level. However, the "Corporate Support Structure" must have the proper organizational foundation to help the most important people in the organization -- the fellowship and the groups.

Our review of internal memos found great intentioned tasks that were never completed -- examples of an organization that is confused and lacks focus. The yearly plans outline, with great intentions, tasks and goals that were not completed at the end of the year.

A Rational for the Determination of Each Problem

Lack of leadership and focused organizational structure have been the reasons why so many committees exist, while committees are appropriate at the group and area level, WSO's organization is the corporate support structure under which the field organizations receive their support and direction.

A Statement of Suggestion for Corrective Actions

The new board, in conjunction with the executive director, should establish a comprehensive management review of every committee's purpose and eliminate those not directly committed to supporting the primary NA mission. Overlapping responsibilities should be considered. Fill the key positions with highly focused and skilled individuals. Establish clear goals and objectives for each committee and a "sun set" requirement for when it goes out of business if its mission is not a continuing one. Establish and manage a "strategic plan" to provide organizational focus and goals.

However you wish to view yourselves, keep in mind that NA is a global organization with a noble cause. It is only appropriate that the most effective organization be established and the most competent individuals placed in position to ensure that a greater number of suffering addicts are reached with the message of hope.* (see Note [2])

Note: There are, of course, other sections of the Consultants Report that addressed these problems, this is merely an example.

Analysis of whether or not the Resolution Group Report addressed item 4. Integration of management techniques to world services (problem):

Yes and no. Are you a business or a fellowship or both? Some issues were addressed and some were side stepped, or not mentioned at all. One would suppose it was because of the ever present politics. It is sad, but true, that organizational politics drive most decisions anywhere you go. Some modern management techniques are appropriate for NA, some are not. When the CR was written great care was taken not to take a cold (bottom line) approach to these issues. The new proposed structure is just fine (RGR 38) and is a good start. This is mentioned elsewhere in this analysis.

The streamlining of lines of communication certainly addresses this item. The establishment of the Human Resources Director, Strategic Planning Director, and Public Relations Director is certainly a good move. These additions to WSO will certainly help to solve many of the problems that were outlined in the CR. The only question is, "who do they report to"? Process ownership is a fine concept if the job can be done. Will they have the staff, budget, and backing to do their job? These are areas that need to be addressed by the next committee which will replace the RG. The internal structure of WSO was not addressed even though it was stressed in the CR (107).

* Note [2] As in all things moderation is essential. WSC could be viewed as an "NA United Nations." Even though the tendency is to try to be all things to all people, it should be remembered that the USA

1. Holds the Intellectual Properties Trust.
2. Generates nearly all the income.
3. Is the Mother of all groups.

Therefore, the needs of the US should not be subordinated to the point of hurting the goose that lays the golden eggs.

Many US firms have made this mistake. By being "too international." They have somehow lost sight of their national origins, wherein lies their strength.

Please remember, this precious program was given by a Loving Higher Power to two white dudes of European descent who were middle class, middle aged, and Protestant. Everything begins there and from their point of view.

5. Bringing the message of hope more effectively to the suffering addict.

Consultants Report Recommendation:

In reviewing the full spectrum of data provided to us, it is almost immediately apparent that the organization has failed to grow, not because of the lack of validity of its' philosophy or the need for its services (the availability of a large population of still-suffering addicts). It has failed to grow because there is a great deal of confusion at the top levels of the World Services Organization. This confusion results in perceptions of lack of trust and uncertainty over the value of services provided by World Services at the lowest levels of organization. There is a lack of discipline in the execution of important strategies allowing for the growth and, therefore, expanded outreach by the NA organization.

Additionally, the organization is so intertwined in committees that two results have occurred.

1. Not exercising it's full potential of leadership.

2. A lack of clear objectives that must be identified and accomplished. Because of the over abundance of projects, directives and committee involvements, a series of objectives

Note: There are, of course, other sections of the Consultants Report that addressed these problems, this are merely are examples.

Analysis of whether or not the Resolution Group Report addressed these problems:

The vision statements certainly do address the core issues which encompasses everyone involved in the fellowship, whether trusted servant, special worker, or both. The question they should ask themselves, "Is what I'm doing promoting, in one way or another, the vision of NA, which is to carry the message to the still suffering addict." The mission statement for WSC certainly attempts to carry that concept forward. I was very impressed with the introduction which examined, in part, the need for members to be of service at the world level and what is behind that. It showed great courage and insight (RGR 4-5 Section 3). It says in part, "Again, we must all be willing to go home if necessary, to find other ways to fulfill our needs xxxx. If we truly love NA, we will be willing to make that personal sacrifice for the greater good of the fellowship."

# 1998

# TRANSITION GROUP REPORT ON

# RESOLUTION 'A'

**Narcotics Anonymous**
**World Service Conference**
PO Box 9999
Van Nuys, CA 91409 USA
Telephone (818) 773-9999
Fax (818) 700-0700

# M E M O R A N D U M

**DATE:** 26 March, 1998

**TO:** WSC participants

**FROM:** Transition Group

**RE:** Report on Resolution A

Attached is the Transition Group report on Resolution A. Resolution A was adopted in principle at WSC '96 and read:

"To approve *in principle* a change in participation at a new WSC to achieve the following objectives:

1. to reduce the total number of representatives
2. to provide for equal representation from all geographic entities; and,
3. to encourage a consensus-based decision-making process"

As we reported throughout this past conference year, the Transition Group is forwarding this report to act as a summary of activity related to Resolution A during the inventory/resolution process. We hope that this report will stand as the basis for all future discussions regarding Resolution A.

There will be an opportunity to discuss this report at the upcoming World Service Conference sometime after the business session has been completed. Also, as the conclusion of this report indicates, the World Service Conference may prioritize Resolution A as a discussion topic for Conference Year 1998-99. In any case, the one thing that is clear is that, whatever is to occur regarding Resolution A and any changes to representation and participation at a new World Service Conference must arise from the regional delegates and their respective regions. We recognize, of course, that the conference has already expressed approval of the principles embodied in Resolution A. However, without such a groundswell of grassroots support for such changes, we can probably anticipate little in the way of actual implementation of those principles.

In conclusion, we hope that our having gathered all this information into one packet will serve the future World Service Conference as a resource for any future work regarding Resolution A.

*q:\tg\reports\ResAcovmem.doc*

### *Introduction*

The purpose of the following report is to provide conference participants, and all concerned members, with the background material relevant to Resolution A. Included is a summary of all that has been said and done regarding Resolution A during the past five years as the inventory/resolution process has taken place. We hope that this information will serve as a resource to whatever group assumes the further work necessary to the successful development of a new WSC that will achieve the ideals described in Resolution A. We hope as well that this report will help provide the basis of that future work in the years to come.

The issues of representation and participation at the World Service Conference have been examined and reexamined by world service participants for over a decade. In the September 1987 *Fellowship Report* the Select Committee had actually proposed a system of national and continental conferences that they believed would help address the growing problems that were being encountered by NA communities outside the United States and Canada. Service materials that weren't relevant to other countries' laws and customs, cultural differences, and the overwhelming problems that world services had experienced with our early literature translations efforts—all of these increasing difficulties demonstrated that yes, we were growing, but that we could also expect significant growing pains as our fellowship became international.

### *Composite Group—1993-1995*

It would be more than five years after the Select Committee's 1987 report before the World Service Conference would begin a process encouraging widespread discussion of both representation and participation at our WSC among local NA communities. In April 1993, the WSC created the Composite Group (CG), a group of twelve trusted servants whose task was to develop inventory "tools" that would allow world services to conduct a self-examination, known as the world services inventory. From May 1993 to March 1995, the CG facilitated a comprehensive inventory of world services. During this two-year period, they surveyed the fellowship regarding the effectiveness of world services. They developed inventory tools for use by world service boards and committees in performing their own self-assessment. And they also compiled this information and conducted small group sessions at WSC '94 so that the conference could asses its own effectiveness. The results of the Composite Group's research were eventually summarized in Book One of the group's 1995 report.

The information most relevant to the issues surrounding Resolution A came from the 1994 WSC's self-assessment. During this phase of the inventory process, WSC participants split into seventeen small groups in order to address a series of questions developed by the Composite Group. The results weren't too surprising, insofar as they simply confirmed what most people had already assumed to be many of the difficulties associated with the size and the processes of the WSC. Perhaps most significant was the fact that we finally had something more or less definitive that said, yes, we really do need to change some things, and here is what we need to address.

The problems identified during the WSC '94 self-assessment can be divided into three categories that correspond to the three numbered sub-elements of Resolution A: (1) The number of representatives at the WSC; (2) The need for more equitable representation at the conference; and (3) The desire to move away from our motion-oriented style of business and toward a more discussion-driven, consensus-based decision-making process.

## 1) The number of representatives at the WSC

Relevant to the number of representatives at the WSC, 1994 conference participants stated that the "representation at WSC exceeds participation" – "Many RSRs attend the conference, but only a small portion of them participate. This is due to financial difficulties, language barriers, and transportation problems. As a result, there is a large silent population of our fellowship" (CG 60).

Related to this issue of so many participants at the conference, participants stated that the "length of WSC sessions" is a problem due to so many people on the floor, which creates "inhuman working conditions, with nine- to twelve-hour days and no breaks," which in turn results in "stress and animosity" (CG 60).

## 2) The need for more equitable representation at the conference

Regarding this second element, conference participants stated that "There is a decision-making imbalance at WSC due to a disproportionate number of USA RSRs in the voting body. . . . USA voting participants outnumber voting participants from outside the USA, creating an inequality in the decision-making process. As a result, a power and control imbalance exists, promoting a colonial attitude" (CG 72).

Participants also perceived that "WSC business methods exclude non-English-speaking participants. . . . Business sessions move too quickly. Not all concepts at issue are easy to translate. The style of the *CAR* is difficult to understand. The *CAR* is too big" (CG 72). Additionally, participants saw "Inequality between voting participants due to lack of knowledge. . . . Lack of an adequate orientation to the WSC results in some participants being more informed than others. A language barrier causes some participants to be less informed than others. Lack of translated world service communications perpetuates this inequality" (CG 63).

And, finally, participants noted a demonstrable "Lack of diversity in NA leadership. . . . The conference needs to increase cultural diversity among its leaders without compromising on office requirements and experience. Lack of personal funds to serve in a leadership position shouldn't be reason not to select someone" (CG 65).

## 3) The desire to move toward a more discussion-driven, consensus-based decision making process.

This element received more direct comment than any other in the 1994 WSC self-assessment. Participants noted a "Lack of time at WSC for informal discussions" wherein "there is too little time set aside at World Service Conference meetings for informal, non-business-debate, small group, issue-oriented sharing sessions" (CG 60). Participants also believed that "Ego. Personalities. Best Pitch. [And] Lobbying" are big problems in the way we do business, stating that "Turf wars and personal agenda interfere with conference interactions and our conduct of

business. Parliamentary procedure is used inappropriately by some of those especially well-versed in it, and cannot be used by those who are not experts, impeding equal participation in the process. 'Mic hogs' dominate the debate and impair the process" (CG 60).

The 1994 WSC also identified "Personal, Regional, and committee agenda[s], both stated and unstated," as significant problems, wherein "struggle and competition, rather than cooperation and mutual support, characterize conference proceedings. Regional 'wants' rather than the interests of the whole fellowship is what motivates many participants. The conference has a tendency to micromanage world services from the WSC floor, demanding that everything be done 'just this way' according to various participants' specific visions of how things should be done. Some participants even withhold relevant information in the process of debate lest that information divert the body from the decision they favor" (CG 61).

Parliamentary procedure and our rules of order were also identified as significant problems: "The conference is such that everything must be either right or wrong—no neutrals can emerge from it. The process lends itself to micromanagement from the conference floor. 'Mic hogs' and Robert's Rules aficionados dominate the process and force the agenda" (CG 61). Meanwhile, WSC business sessions were defined as often "difficult to comprehend" . . . because the "WSC gets caught up in parliamentary procedure. WSC business sessions are difficult for both English- and non-English-speaking participants to follow" (CG 61). "Business sessions, politics, [and] 'motion madness'" create a situation in which "Politics divert the conference from handling motions in a calm, considered manner. The agenda is dominated by North American issues. 'Motion madness'—an obsession with making, debating, amending, and voting on business motions—is compounded by a 'taking care of business' mindset; the format of the *Conference Agenda Report* reinforces this. Too much time is spent on procedural debates" (CG 61).

Finally, the spirit of competition that characterizes much of what occurs at the WSC was seen as a serious problem. "Decision making at WSC is based on majority rules, rather than consensus," participants stated. "Decision making at WSC is often limited to three pro's and three con's, rather than open discussion. In addition, numbers play an important role in the passage or failure of motions. For what is perceived to be an important decision, the question is asked, 'How many does it take to pass?' WSC debates and votes rather than discussing and building consensus. The conference process of 'majority rules' is not spiritual by its very essence. Voting should be unnecessary" (62). "The voting process is a competitive, not reflective, process. . . . Motion makers influence the process with their personalities and their skills as salespeople" (CG 62). Participants also stated that "The current *CAR* format promotes disunity—The motion-oriented *CAR* format fosters a sense of belonging for some individuals, but for others it creates disunity" (CG 62).

### *The Resolution Group—1995-1996*

Based upon the problems that were identified during the Composite Group phase of the world services inventory, the Resolution Group (RG), appointed by the WSC in 1995, was charged with the responsibility of providing general solutions to world services' identified problems for conference consideration during the 1996 WSC. The RG presented a series of resolutions to the WSC in the 1996 *Conference Agenda Report*, and Resolutions A, B, C2, E, F, and G were adopted by the World Service Conference. Regarding the problems noted above relevant to the issues of

representation and participation at the World Service Conference, the RG developed Resolution A as their response to address the identified problems:

**Resolution A:**

> **To approve *in principle* a change in participation at a new WSC to achieve the following objectives:**
> 1. **to reduce the total number of representatives**
> 2. **to provide for equal representation from all geographic entities; and,**
> 3. **to encourage a consensus-based decision-making process**

The RG set about developing a solution to the many problems identified with the World Service Conference, including the issues of what was perceived to be too many participants on the floor, as well as the motion-oriented, and therefore divisive, mindset of the conference's business sessions. What they eventually proposed was to "downsize" the WSC by changing the number of participants, as well as changing the nature of their participation at a "new" WSC. In essence, the Resolution Group envisioned a limited number of what they called "Geographic Entities," that would replace the current regional representational format and that would, through a variety of means, effect the changes necessitated by the adoption of Resolution A. However, as the RG admitted, they never as a group "discussed many specifics about these entities," though the group had no doubt that the issue would "be an important focus of the group to follow. . ." (RG 39).

The RG envisioned a new World Service Conference that did not "concern itself with detailed matters of implementation or execution of projects, but rather . . . [focused] on matters of strategic direction and long range planning." Its primary duty would be to "review the strategic plans submitted by the World Board, and [ratify] them or [call] for changes" (40). The RG also believed that this new conference should provide "a forum for establishing and maintaining the worldwide unity of Narcotics Anonymous as a whole . . . [in which] substantial time is devoted to sharing experience, strength, and hope among all the participants" (RG 40).

The RG believed that these changes would address many of the World Service Conference problems that had been identified by the inventory process. In their report to conference participants in 1996, they argued that their geographic entities would "reduce the number of representative participants at the WSC, thereby decreasing the current participation problems attributable to the size of our current system. They will also make the possibility of full funding for all conference participants a realizable goal. Most importantly, they will allow North American issues to be dealt with in a national or continental forum, and thus 'free-up' the WSC and enable it to finally deal with the worldwide issues which will increasingly face our fellowship as a whole" (RG 48-49).

However, the difficulties associated with actually implementing such sweeping changes to representation and participation at the World Service Conference would come into sharper focus as the Transition Group began to work on developing models for the new WSC during the 1996-1997 conference year.

### *Transition Group—1996-present*

The Transition Group was appointed at the 1996 WSC to develop detailed proposals based upon the resolutions that had been adopted, thereby moving the conference into the final phase of the inventory/resolution process. Regarding Resolution A, we recognized pretty early on that the RG's work had been based upon the assumption that maintaining a unified world services as well as a unified global fellowship was a priority. The description of our service symbol, put forward in our Basic Text, which includes the idea that "the greater the Base, . . . the higher the point of freedom," seemed to have been the basis for the RG's Resolution A proposal.

In our report to conference participants prior to the 1997 WSC, in fact, we wrote that we saw "great potential benefit from the unity that would arise from maintaining our worldwide focus into the twenty-first century. As the description of our symbol in our Basic Text suggests, 'as we grow in unity in numbers and in fellowship,' the freedom that accompanies our fellowship's size, strength, and commitment to a common purpose can only increase. In this way, the Resolution Group's vision—of a unified world services structure and a fully connected and participatory global fellowship—is inspirational. We applaud their idealism and the loftiness of their goal" (TG 8).

However, we found considerable difficulty in both trying to agree upon a single interpretation of Resolution A amongst ourselves, as well as in developing a model for a new WSC that seemed both practical and in keeping with the spirit of the resolution. We wrote of this dilemma in our report prior to WSC '97 as well: "Whether or not the attainment of such a vision is in fact achievable is another matter entirely, and our own struggles with its practicality are evident throughout [our report]" (TG 8).

### Difficulties of Interpretation and Definition

One of the first problems we had was in trying to agree upon a single definition of many of the words in Resolution A. We wrote in our WSC '97 report that "this resolution presented us with a series of challenges, including (1) the difficulty of defining the word 'equal,' (2) the potential problems associated with adding yet another layer to our service structure (as well as with providing the resources, both human and financial, necessary to the proper functioning of a new service tier), (3) the difficulties we experienced with attempting to define the term 'consensus-based decision making,' and (4) the distinction between the terms 'representative' and 'delegate'" (TG 8).

In our report to conference participants, we offered no definitive answers to any of these questions: Rather, we believed that these issues required broader fellowship discussion. In fact, we continue to believe that broader discussion across the fellowship will need to occur before we can move into any proposed representational structure. As we wrote in our report, "The World Service Conference has been discussing the ideas contained in resolutions B through G adopted at WSC '96 for years. The concepts of a single board, a human resources panel, a unified budget, and a downsized committee structure are therefore familiar to most of us. Moreover, resolutions B through G reflect that basic familiarity in the clear and relatively narrow direction that they contain. Resolution A, however, contains ideas that have not been discussed by either the conference or the fellowship at large in any detail at all" (TG 9). We

believe that such discussions will need to continue, for only broad-based awareness and effort across our entire membership can make the eventual changes in WSC representation possible.

## Ongoing Fellowship-wide Discussion Necessary

We also believe that the issues we struggled with in our own process will be some of the major stumbling blocks standing in the way of implementing Resolution A. For example, we have heard many different beliefs expressed in our group and in the input we have received about what "equal representation" means. Along with this, issue, the issues of a new service tier, and of what "consensus-based decision-making" really means, will remain issues in need of clarification before Resolution A can become a reality.

As a resource for the fellowship, and for the group charged with the responsibility of continuing with the work of further developing Resolution A, we have included below much of the discussion and issues first presented in our March 1997 report regarding the stumbling blocks that we encountered. A lot of this material is presented verbatim from that report, while other parts are paraphrased. We hope this material will serve as a kind of reference point for any future discussions regarding some of the unclear and/or confusing language within Resolution A.

### Equal Representation from Geographic Entities

Regarding the issue of attempting to define "equal representation," we did not believe that the conference asked us to change the very nature of representation in Narcotics Anonymous to one of literal democracy; one group meaning one vote (though we did examine this direction in our discussions). Thus, even though the fellowship in the USA represents 85% of the worldwide fellowship in number of groups; and even though the USA represents a similar proportion of the fellowship's areas and regions, we believe that "equal" will have to be based on other factors in addition to a simple democratic majority. If we are to build a world service structure and conference that are truly representative of the many cultures that comprise us—and concerns that will increasingly face us—over the coming years as our fellowship continues to grow and mature, other factors such as language and culture will need to be considered as well.

### Adding a New Service "Tier"

A second area that presented us with significant difficulty was that of adding a new layer, or "tier" of service to our service structure. Many of the discussions during the inventory addressed the distance separating the groups from world services, as well as the communication problems associated with that distance. We have heard many ideas about how to make the conference itself more responsive to the groups by transforming its focus, format, and decision-making processes. Yet Resolution A presents us with a dilemma: how is it possible to make the conference more responsive to the needs of the groups, and improve the communication between the groups and world services, while simultaneously moving the two further apart? Examining the potential consequences of inserting another representative layer into our service structure was the second difficulty addressed in our discussions.

In addition to these communication concerns, another primary consideration in the implementation of Resolution A is the current reality of our fellowship's limited resources, both human and financial, at all levels of service. We do not claim to have the answer to this

question, but we do know that creating another layer of service will mean creating another layer of expense and administrative time and energy.

A concern related to the expense associated with the new layer of service is the expense associated with representation at the new WSC. One of the ideas that we have not pursued but which we will have to discuss in the future is that of cost equalization. Should the cost of sending a delegate to the World Service Conference be the responsibility of the conference? Or of the region or district? The Transition Group supports the philosophical premise of cost equalization, but we are also aware of the difficulty of attempting to implement it fairly. If all delegates pay an equal amount to attend the conference, for example, what happens when someone cannot contribute their share? Is everyone then prevented from attending at all? These and other questions will need to be the subject of considerable fellowship thought and discussion if Resolution A is ever to become a practical reality.

### "Consensus-based Decision Making"

The notion of "consensus based decision making" was the third source of considerable discussion and debate among TG members, as well as within the input we received. Some members believed that consensus-based decision making means discussions that conclude with the vast *majority* of the members coming to agreement. Others believed that such discussions must conclude with *unanimity*. While we believe that unanimity is something that conference participants should always strive for, we are not proposing that the World Service Conference be limited by a demand for it. Our ninth concept reminds service bodies to carefully consider all viewpoints. We believe that, for the purposes of our service bodies, consensus must be based on considering all viewpoints while at the same time trying to find the common ground that every participant can support, even when the eventual decision is not exactly as every participant may have desired. However, we also believe it will be necessary for the fellowship to discuss this issue, and be prepared to forward ideas and recommendations as to how the "consensus-based decision-making" described in Resolution A can become a practical reality at the "new" World Service Conference.

## *Four Models for Resolution A Proposed at WSC '97*

In spite of the difficulties that we experienced as described above, at WSC '97 we nevertheless proposed four possible models to serve as a basis for the discussions about Resolution A at the 1997 World Service Conference. Our hope was that by providing the framework and impacts of different representative models, we would be able to gain direction from conference participants so that we could then develop one comprehensive proposal for consideration at the 1997 world services meeting, and, after review by the fellowship, adoption at the 1998 World Service Conference.

As this report demonstrates, we were never able to gather such a clear response from WSC '97 participants. While most participants felt that change was necessary, the form that such change should take was a matter of much discussion and disagreement at the 1997 WSC. Once again, for the purpose of providing the conference with a "record" of actions pertaining to Resolution A, we are providing below a summary of the four models that we presented to the conference in 1997, as well as some discussion regarding those models.

The four proposed models were presented in order—from the one most like our present system to the model that most differed from our present system. Models One and Two therefore offered the least amount of change from what we presently have, while Model Three was farther removed from our system's present configuration. Finally, Model Four stood as the furthest departure from the world services system as we know it today.

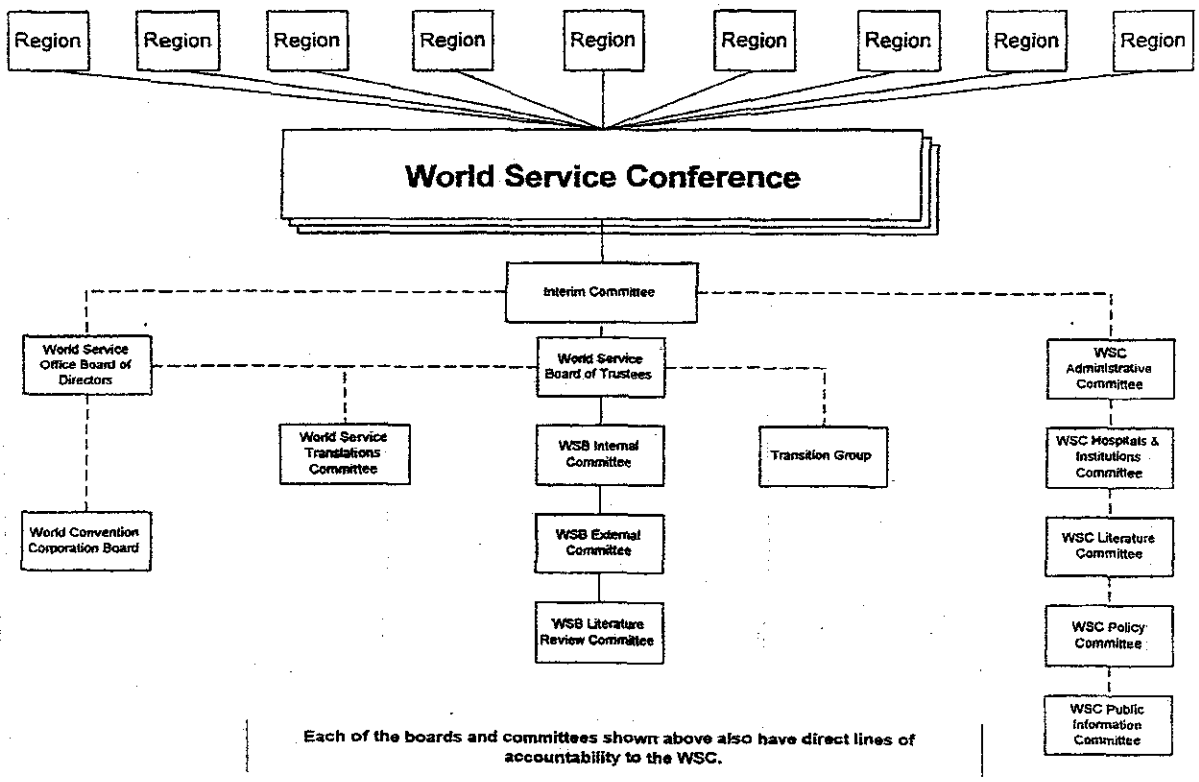
## Current World Service System as of WSC 1997

We are providing the current model of world services to assist in your discussions. Although the conference is currently considering a proposal to change the configuration of world service boards and committee, the representation at the World Service Conference will remain the same.

### World Service Conference Participation

The number of seated delegates at WSC 1997 was ninety-four (94) with eighty seven (87) actually present at that conference. Those eight-seven (87) delegates represented twenty-six (26) countries and one (1) US territory. There were an additional twenty (20) board and committee members voting in all but old business. This would change to twenty four (24) World Board members if our proposal is adopted at WSC 1998. Thus up to one hundred fourteen (114) World Service Conference members participate in the consensus process during the conference in our existing system and up to one hundred eighteen (118) if the World Board is adopted.

### World Service Structure as of WSC 1997




In 1997, 87 regions were represented out of the 94 regions seated at the World Service Conference. There were 107 total voting participants with representation from 26 countries and 1 US territory.

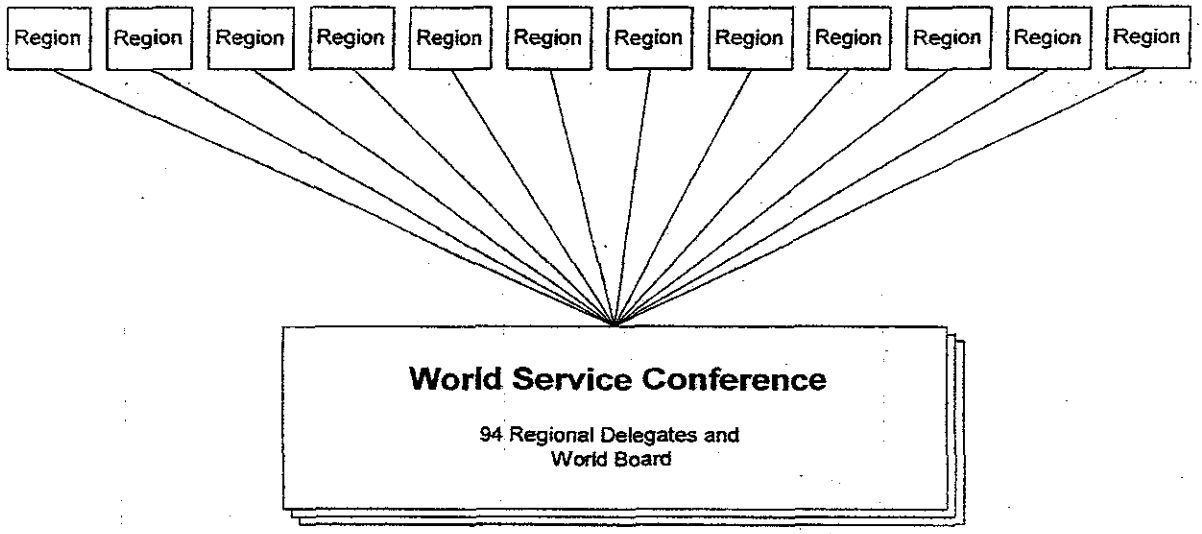
## Model One - Non-US Country/US Regional Configuration

1. One delegate from each country outside of the United States and Canada—currently twenty-four (24) delegates.
2. One delegate from each presently seated US and Canadian region—for a permanent number of seventy (70) delegates.
   - The regions from the United States and Canada would be frozen at present levels in this proposal.
   - New regions could form but they would have to meet with their old region to send one delegate to the World Service Conference.
   - The only new regions that would be considered for recognition and seating at the WSC would be those regions from outside the United States and Canada that represent a country.

### Model One - World Service Conference Participation

The total currently proposed number of delegates is ninety four (94). There are also twenty four (24) World Board members. Thus up to one hundred eighteen (118) World Service Conference members participate in the consensus process during the conference.

### Model One




US and Canadian delegates - frozen at current level of 70
plus 24 current representatives of other countries
Total of 94 delegates

Groups and areas are not included in these diagrams purposefully.
The Transition Group is not charged with work that affects that part of
the service structure directly.

## Model Two - Non-US Country/US State Configuration

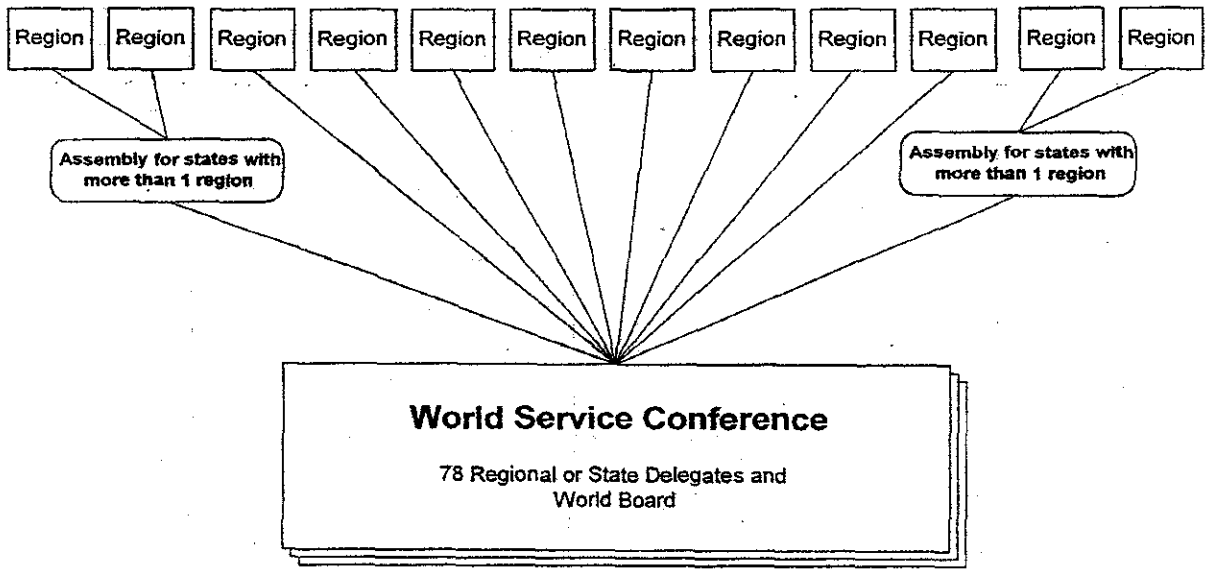
The recommended representation at Model Two's new WSC is as follows:

1. One delegate from each country outside of the United States, with the exception of Canada, which will continue to hold its six delegates --for a current total of thirty (30) delegates.
2. One delegate from each US state—for a total of forty-eight (48) US delegates.
   - States with more than one regional service committee would need to elect one delegate
   - California and New York would have two delegates each due to their number of groups and their geographical size
   - The six New England states; Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine; would elect 2 delegates to serve the entire area due to their close proximity and their number of groups

### Model Two - World Service Conference Participation

The total currently proposed number of delegates is seventy-eight (78). There are also twenty four (24) World Board members. Thus up to one-hundred two (102) World Service Conference members participate in the consensus process during the conference.

Model Two




US states send 48 representatives
Canada sends 6 representatives
1 each for other countries - currently 24

Groups and areas are not included in these diagrams purposefully. The Transition Group is not charged with work that affects that part of the service structure directly.

## Model Three—District Configuration and Representation

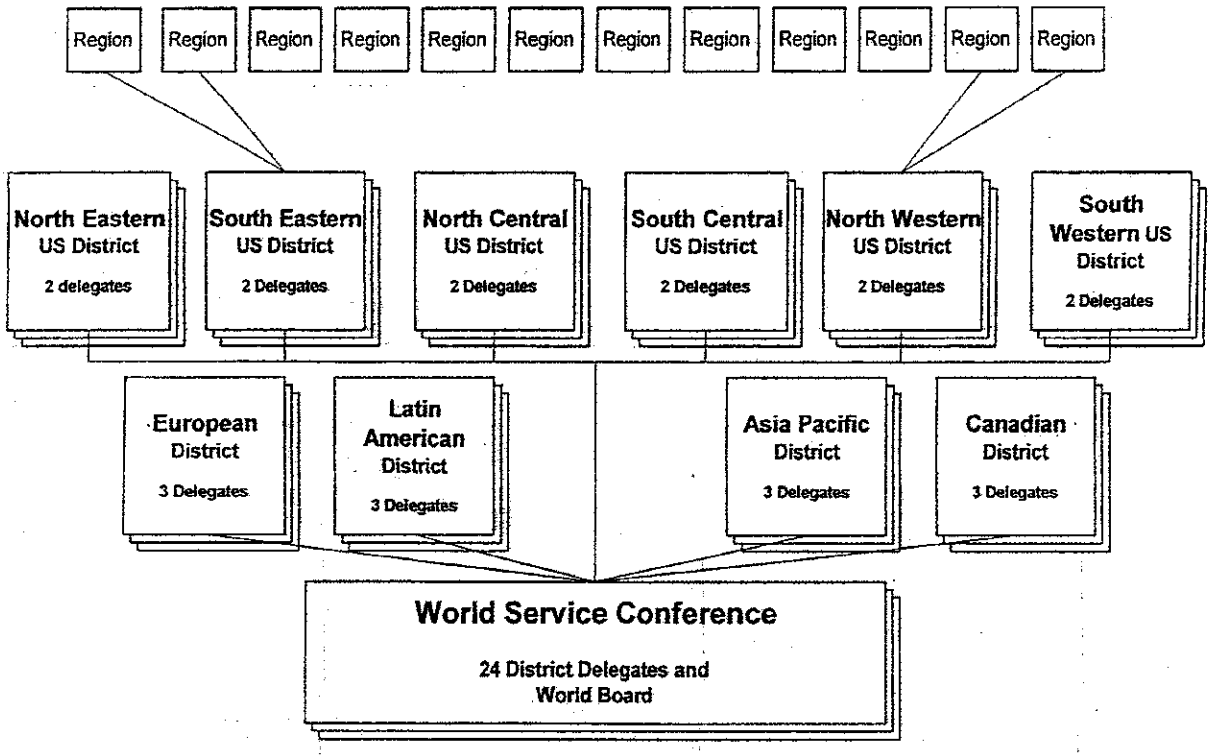
1. Three (3) from each non-US district. These have been identified as four (4); Europe, Pacific Rim, Latin America, and Canada.

2. Two (2) from each US district. These have been identified as six (6); Northeastern US, Southeastern US, North Central US, South Central US, Southwestern US, Northwestern US

## Model Three—World Service Conference Participation

The total currently proposed number of delegates is twenty four (24). There are also twenty four (24) World Board members. These forty eight (48) World Service Conference members participate in the consensus-building process during the conference.

### Model Three

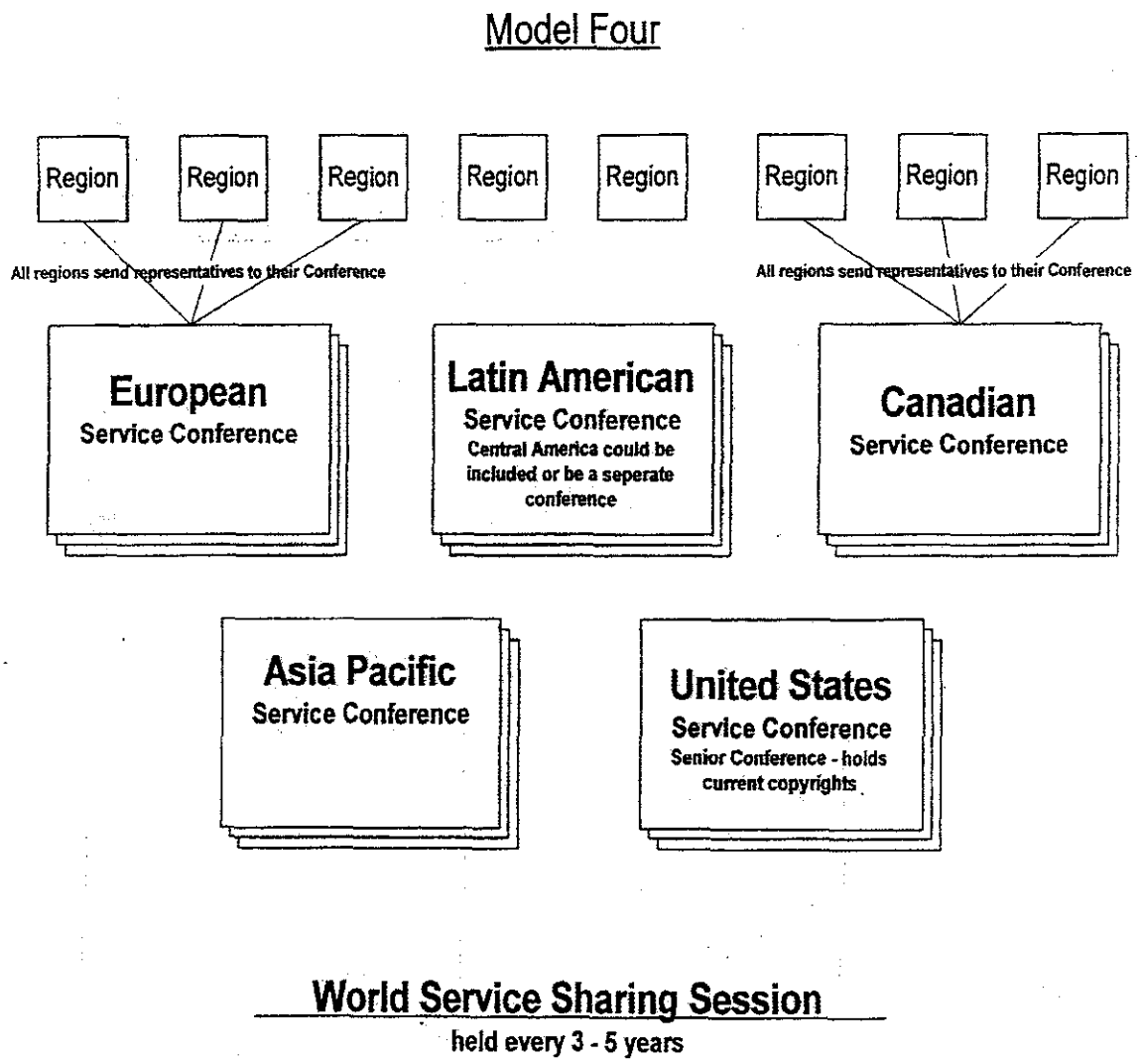



All regions send delegates to a district and all districts are represented at the World Service Conference.

## Model Four

For Model Four, the Transition Group proposed a system of conferences defined by recognizable, existing geo-political boundaries. The proposed conferences would be the United States, Canada, Europe, Latin America, possibly Central America and Asia-Pacific. These conference would be attended and supported by the regions within their geographic boundaries.

The conferences would come together every 3- 5 years at a world service sharing session to discuss issues and seek avenues of cooperation, and the administrative responsibilities associated with this sharing session would rotate among the various conferences.



## *Models One, Two, Three, and Four—Discussion*

### Models One and Two

Models One and Two presented a world service conference that is most like our current WSC, particularly with regard to the actual NA communities represented there, as well as their present method of representation. Even though Model One relied essentially upon the existing regional system of representation and Model Two relied upon a state-based representational system, the key element of these models was their fundamental similarity to our current system—there is no new district, continental, or zonal layer of services that would necessitate a fundamentally different representational strategy on the part of local NA communities.

In fact, the rationale for Models One and Two argued for the desirability of not adding an additional layer of administration and services such as we would see in Model Three. Thus one of the purposes of these two models was to keep the regions connected to the World Service Conference and the World Service Conference directly responsible to the regions without an intervening layer of services, administration, and expense. The biggest changes necessary to implement Models One and Two would be: (1) the new format of the World Service Conference; (2) the expanded role of the delegate from the current RSR/RD responsibilities, and (3) the reduction in the overall number of conference participants from our present system.

### Model Three

Model Three was a further step away from our current conference. The primary rationale here was to develop a model most in keeping with the wording of Resolution A, adopted at the 1996 World Service Conference. The strengths of this model are that (1) It allows for the geographical entities outlined in the Resolutions Group's proposals by essentially utilizing the existing zonal boundaries that have begun to develop in our fellowship; and (2) It allows for a kind of "equal" representation as recommended in Resolution A.

Like Models One and Two, Model Three also affirmed the essential value of a unified global fellowship united in purpose, as well as in services, by an inclusive and participatory service system. While geographic districts should certainly maintain their autonomy with regard to the provision of local services, they would also strive in Model Three to continue to share in the essential unity of our fellowship by participating in a globally focused world service system.

Model Three also affirms that the majority of actual service provision should occur at the regional and areas levels—that world level service activities should consist primarily of the formulation of broad philosophical discussions, debate and initiatives which culminate in a comprehensive plan for ongoing direction of fellowship development, as well as in specific projects which result in new literature and service materials directly relevant to our membership's needs and requests. By keeping the focus of world services concentrated upon conceptual, philosophical, and policy issues, the emphasis within our local communities should be to renew and revitalize service provision at the local level by decreasing local NA communities' focus on world level issues and reliance upon world level solutions to local problems. In this way, the addition of a "new" layer of service, in the form of districts, would primarily allow for a reliable means of communication and representation on the world level, as actual services (such as H&I, PI, and Outreach) are supported and provided "in the trenches"—that is, by our members in their local NA communities.

## "Equal" Representation and Model Three

One of the primary elements of Resolution A was the notion of *equality of representation* among our conference's participants. It has been suggested that our *World* Service Conference is really not representative of either the populations or the issues that now comprise and confront our worldwide fellowship. The Transition Group, in attempting to define the word "equal" in Resolution A, came up with six general points of agreement as criteria that would help to define "equal" as it related to representation at the new World Service Conference. Those six criteria were Culture, Geography, Size, Language, Needs, and Experience. While these characteristics are defined in detail below, our hope here was to emphasize that, in Model Three, we believe we have actually developed a model for world service representation that is as fair as possible, given the limitations of our fellowship's currently diverse population and its varying levels of clean time and service experience in different parts of the world.

In this way, we developed not only a means of determining which districts would currently be represented at the new WSC, but also the criteria by which any prospective new districts could be seated (or, conversely, denied seating) at the new World Service Conference. Such criteria (be they the ones we have developed, or some other) would be our fellowship's first collective step into a more globally oriented worldwide structure that could offer full participation (as well as the strength and experience that accompany such participation) to our members from around the world.

## Considerations for Creating New Districts

In identifying the proposed district configuration, the following six criteria were used. We applied as many of these as possible in developing our proposal. The conference would consider similar criteria in recognizing new districts.

1. *Cultural* — members within the proposed district have a common bond to foster cohesiveness.
2. *Geographic* — members within the proposed district have the ability to travel to district meetings and to have district membership within a reasonable distance.
3. *Size* — the number of groups in each proposed district would be somewhat balanced with existing districts
4. *Language* — members within the proposed district speak a common language
5. *Needs* — local regions share similar needs in terms of fellowship development
6. *Experience* — each proposed district has some experienced members

## (Note: Funding World Services)

During our lengthy discussions, we assumed that this model would require an additional layer of service that would actually provide services, information, and administrative guidance. Based on this assumption, the most obvious downside of this model that continually presented an apparently insurmountable wall was one simple question: "How could all this be funded?" The expenses associated with an additional layer of services, as well as the necessity for some kind of funding method to make WSC participation affordable for all districts, seemed so potentially costly that we could not see any reasonable hope of paying for it within our current fund flow system. While, in principle, we are in favor of the idea of a unified worldwide service structure, our discussions have raised serious doubts about its fiscal practicality.

## Model Four: Material and Spiritual Cost

This fourth model was based on the belief that the material and spiritual cost of maintaining a worldwide structure cannot be sustained by the fellowship over the long term. Materially, the responsibility of attempting to serve a growing global fellowship has already begun to outstrip the fellowship's collective financial resources. The expenses associated with the annual meeting (as well as its administrative support throughout the year), along with the expenses of maintaining international branches of the World Service Office, deplete whatever resources are provided by literature proceeds. There is no reason to believe that this financial situation will improve. In fact, it seems reasonable to assume that it will only continue to worsen as our fellowship comes of age in other parts of the world.

### The Spiritual Cost

The spiritual cost of a worldwide structure may prove even more potentially destructive than the material. Although the NA program is universal, cultural and social differences will not allow for effective worldwide decision-making without diverting us, collectively, from our primary purpose. That cultural differences and expectations exist between us is undeniable. Unfortunately, it may be that the time needed for each of us to comprehend and overcome such differences will prove counterproductive in the end. We may, in fact, spend so much time attempting to create ways for us to simply work together that our shared responsibility to carry the message—mandated by our Fifth Tradition—may well be lost as we struggle to simply find mutually agreeable ways to make collective decisions. Indeed, some members feel that we have already arrived at this roadblock at the world level, and that the situation is worsening.

### "Universalism" and Homogeneity: Diluting Our Message

Another grave concern related to these difficulties with finding a mutually agreeable way to proceed is the fact that, in order for a worldwide service structure to produce literature and service materials relevant to our entire membership, such materials would have to be so "generic" as to effectively dilute any real message or value they might otherwise have offered to individual addicts. We all believe that the fundamentals and principles of our recovery are the same throughout the world. Even so, because of the growing cultural differences among us, the focus of world services would, in its attempt to be everything for everyone, be *mandated* to increasing homogeneity. Such "universalism" might well result in the potential loss of local experiences, interpretation, and application in our literature and service materials. Our program needs to be expressed in each community's local language, relating local experience, to be most effective. The identification process and empathy so necessary to our recovery from addiction, which can only derive from addicts sharing their own experiences with each other in their own language and within shared cultural limits and expectations, could well be lost.

### Structural Problems: Taking Responsibility and Supporting Decisions

Our attempt to maintain a unified world structure also contains structural problems that impact our system's overall practicality as well. If, as some members have argued, the groups are already too far removed from the decision-making process at the world level to feel responsible for upholding the decisions it produces, then how will they be able to understand or take responsibility for their services if they become even further removed by the proposed new layer of bureaucracy? Moreover, such a feeling of separation from the decision making process may also further alienate them from the actual meaning and application of decisions which are

made. Such alienation can only mean that members and groups will become increasingly unwilling to support any such decisions either materially or spiritually.

## Promoting Local Responsibility

Of course, the implication of this argument suggests that continental autonomy will promote local responsibility. It certainly seems logical to suggest that, when members are better able to see the importance of their role in a decision making process that directly affects them, they will then feel more responsible for supporting the decisions they feel themselves to have had a clear hand in deciding. Unfortunately, our collective experience at the regional and area levels may seem to belie this argument to some extent. Nevertheless, which makes better sense? To believe that members will be more willing to support a local decision making body in which they have direct participatory rights? Or to create a service body three times removed from the groups whose decisions may seem only distantly relevant to more localized issues and concerns?

## NA's Intellectual Properties and the United States Service Conference

In order to protect our fellowship's collective intellectual properties, their copyrights must be held by a legal entity. In our fellowship, that means a legal entity that is directly responsible to a service body. Registering and protecting copyrighted material in every country around the world is extremely costly. The United States' NA community represents 85 to 90% of our fellowship's groups, areas, and regions, and, at least for the present time, would be the logical choice as the copyright holder to protect our fellowship's assets. Not only does the US currently represent the bulk of our world service donations, but they also have the most experience within our fellowship of protecting its intellectual properties. On behalf of the worldwide fellowship, the conference serving the US fellowship would therefore act as the senior conference. Thus, in addition to its responsibilities to the US regions, it would hold:

- the authority to grant permission to print and distribute all existing fellowship approved literature and future translations of that literature.
- the authority to approve for publication all translations of existing fellowship approved literature.
- the responsibility to serve the groups not already served by an existing conference.

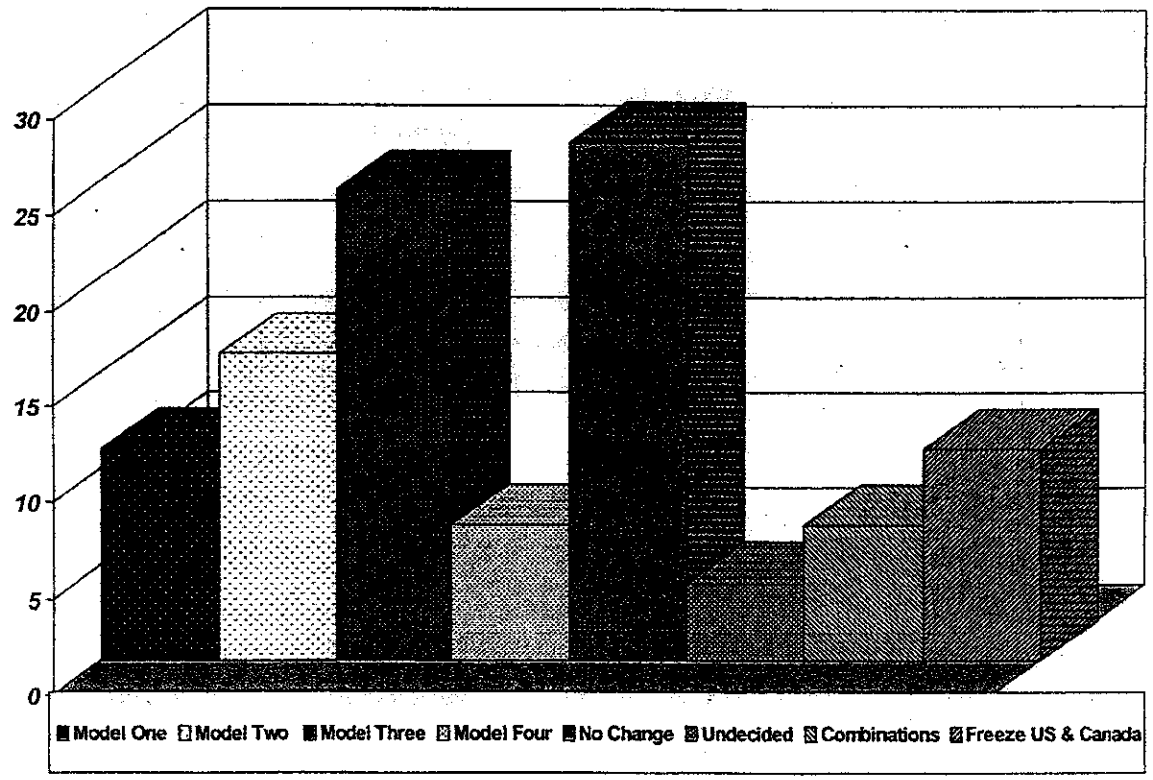
Many of the details about literature production and service offices would need to be left to future decisions by the individual conferences. Their decisions could then be worked out with the US conference and US board.

### *Small Groups from WSC '97*

All four of the models that we developed were presented to WSC participants prior to WSC '97, and a total of nine small groups answered a few questions developed by the Transition Group aimed toward gathering an overall direction in which to move toward developing a viable—and mutually agreeable—model for the implementation of Resolution A.

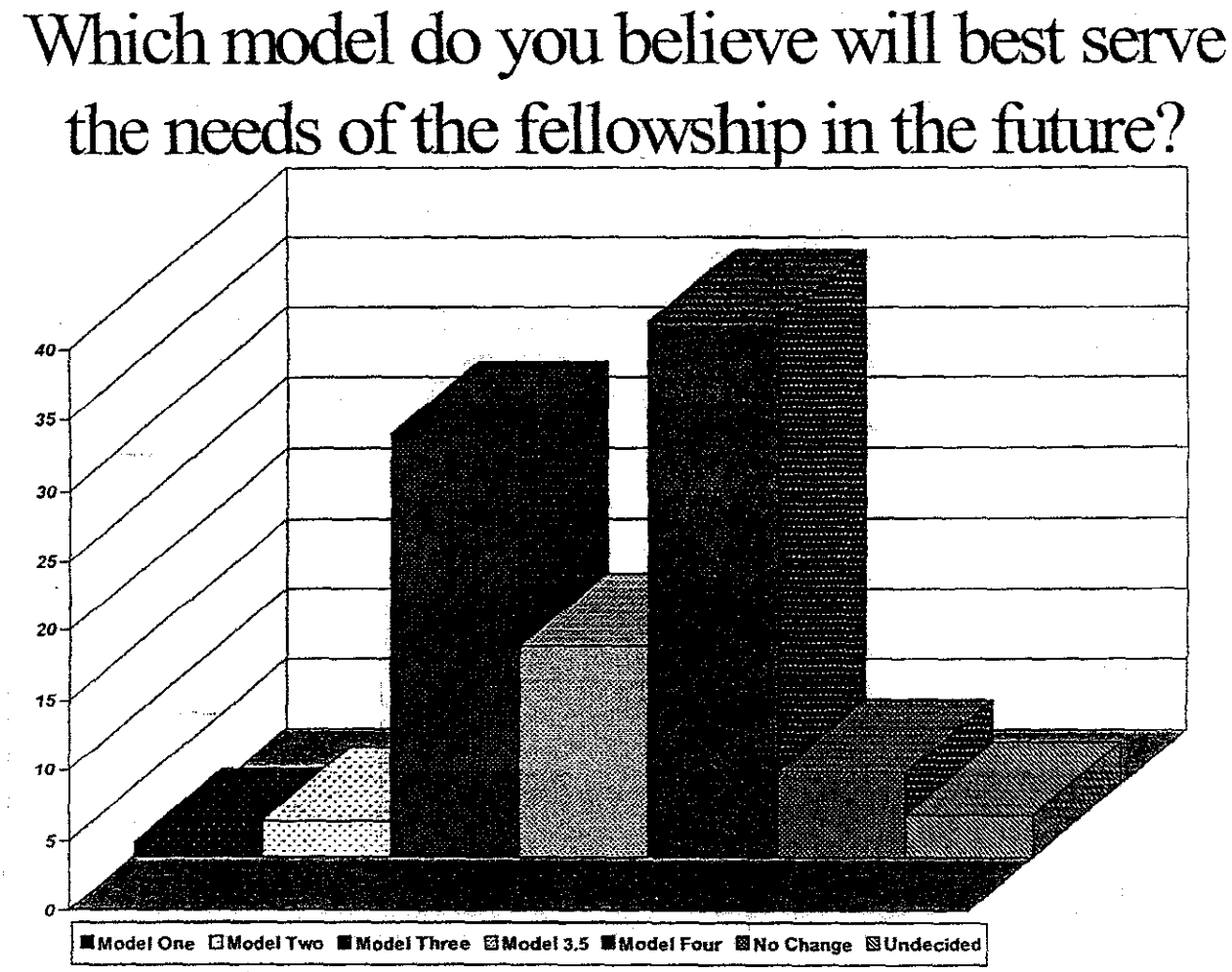
Unfortunately, as the following charts demonstrate, we were not able to gather a clear direction on either question that was asked pertaining to Resolution A. For example, regarding question #1—"Which model do you believe will best serve the needs of the fellowship now?"—conference participants' responses ran the gamut from Models One through Four, as well as adding other options that we had not even offered as possibilities such as combinations of various components of the separate models, and even none of the models offered at all. The following graph represents the percent of conference participants who indicated a preference for a specific model.

# Which model do you believe will best serve the needs of the fellowship now?



Similarly, question #2—"Which model do you believe will best serve the needs of the fellowship in the future?"—showed a highly mixed response as well, though conference participants obviously favored Models Three and Four, or some combination thereof.

Further, while many possibilities were discussed regarding what a "Model 3.5" might look like, there was no general agreement as to what such a combination might include. For some members, the idea seemed to be that the continental autonomy present in Model Four was great, while they hated to see the loss of a World Service Conference. Others seemed OK with the replacement of the WSC with a regular "Sharing Session," but did not agree with the US control of copyrights. In short, while "Model 3.5" got many positive remarks, there was no general consensus as to what the model actually ought to look like.



### *Recommendation for the Future*

In the end, the information that was gathered from the small groups at WSC '97 demonstrated only two things clearly to us: First, a majority (about 70%, in fact) of WSC participants want significant change some time in the future. Second, the fellowship needs more time and a great deal more discussion about the various options presented by Resolution A before such sweeping changes to our conference, and to our service structure, can become a reality.

An "evolutionary" process, at the grassroots level, will be necessary for the changes implicit in Resolution A to ever become realizable on a fellowship-wide scale. What this implies is that, while the conference has indeed adopted Resolution A in principle, and has therefore expressed its collective willingness to move in the direction of change, the drive or impetus for that change can only arise from the groups, areas, regions and zonal forums themselves. Without such a fellowship-wide groundswell of activity and support, the changes to representation and participation at the WSC will prove, at best, extremely difficult to enact and sustain.

We therefore recommend that one of the first orders of business for the conference regarding this issue is to determine whether or not Resolution A should be prioritized as an issue discussion topic and whether that discussion should take place in the upcoming conference year or at some later date. Should the conference so prioritize Resolution A, the results of fellowship-wide discussion in groups, areas, regions, and zonal forums about the information in this report could then be forwarded to the World Board.

Whatever process may eventually be decided upon, we can expect that it will take time, fellowship-wide consensus building, and resources. Yet, if maintaining our global unity remains one of world services' priorities, then such a process will be essential to the future effectiveness of the World Service Conference.