

IT'S ALL ABOUT **CARRYING** THE MESSAGE



WISC 2006

CONFERENCE AGENDA REPORT

23-29 APRIL 2006

World Service Conference Mission Statement

The World Service Conference brings all elements of NA World Services together to further the common welfare of NA. The WSC's mission is to unify NA worldwide by providing an event at which:

- ♦ Participants propose and gain fellowship consensus on initiatives that further the NA World Services vision;
- ♦ The fellowship, through an exchange of experience, strength, and hope, collectively expresses itself on matters affecting Narcotics Anonymous as a whole;
- ♦ NA groups have a mechanism to guide and direct the activities of NA World Services;
- ♦ Participants ensure that the various elements of NA World Services are ultimately responsible to the groups they serve;
- ♦ Participants are inspired with the joy of selfless service, and the knowledge that our efforts make a difference.

*Everything that occurs in the course
of NA service must be motivated
by the desire to more successfully
carry the message of recovery
to the addict who still suffers.*

Basic Text, page xvi



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الأمر كله يتعلق بحمل الرسالة

CONFERENCE AGENDA REPORT

WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE © 23–29 APRIL 2006

2006 Conference Agenda Report

World Service Conference of Narcotics Anonymous

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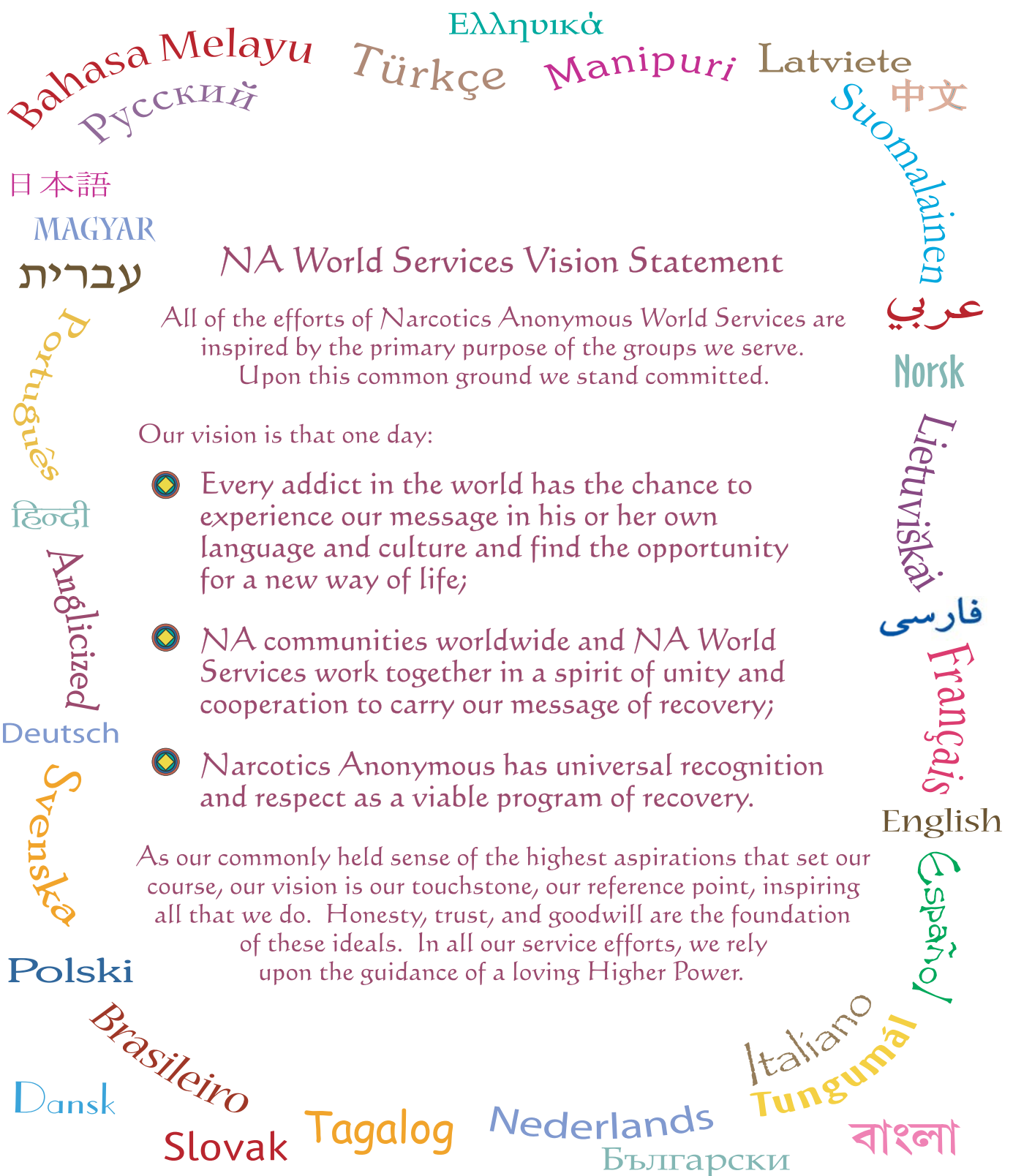
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World Board Report

Preparing for WSC 2006

Greetings from your World Board. We are writing this report in preparation for the 28th World Service Conference, to be held 23–29 April 2006, in Woodland Hills, California, USA. We are distributing copies of this *Conference Agenda Report*, at no charge, to all World Service Conference participants and to every regional service committee. This CAR is available in English, French, Spanish, German, Portuguese, and Swedish. The translated versions of the CAR will be published at the end of December 2005. Any NA member, group, service board, or committee can purchase additional copies from the World Service Office, at a cost of \$5.00, or download the report directly from our website, www.na.org, at no charge. We want to ensure this material is distributed as widely as possible and to provide NA members with several ways to access the *Conference Agenda Report*.

This report summarizes some of the discussions we have been having as a fellowship for the past two years—discussions about atmosphere of recovery, leadership, our public image, and infrastructure—and takes the next step to move those discussions forward for the next cycle. It reports on several of the projects passed at the last conference, and it presents several motions from regions. The material in this *Conference Agenda Report* will form the basis for much of the discussion at the World Service Conference and throughout the fellowship.

This first section, “Preparing for WSC 2006,” is largely focused on material that may be of most interest to the conference participants themselves. In the “Putting the ‘World’ in ‘World Service Conference’” section, we discuss fellowship development and in the “Continuing to Change” section we talk about our strategic planning process, but much of these opening pages is devoted to the conference itself. The questions that are called out on the WSC 2006 Summary Sheet, are related to the material that begins with the “Issue Discussion Topics” section on page 11.

Moving Toward a Discussion-based Conference

Those of you who have already turned to the Summary Sheet, what we used to call the “abbreviated motion page,” following this report will have noticed there are only three motions in this cycle’s CAR, and none of those three are from world services. We see this as progress. Many of us remember a time when things were quite different, when the World Service Conference consisted of long days in motion-driven sessions, often focused on “trees” to the detriment of “the forest.” We continue to move toward a conference that is characterized by broader discussions. We have made tremendous strides in this transformation from a motion-driven conference to a discussion-based, collaborative forum.

It’s true that we still have formal business sessions at the conference, but the majority of the work is now accomplished in discussion sessions. Delegates talk together about the achievements and set-backs in their local NA communities. Delegates and the World Board discuss and assess the work of the past cycle. Conference participants shape the work for the next two years and talk together about long-term goals. A discussion-based conference enables conference

participants to communicate more deeply about the issues that affect the fellowship and the work we are doing together to fulfill our goals.

As the culture has been shifting at the World Service Conference toward a discussion-based forum, our issue discussion topics have been taken up throughout the fellowship. Much of this *Conference Agenda Report* focuses on the topics we have been discussing over the course of the last two years. This conference cycle, we feel we have made progress with fellowship-wide discussions to an unparalleled degree. In local NA communities around the world, addicts have discussed the four topics for this cycle. Members' awareness has increased, groups and service committees have talked about the difficulties that confront them and the progress they've made, and we all have begun to implement solutions. This CAR contains questions about each issue discussion topic that are designed to take these discussions to the next level.

But we know we still have so much we could do to make this change more effective. Take the CAR itself, for example. What we know about the CAR is that many people—probably most—pick it up, flip to the back, pull out the abbreviated motions list, and put aside the rest of the report. In fact, writing about this here on page 2, we are aware that many of our members will not read even this far into the report.

This is hardly a new way to approach the *Conference Agenda Report*, and we at world services need to take part of the responsibility for this practice. Once upon a time, when the conference and this agenda report were dominated by motions, it made sense to use an abbreviated motion list as a short guide to the fellowshipwide discussion that needs to happen in preparation for the conference. Although those years are in the past, we still have not grown out of this practice as a fellowship. We at world services could also do more to encourage discussion about issues (not just voting on motions). Every two years, when we draft the CAR, we try to move a little farther down the road in this direction. This past cycle, we made a lot of progress in this direction; we developed some tools to facilitate local discussions and posted them online at www.na.org/discussion_boards.htm, including session profiles, brainstorming guidelines, and ground rules for discussions. And this year, the CAR's attention to issue discussion topics has evolved from previous reports. The discussion topics are more clearly the central focus of the CAR. We summarize some of the discussions we've heard around the world—from sessions in which we have participated, and from workshops and discussions you have told us about—and we try to encourage the discussions we need to keep having as a fellowship to move these topics further.

But that's not enough. More and more local NA communities are putting together workshops and discussions that have value and merit, but we know we still have a distance to travel down this road. In particular, the CAR contains discussion questions. Online tools show you how to incorporate those questions into your local discussions; again, that URL is www.na.org/discussion_boards.htm, or you can contact the World Service Office to obtain copies. We have added updated session profiles recently at www.na.org/conference. But we still lack tools to help process those local discussions. We have seen the progress being made in having discussions in NA communities around the world, but we know that we can do more to help delegates collect the results of those discussions and bring them to the conference. Everywhere in the world we've traveled during these past two years, members have talked about the benefits from having these kinds of discussions on a

local level. Certainly, our increased emphasis on the issue discussion topics has benefited NA as a whole; however, we still must bridge the gap between the discussions we have on a local level and those that take place at world services. We hope you'll share any ideas you have on ways in which we could help—in the CAR or otherwise—to make that link. This is something we will talk about at the conference, and we are eager to hear your ideas. We are very aware of the problem, but we need help working out solutions.

We were joking at world services that this 2006 report is a “compact CAR,” but perhaps we could more accurately characterize it as a “hybrid”—part one thing, and part another. Help us to move the CAR to the next level; let us know what we can do to be more helpful.

Continuing to Change

Another huge cultural change in world services has been the move toward a plan-driven approach. We have talked quite a bit over the past several years about our strategic planning process. The 2004 CAR, in fact, was largely devoted to this topic. Planning has helped us better assess our needs and resources, and set goals and prioritize accordingly. Really, when you think about it, we already understand the benefit of taking an inventory, and we already share a fundamental vision and goal: our primary purpose. It makes perfect sense that we, as an organization, would take to planning.

Even so, we have struggled at times to shift our organizational culture. As relative newcomers to strategic planning, initially the process felt difficult to many of us. We did not yet have an intuitive sense of how to approach work this way, and we lacked the mental habits that come along with planning. Organizational change is a lot like individual change in this way: It happens gradually, and it can take quite a long time to become second nature. Most of us struggled when we were new to NA because recovery was so unfamiliar to us. We had to “keep coming back.” As many of you know, we have persevered with strategic planning, even when it has felt uncomfortable or difficult—and we have been rewarded for the effort. Over the years, the planning process has become more intuitive for us. Now we find ourselves approaching our work strategically, as a matter of course, just as in our personal lives, we work the steps on a daily basis without even thinking about it sometimes. In short, we have developed (and are continuing to develop) good habits.

One of those habits is to ask ourselves what we are trying to accomplish before beginning work of any kind, or even *planning* for work of any kind. Before we give a presentation, we ask, “What are we trying to communicate?” Before we begin a project, we ask, “What work are we trying to do?” And before we begin planning for a conference, we ask, “What do we want to achieve this cycle?”

The planning process not only teaches us to ask that question before racing off to get to work, but it teaches us to answer the question realistically and responsibly. Our work for a given cycle fits into a larger framework that, ideally, outlines a path to the fulfillment of our vision. Those of you who read the 2004 *Conference Agenda Report*, or who keep up with events at world services, may recall that our strategic plan contains objectives that spring from our long-term goals. Those long-term goals, in turn, are developed from our vision statement.

The NA World Services Vision Statement is a touchstone for NAWS. We cite it in the course of our work; it inspires us, and we know that it inspires many of you, as well. We look forward to a time when “every addict in the world has the chance to experience our message in his or her own language and culture,” and that’s what all of this is for—the *Conference Agenda Report*, the issue discussion topics, the conference itself. All of this is fueled by the desire to realize our vision. The World Service Conference gives us a precious opportunity to see the second point of our vision statement in action: Here, “NA communities worldwide and NA world services [can] work together in a spirit of unity and cooperation to carry our message of recovery.”

But, of course, that is only to name two of the three bullet points in our vision statement. The final part of our vision, that “Narcotics Anonymous has universal recognition and respect as a viable program of recovery,” is just as important—and, as you will read, much of our recent work has been in the service of improving our relations with the public.

If that sounds like a weighty vision, that’s because it is. One of the biggest challenges we face in planning has to do with implementation: How do we best use our scarce resources? The theme of the last World Service Conference was *Moving Forward Toward Our Vision*. In that spirit, our challenge comes “when the rubber hits the road,” as it were. We never seem to have enough time, money, or people to do all of the things that need doing, and so we need to make difficult choices at times. This conference cycle, for instance, we found ourselves in a severe crunch in terms of our writing resources. We had to make some tough decisions about what to do and not do, and as a result our reporting suffered. We asked at WSC 2004 that the workshops be moved to a low priority for this conference cycle. The conference was clear that they saw the workshops and fellowship interactions as a priority. With all of this activity, we did not produce NAWS News for quite some time, in the interests of keeping our projects, workshops, and other services on track and on schedule. All of our activities pull from a finite pool of resources, and we were unable to do everything within the timeframe we would have liked.

We believe we will not be confronted with this same sort of resource shortage next cycle, and we apologize for our delay in reporting this cycle, but it brings home the less-savory aspects of the planning process—the difficulties in decision making. We must always ask ourselves before prioritizing and undertaking work: Does this move us closer to our vision? And, out of all the things we can choose to do, is this particular work the best choice?

The theme of this year’s conference, *It’s All About Carrying the Message*, brings that home to us. Because it is, isn’t it? Ultimately, all of the work we do—at world services, at your regional and zonal meetings, at area service committees—all of it should better equip our groups to achieve our primary purpose.

Putting the “World” in “World Service Conference”

It may seem that the World Service Conference is far removed from the front-line work we do in our groups every day to carry the message to the addict who still suffers. In truth, the discussions we have at the conference, and the subsequent work that takes shape for the following two years, all ultimately serve to better equip our local NA communities. The World Service Conference gives us an opportunity to

gather together every two years, as a worldwide fellowship, to assess the progress we've made in the current conference cycle, and to make decisions about the years ahead. *A Guide to World Services in Narcotics Anonymous* explains:

The World Service Conference brings all elements of NA World Services together to further the common welfare of NA. The WSC's mission is to unify NA worldwide by providing an event at which:

- Participants propose and gain fellowship consensus on initiatives that further the NA World Services vision;
- The fellowship, through an exchange of experience, strength, and hope, collectively expresses itself on matters affecting Narcotics Anonymous as a whole;
- NA groups have a mechanism to guide and direct the activities of NA world services;
- Participants ensure that the various elements of NA World Services are ultimately responsible to the groups they serve;
- Participants are inspired with the joy of selfless service, and the knowledge that our efforts make a difference.

This mission is important enough that we began offering funding to all delegates to the conference relatively recently. We believe it's important that all seated regions be able to participate in the conference, regardless of their ability to afford travel and lodging for their delegate. If regions wish to send an alternate or anyone else, they must fund those members at a local level; however, world services' funding of a delegate ensures that each region that is a conference member can be represented if it wishes. We have not seen the corresponding rise in regional donations to world services that we had hoped for, but we continue to support the idea and practice of funding delegates nonetheless, because we believe it's important to do so.

Invited Non-Participants

This *Conference Agenda Report* opens in our standard format, with an explanation of how accessible it is. It is available in six languages and a couple of different formats because, we explain, "We want to ensure this material is distributed as widely as possible and to provide NA members with several ways to access the *Conference Agenda Report*." We open each CAR in this way because we *do* try to make these reports as accessible as possible to conference participants and the members they represent. This year, we are also making an effort to make the conference itself more accessible to some NA communities that are not yet seated participants, but whose circumstances are unusual and, we think, warrant the effort.

This year we are funding several non-seated attendees—Iran, Western Russia, and South Africa. Many of you reading this year's CAR may not know that in the past, most delegates were not funded to the World Service Conference, but world services did fund attendance for some "emerging communities." The International Development Forum (and then the Development Forum) was instrumental in reaching out to these communities in the 1990s. All of these communities are seated today, although many first came as non-voting participants. And so it is not without precedent that we have extended an invitation to Iran, Western Russia, and South Africa to WSC 2006. It is our hope that welcoming these three NA communities to

come and observe the conference will benefit both those local communities and the conference.

Observing or participating in the World Service Conference can be a stupendous experience for an NA community. Just as individual members have described their first time attending a world convention and getting a sense they never had before of NA as a worldwide fellowship, coming to the conference can help a community understand the global nature of NA in a way that they previously did not. A community such as South Africa, which faces the challenge of geographical isolation, can feel connected to NA as a whole in an unprecedented way through attending the World Service Conference. Of course, conference participation is a two-way street. The conference also benefits from a more diverse group of attendees. Each of these three communities has unique developmental circumstances, and none of the three—Iran, Western Russia, or South Africa—has neighboring NA communities with similar experiences whose voice is already represented at the conference. Having them present, even simply as observers, will help broaden the perspective of these communities as well as that of the conference as a whole.

Fellowship Development

As in all other areas, the conference is the culmination of the preceding two years of fellowship development activity. NAWS has done a great deal of traveling during this conference cycle. Along with a host of other trips, we have visited two of the three communities mentioned above. We took a trip to Johannesburg, Cape Town, and Durban, South Africa this year, visiting recovery meetings, service committees, and a local convention. This was the first trip world services had taken to South Africa, and we were extremely gratified to see the program working there. We brought their neighbor, Kenya, to this meeting to help addicts in those two countries learn how to support one another. We are looking forward to welcoming South Africa to the WSC this spring.

We also held a workshop in Bahrain this cycle. Seven countries participated: Lebanon, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Kuwait, Bahrain, and Oman. As with our trip to South Africa, we got to talk about some of the topics we have been discussing around the world this conference cycle (such as atmosphere of recovery, for example), as well as some topics of local interest and attention (in this case, an Arabic adaptation of the *Just for Today* video is one example). This was the first time Iran had attended one of these Middle East workshops. And, for the first time in years, we opened another branch office of NA World Services, this time in Iran. So far, that is going smoothly. The growth of the fellowship in Iran, coupled with the relative newness of NA's presence there, is like nothing we've ever seen before. We had heard there was an NA convention with 12,000 members in attendance, but we frankly had a hard time believing that. When we visited Iran, we found that, indeed, there are twenty-six areas serving more than 1,100 groups with 150 to 1,000 people attending each recovery meeting. Some estimates say that 200 newcomers a day arrive at the doors of NA in Iran. Clearly, we have much to learn from each other. As with Russia and South Africa, we look forward to welcoming Iran to Woodland Hills.

South Africa, Bahrain, and Iran are three of the many, many places we have visited this conference cycle. We hosted a translations workshop in India with representatives from each area. We held a worldwide workshop in Portugal. We've been to numerous places in the US, Panama, Peru, Canada, Spain, Germany, and the

Philippines, to name just a selection of places we've been. It seems that there is more often a travel team on the road than not.

And our work with fellowship development and travel isn't stopping just because we are preparing for the conference. In a few months from this writing—before the conference—we will be funding just over 100 people to attend two workshops, one in Lithuania, the other in Ukraine. The workshops are being planned in conjunction with our trip to the European Delegates Meeting in Lithuania, which will be attended by members from all over Russia as well as many other Eastern European NA communities. Some of you know that we hosted a very successful workshop in Saint Petersburg for Russian-speaking NA communities during the last conference cycle, and we are eager to return to Eastern Europe for a further opportunity to carry the message.

Conference Sessions

Some of you reading this report will have actually been to a World Service Conference in the past and have some idea of what fills that week at the end of April. Most of you, however, have not. Many of the sessions at WSC 2006 will be similar to those from past conferences. Of course, as we've said, a lot of those sessions have evolved a great deal over the years. Take the business sessions, for example. Each of these was preceded in WSC 2004 by a discussion session on the items that would be presented. Being able to have a discussion unfettered by the rules of order prior to entering into a formal business session meant that the business sessions themselves proceeded more smoothly than ever. That's just one example of the ways in which things have changed over the years.

Some of this year's conference sessions will include:

- Orientation, with a review of the agenda for the week,
- Introductions,
- Old and new business sessions,
- Reports on the activities of the last two years,
- Small-group discussions about issue discussion topics,
- The proposed budget and project plans for the next two years,
- Discussions about issues facing the fellowship and world services,
- Elections,
- Reports from some zonal forums, and
- Recovery meetings, whenever possible.

The week will feature some meetings of the World Board, and time will be set aside for zones who wish to meet. We will also talk about the issue discussion topics from the closing conference cycle as well as select new topics for the upcoming cycle. And we'll discuss the work that faces us over the coming two years, including the conclusion of the Basic Text project and the implementation of the *PR Handbook*. We also welcome any input from delegates about other topics you would like to discuss. We need your ideas by 15 January 2006 in order to consider them when planning the conference week. Does all of that seem like a lot? Well, it always feels like a lot during the conference week itself. Each conference presents a challenge: how to discuss everything we want to discuss, and decide on everything we want to decide

on, in a finite period of time. Nonetheless, at WSC 2004 we tried something new and put aside an afternoon in the middle of the week to take a break. We all took buses to a nearby ranch, ate together, played soccer, had a recovery meeting, and got to know each other on a personal basis. When the conference week closed, we surveyed the participants—as we always do—about what went well and what needed improvement. Everyone praised the idea of taking that time to rest and break bread together. Without exception, participants felt like the afternoon strengthened their connections with each other; it helped them see the more human side of each other and recognize our common foundation as addicts who all want what's best for Narcotics Anonymous. Given what a success the day was in 2004, we will most likely have another such afternoon this year.

Honestly, it's almost impossible to capture the heart of the conference in a report—the intangibles that most participants actually find the most meaningful—a sense of a worldwide fellowship, the opportunity to come together with others from all over the globe who share our love for NA and our dedication to service. We can't paint you a picture that helps you feel all of that. But those of you reading the *CAR* for the first time or participating in one of your first discussions of the *Conference Agenda Report*, know that this document is being read all over the world by addicts like you—from Venezuela to Virginia, and from Israel to Idaho. We are a worldwide fellowship, and every year our message is spread to more addicts in more places because of members like you who care enough to read a report like this and try to participate in creating the future of our fellowship.

Conference Approval Track Material

We close this introductory part of the *Conference Agenda Report* with news that we know will be quite welcome by some: that the Conference Approval Track material will be published online this year.

Some of you may be saying, “Huh?? What on earth are they talking about?” Let us take a moment to explain. In addition to the *Conference Agenda Report* and the other reports and tools mentioned above, one of the things the conference does is discuss and approve the Conference Approval Track material. In the past, before world services restructured, there was no such beast as the “Conference Approval Track.” The material that is now referred to as “Conference Approval Track” was contained within the *CAR*, which was a weighty report indeed. Many NA groups complained, however, that much of the focus of the *CAR* was neither interesting to them nor relevant to their needs.

We proposed that a publication distinct from the *CAR* contain the service materials, budget information, and project plans that must be approved at the conference—in short, the kind of material that many groups view as a distraction from their primary purpose. Having two separate publications makes it easier for groups to delegate decision-making about service materials if they so choose. The 2000 *CAR* explains the proposal—which the conference, of course, adopted—this way:

Another factor influencing this proposal is that the World Service Conference is moving toward a “consensus-based” and “issues-oriented” conference meeting. While this change is not fully realized yet, the need is evident for a *Conference Agenda Report* (*CAR*) that contains issues highly relevant to members and groups. ... This frees up our members and groups to devote their

attention to holding meetings and carrying the message of recovery, without having to ratify every decision made on their behalf at every level of service.

Having two separate publications also enables us to publish the *Conference Agenda Report* two months earlier than in the past. The CAR is published 150 days before the conference, while the Conference Approval Track material is still published at least 90 days ahead (when the CAR used to be published).

This year, in addition to the proposed budget and project plans, the Conference Approval Track material will contain the approval form of the first nine chapters of the *Public Relations Handbook*, a document we know many service committees are interested in reading and discussing. As always, this material will be sent to conference participants and will be available for sale from the World Service Office. This year, however, in response to requests from the fellowship, it will also be posted on the web. Access to the Conference Approval Track material will be password-protected, just as access to the review copies of the *Public Relations Handbook* chapters were password-protected. That way, we can ensure that only NA members see our proposed budget material and the approval draft of the *Public Relations Handbook* chapters. As with other conference material, the Conference Approval Track will be accessible from the World Service Conference page of our website at www.na.org/conference. If you do not already have a password, clicking on the link for this page will take you through a process to obtain one.

Other Conference Preparations

In addition to the Conference Approval Track material and this *Conference Agenda Report*, there are other materials that can help participants prepare for the conference. We have online materials, forthcoming reports, and ongoing reports, all of which can help prepare conference participants for WSC 2006 and inform interested members about what's going on in world services.

Online Materials

This document, the *Conference Agenda Report*, and the other conference reports and preparatory materials are available on our website at www.na.org/conference. In addition to that conference page, the bulletin boards have valuable material for conference participants and other interested members. During the 2002–2004 conference cycle, we created online bulletin boards for the issue discussion topics as well as for conference participants. You can access the bulletin boards online at www.na.org/discussion_boards.htm. The issue discussion topics board features members' thoughts on the topics. Anyone can post there. A second bulletin board is designed for conference participants in particular. Delegates and their alternates, World Board members, and the executive director of NAWS can post here, though anyone who is registered can read the postings. Conference participants can discuss issues related to world services and the upcoming conference. We strongly encourage those of you who are delegates to share your experience on this bulletin board. Tell us, and your fellow conference participants, about workshopping the issue discussion topics. What worked, and what didn't? What did you learn? We hope you will share your general experience in filling the role of delegate. We know there is much experience out there that, if shared, could help others, but we are not always good at passing it along. Help us improve communication from delegate to delegate.

March Conference Report

In addition to our newer online material, we publish a time-tested *Conference Report* each March before the WSC. Reading this report, which will be sent to all participants, is one important way to prepare for the conference. The March CR issue contains reports from regional service committees around the world. The deadline for submitting your report for this year's March CR is 15 February 2006. Generally speaking, regional reports contain facts about your regions such as the numbers of meetings and areas, things that are working well for you, and your challenges. For the 2004 conference, we tried something new: We published a form along with some hints designed to make report writing easier for you. The format was also meant to help standardize the reports, making it easier for us to compile consistent regional data from them—and easier for you to read the reports. We consider these report-writing tools a success. Most regions used them and liked them, so we will be making them available once again. We will publish them before the *March Conference Report*. We will also post them online at www.na.org/conference. Delegates will be able to download the regional report form or fill it out online from the link on this page. Please make every effort to submit a report. Sharing in this way can help participants get a better sense of NA worldwide, in all its different communities, and the concerns and accomplishments talked about in your reports can help us plan discussions for the conference itself.

Another thing we have been trying recently is to use the *Conference Report* as a forum where regions can share ideas, issues, and concerns before the conference itself. This can be much more effective in generating genuine discussion than a yes/no vote could ever be. Participants have always been able to use the *Conference Report* to publish their ideas, but only at the last couple of conferences have we seen this start to happen. We want to continue to encourage this. We have not yet heard anyone complain about too much communication; let's continue to develop our publications so that they can best serve our conference and our fellowship.

Making Progress

In the 2004 *Conference Agenda Report* we wrote:

Some of the material [in this report] may seem far removed from the interests of your home group or NA community. We hope that, with time and open communication, that will change. We continue to work to improve the relevance of the material contained in the CAR, but our success depends upon your participation and input.

It's only two years later, and we can say that we have made tremendous strides in this direction. In the remainder of this year's CAR, we report on the status of several projects approved at the last conference, and we write about the four issue discussion topics for the conference cycle that is coming to a close: atmosphere of recovery, leadership, our public image, and infrastructure. These topics were widely discussed throughout the fellowship, and we try to recap some of the common themes in those discussions and move the conversation further for the upcoming conference. If we had some concern in 2004 that some of you reading the *Conference Agenda Report* might fail to see the significance of the content, this year we have no such worry. These four discussion topics, the three projects we report on, and the other material covered here all have direct bearing on our ability to help the still-suffering addict, and we're confident that comes across.

Issue Discussion Topics

We have talked about moving toward a discussion-based conference, and conference participants can attest to the ways in which we have realized that goal. And so, just because there are only a few motions in this *Conference Agenda Report* doesn't mean there is nothing to discuss.

The bulk of this report is devoted to the current issue discussion topics. Initially, two topics were approved at WSC 2004 for this cycle: "Our Public Image," and "Infrastructure." We tried some new ways to generate discussions about these topics in the fellowship, and our efforts seem to have made a difference. We produced session profiles for both topics, which we published in the *NA Way* and *NAWS News* in five languages. We also created space on our online bulletin board for both topics. We have addressed some combination of these topics at almost every fellowship event we have attended during this cycle. We would like to thank everyone for participating, particularly the delegates who led many of these discussions locally. Before too long at all, we added two more issue discussion topics, "Atmosphere of Recovery" and "Leadership." The former was an issue topic in the previous cycle and also grew out of some of the discussions about "Our Public Image" (and the fallout from those discussions) and "Infrastructure." The latter, "Leadership," came out of the most common discussion topic suggested at worldwide workshops—how to get people involved in service—as well as the ongoing discussions between the Human Resource Panel and the World Board about leadership issues—and as with "Atmosphere of Recovery," the discussions on infrastructure. We summarize some of what we've heard over the course of the past two years. We also suggest some discussion questions to help us keep moving forward with our discussion of these topics and our solutions to the common challenges that confront us.

If you have read this far in the *Conference Agenda Report*, there is a good chance you will do what you can to have a discussion in your group, area, or region about these topics. The discussion questions are provided as a way to help structure your talks and input (they are also compiled on one page together with the list of motions at the end of this report). But don't feel you need to limit your input to what the questions are asking. If you have additional thoughts on these topics, please post them on our online bulletin boards, let your delegates know, or contact world services. The page for the online bulletin boards also contains the materials that have structured much of our ongoing discussions on these topics, including session profiles for the two original issue discussion topics, "Our Public Image" and "Infrastructure." If you didn't get a chance to see those materials before, you might want to look at them online at www.na.org/discussion_boards.htm.

'Atmosphere of Recovery'

Atmosphere of recovery was the issue discussion topic perhaps most widely embraced by the fellowship during the 2004–2006 conference cycle. We led discussions at workshops around the world, and local NA communities held their own discussions as well.

The importance of a warm, welcoming atmosphere within our NA groups is undisputed. Most of us remember how comfortable (or uncomfortable) we felt when walking through the doors of our first few meetings. When we were greeted and we

felt safe and welcome, that made all the difference for some of us. Regardless of how much time in recovery we have, the atmosphere of recovery in a meeting makes all the difference for any still-suffering addict. Our Basic Text tells us:

At first we can do little more than attend meetings. Probably we cannot remember a single word, person or thought from our first meeting. In time, we can relax and enjoy the atmosphere of recovery. Meetings strengthen our recovery. ... [W]hen we hurt, we go to a meeting and find relief. Meetings keep us in touch with where we've been, but more importantly with where we could go in our recovery. As we go to meetings regularly, we learn the value of talking with other addicts who share our problems and goals. We have to open up and accept the love and understanding that we need in order to change. (p. 53–54)

No matter where we discussed the topic of “Atmosphere of Recovery,” no one disputed how crucial it is in both early and ongoing recovery. When we are at our best, our NA groups carry a strong message of NA recovery, the service positions are filled, and we are on good terms with the meeting facility. In an attractive NA group, members can feel the empathy and love, and all members—regardless of age, race, sexual identity, creed, religion or lack of religion—feel at home.

The Challenges

We cannot carry the message as effectively if this atmosphere of recovery is compromised in some way. Sometimes our meetings are a poor reflection of what the NA program has to offer; they can be disorganized or chaotic, with disruptive members and not much of a message of recovery being shared.

We all know the feeling of sitting in such a meeting. Sometimes it can seem like this is the only type of meeting available to us where we are living. We can try to lead by example, but it can get frustrating. Often we lose members when we cannot offer an atmosphere of recovery in our meetings, or when someone comes to an NA meeting seeking help and never identifies or connects enough to understand that he or she can find recovery there. One of the biggest challenges shared in workshops on this topic in some communities is the retention of members with time. Not all of our long-term members relapse or “float out the door on a cloud of religious zeal”; some of them stop going to meetings because they aren't finding the recovery they need there. We all feel the loss when our groups lack members with clean time, because we all need each other. In the best cases, our meetings have new members, members with substantial time in the program, and members in between.

‘Regardless of ... ’

Of course, that is the *best* case. In reality, members with substantial clean time aren't the only ones who are tempted to leave NA—or who do. Sometimes addicts who come to our meetings feel like they don't belong there, and sometimes addicts never make it to our meetings because they perceive that, for some reason, our program is not for them.

We say that we welcome all members, and that all addicts are equal behind the doors of an NA meeting—but the truth is that, sometimes, our members or potential members don't feel welcome. They feel different. We struggle with these issues. Many of us want to see NA as being exempt from the kinds of prejudices and conflicts that characterize the “outside world.” The question that we asked ourselves

was, “What can we do to better carry the message to those who suffer from addiction but are not typically found in the rooms of NA?” We realize that NA is for those who want it, not necessarily those who need it—but are we truly doing all we can to reach out and make our message available, accessible, and relevant to all addicts?

Our discussions led us to the conclusion that there are many things that we can try, as a fellowship, to see if they help us better carry our message. These ideas include engaging the fellowship in this discussion; creating literature targeted at specific populations, such as younger or older addicts or those who also suffer from mental disorders; and, on a local level, holding special-interest or common-needs meetings.

“Special-interest” or “common-needs” meetings spring from a perceived need on the part of our members. Of course, the question of meetings geared toward specific populations, and the place of such meetings within NA, is a very controversial one in our program. Regardless of where one stands on this particular issue (even the language we use to describe such meetings is telling—“common-needs” or “special-interests”), it is hard to dispute the fact that addicts need to feel welcome and “a part of” in NA meetings. Feeling different can be fatal for us. We all need to work to ensure that no addict feels excluded or different because of his or her age, religion, ethnicity, profession, or any other reason. We all hope that addicts can find their place in NA, but what we have heard over and over again from professionals who send people to our meetings is that we undervalue the power of that initial identification; when still-suffering addicts feel that identification, it can help them stay long enough to become recovering NA members.

In this spirit, we are planning to schedule some common-needs meetings at the 2007 World Convention in San Antonio. Because there is currently a very dated set of *Convention Guidelines*, approved by the WSC, that contains a statement that we do not hold this type of meeting at the World Convention, we did not schedule this type of meeting for the 2005 convention in Hawaii. We wanted to have time to discuss this with the conference first and explain what our intentions are. Rather than going through the process of a formal change at this point, we want to try this as an experiment. If it is successful, we will be posing the question to WSC 2008. Regardless of what the response is to these meetings, this will be an ongoing discussion.

Part of our discussion should be about the ways we struggle with these issues, not just on a group and individual level, but on an area and regional level as well. It’s not uncommon for an area split to occur along lines that are largely economic or even racial. These kinds of splits, and the tensions that lead up to them, permeate not just our service meetings, but our recovery meetings as well. Much of the time, we don’t even know how to talk about these kinds of struggles. Because “addiction makes us one of a kind,” we can fall into the trap of thinking that it’s wrong to acknowledge the real differences that exist among us, and denial is never a useful tool for an addict. We can be tempted to ignore or deny the nature of the conflict with which our local communities are struggling, because we want to believe NA is “better than that.”

And you know what? At our best, we *are* better than that. We do not, however, get better by denying the challenges that confront us; we get better by using spiritual principles to meet those challenges. Sometimes we get preoccupied with laying blame: “It’s your fault for feeling different when the principle of anonymity makes us all the same;” or, “It’s your fault for making me feel different by not seeing your own narrow-mindedness.” When we can stop worrying about laying blame and address

our challenges together in the spirit of the First Tradition, we can begin to move past our differences to a place where the ties that bind us together really, truly become stronger than anything that would tear us apart.

Safety and Respect

Sometimes our meetings feel unsafe to our members for other reasons. Perhaps they fear that what they share will not be kept in confidence or will be subject to cross talk or comment in the meeting. Maybe they don't even feel physically safe at a meeting, for some reason. The session profile we published earlier this conference cycle for the issue discussion topic, "Our Public Image," began with a quotation from a treatment professional about the impact of predatory behavior on referrals to NA. It was not our intention to start a firestorm when we published that session profile, and yet we did. Some members and meetings adopted an almost crusading attitude toward eliminating "sexual predators" from their midst, while others felt that this language was too strong for the behavior we are discussing, even if the concerns about inappropriate advances on new or vulnerable members are valid and need to be addressed. We agree that, certainly, we need to take individual and joint responsibility for our meetings. We need to work to ensure that addicts feel safe and welcome at our meetings, and that the atmosphere in our groups is an atmosphere of recovery and good will. Starting fights and blacklisting members, however, is *not* the way to go about that.

What's more, the challenges we face in our meetings in terms of safety and respect extend beyond those raised by sexual behavior. We need to guard against exploitation in general—not only the exploitation of new members, but any member who feels threatened with exploitation on a professional, religious, or financial level, for example. Sometimes disruptive members can make people attending our meetings feel unsafe when there isn't even any one-to-one contact between them. The main point here is that our principle of anonymity requires that everyone has an equal opportunity to recover. Together, we need to talk about how to best ensure that all members have equal access to recovery.

When we discussed this topic at workshops around the world, people shared a number of ideas. The one we heard again and again has to do with raising awareness of the problem on a group level, including approaching members with more time and talking about the issue at group business meetings with the intention of taking people aside to deal with the problem directly but without disrupting the meeting as a whole. Other solutions people discussed had to do with learning to disagree without being disagreeable, leading by example, and working to maintain a responsible and respectful attitude within the group. Again, the key is for us to sit down together and approach our common challenges, guided by the principle of unity. There's probably a lot we can do together to foster a sense of well being in our group, to help people feel (and be) safe, and to create an environment where positive behavior flourishes and negative behavior fades.

Solutions and Questions

What we found when we led sessions on "Atmosphere of Recovery" is that many people haven't really thought about what they can do. While we may be in agreement about the importance of the issue, not everyone has given a great deal of

consideration to the atmosphere of their own home group and, further, what they can do personally and on a group level to improve the atmosphere.

Here are some questions that your group (or area or GSR assembly...and so on) can ask itself. We urge you to consider these sorts of questions not just during CAR season, but on a regular basis. Take the last question below, for instance. If your group hasn't discussed this already, consider bringing it up during your next business meeting.

1. What is working within your group? That is, in what ways is your group carrying the message, rather than the disease?
2. Who, from your local community, is missing from your group, and why do you think they might be missing? (For example, if you live in a racially diverse community do the people attending your meeting reflect that diversity?)
3. What are some things that you can do as an individual to create and maintain the atmosphere of recovery in your home group? (For example, greet someone you don't recognize; make a commitment to listen while each person is sharing and not participate in side conversations; etc.) What can you do when you see things happening that take away from that atmosphere?
4. What are some of the things the group can do? (For example, change the room set-up so that it's more conducive to an atmosphere of recovery; acknowledge newcomers in some way—with phone lists or introductions; etc.)

Our meetings should be a place where we can share with each other about our struggles and triumphs and how we are practicing spiritual principles and working the steps in our day-to-day lives. Ideally, when we walk through the door of an NA meeting, we each feel in our hearts, "Oh yes, I'm home." When our meetings are places where addicts feel at home, our meetings are places where addicts learn they can lose the desire to use and find a new way of life. And isn't that what it's all about?

It's all about carrying the message.

'Leadership'

"Leadership," while not formally instituted as one of the two official issue discussion topics at the last World Service Conference, has been one focus of our discussions for a few years now. At the world services level, there has been concern about nominations and elections procedures and, more fundamentally, about identifying and cultivating leaders for involvement in world services. We have focused on introducing members to world services through involvement in workgroups, building our relationships with delegates but reaching past just those relationships, and acknowledging leaders on a local level when we see them. The issues that underpin our challenges at a world level pervade every level of service. Throughout Narcotics Anonymous, we struggle with apathy and lack of involvement, and we are challenged to identify and cultivate leaders. At every worldwide workshop, when we ask members what they want to discuss, the topic that comes up, over and over again, is how to attract people to service—how to get them involved—and that's a large part of where this issue discussion topic came from. "Cultivate leadership" is one of the primary answers to that question.

Nonetheless, the degree to which the fellowship embraced leadership as an issue discussion topic surprised us a bit. Initially we anticipated an aversion to discussing the concept of leadership at all. In fact, we published two articles in the *NA Way* addressing this topic very generally. In the past, leadership has at times been considered something of a dirty word in NA. The principle of anonymity has been misunderstood to imply that we have no leaders whatsoever, because we are all leveled—the same—under the umbrella of anonymity and equality. But even our Second Tradition admits the presence of leaders; they are “but trusted servants” the tradition explains. *The Second Tradition does not say that we have no leaders.* And then, of course, there is our Fourth Concept, which addresses the importance of leadership in NA. The 2004 *Conference Agenda Report* cites the Fourth Concept when talking about the focus on leadership in the NAWS Strategic Plan:

Our Fourth Concept is clear: “Effective leadership is highly valued in Narcotics Anonymous. Leadership qualities should be carefully considered when selecting trusted servants.” The essay on Concept Four further elaborates on the principle of leadership, explaining, “As recovering addicts, any of us can fulfill a leadership role, providing a sound example, by serving our fellowship. This modest spirit of service to others forms the foundation of our Fourth Concept, and of NA leadership itself.”

How can we be of service to others? For most of us, involvement begins with someone reaching out their hand and asking us to come to an area service meeting, to stay for a group’s business meeting, or to stand for a service position. If we struggle to fill positions and get members involved at all levels of service, perhaps we need to look at how to make involvement more attractive.

Just as we need to work to maintain an atmosphere of recovery in our NA meetings, we need to work to make our service meetings attractive to our members. We have come a substantial distance in accepting leadership as a concept integral to Narcotics Anonymous, but there are still aspects of the topic that are less widely accepted and that bear further discussion.

Some of our continuing challenges come from the ways in which we tend to interpret the principle of anonymity. While it now seems to be more commonplace to accept the notion that NA has leaders than it once was, it is still widely believed that we each can fill the same leadership roles equally well. That is, the principle of anonymity is misunderstood to mean that willingness is the only crucial ingredient to consider when filling a service position. We often have no problem finding people who want to be leaders; the problem we have is in finding real leadership. We resist distinguishing between people or pointing out who may or may not have the skills necessary for a task when considering who to elect or appoint to a position. Our desire to fill a position, and our aversion to hurting anyone’s feelings, can lead us to what some call the “warm body syndrome.” We will elect whoever is willing, without always considering if that is best for the member, group, or service body as a whole.

Our *Group Booklet* reminds us:

We encourage you to remember that you’re selecting group officers, first, to benefit the common welfare of your group. While service commitments often benefit those who accept them, that should not be the primary reason for selecting one individual or another to serve as an officer of your group. As the

First Tradition says, in part, “Our common welfare should come first.”

We need to consider what is best for the member, the group, and/or the service body when selecting individuals to take on leadership roles. When we talk about how to foster the atmosphere of recovery in our groups, one of the things we talk about is what kind of example the members in group leadership positions are setting. It is a jointly held responsibility of the group to elect the members most likely to set a positive tone and maintain a consistent atmosphere of recovery to serve the group. Similarly, at a regional or area level, electing healthy, capable trusted servants makes getting involved, membership in the body, more attractive to others. Our primary concern when filling leadership roles in our recovery and service meetings should be how we can best carry the message, not whether holding a position would benefit a particular individual or whether we might hurt an individual’s feelings by not electing him or her. The big question should be, does electing one individual or another help us better carry the message to the addict who still suffers?

Most of us do not walk through the doors of NA ready to take on a leadership role of any kind. We develop skills and experience through our work in recovery, including our service work. We need to be patient with that process and not elect people to positions they may not yet be ready or able to perform, however willing they might be. Everyone has a role to play in NA service, but everyone certainly does not have the same role to play. Putting people in service positions at which they are destined to fail because they lack the necessary resources, tools, or experience is one way to possibly drive them out of service for a long time—maybe even forever. We can work together to do more to ensure people’s success in service, encouraging them to take risks, but at the same time helping to match their talents to the tasks at hand and to polish their skills through their service work.

One of the primary ways to help people succeed in new service positions is through orientation and training. Every World Service Conference, we have an orientation session, and every two years at this point in the conference cycle, we at world services ask ourselves how we can improve orientation for new participants. You will see orientation materials posted on our website, www.na.org/conference, as we collect and develop them. We also orient new board members and new workgroup members—and, again, every two years we think about how to improve that orientation. These practices—training people new to a position, and passing along the knowledge that others have learned in that position—are not very common in NA, however. In general, training and orientation are not widespread; they are not part of our culture. We can all do more to encourage “sharing,” not just in our recovery meetings, but in our service gatherings as well.

This is one of the reasons why mentorship goes hand-in-hand with leadership. We cannot do it alone. Others act as mentors, helping us to develop our skills, identify our strengths, and find our roles. For many of us, the initial spark of willingness—to get involved, to serve—came from our sponsor. Our sponsor was the person who first encouraged that part of ourselves, or who functioned as a role model for us. We need help seeing what we can best contribute, and we need encouragement and training as we grow in our positions. Mentors are those who help us polish the diamonds in the rough.

When we discussed this topic throughout the fellowship during the current conference cycle, a third idea came up in addition to leadership and mentorship, and

that was stewardship—the notion that we should leave the job better than we found it. Just as many of us who have helped clean up after a meeting pride ourselves on leaving the meeting place cleaner than when we arrived, we can work to improve our service committees and positions by practicing the principle of stewardship.

When we were using, we lived our lives as takers, trying to get as much as we could while giving as little as possible. That approach turns around for most of us as we stay clean. We develop a sense of personal ownership in the NA program, and a sense of responsibility to give back. Yes, you are “a member when you say you are,” and what that means—the implications of membership—deepens for many of us as we grow in recovery. From the little, everyday ways in which we set an example and take responsibility for our group—such as picking up cigarette butts in the parking lot, or making sure we greet newcomers at our meetings—to the more formal roles we may take on—such as H&I panel coordinator, or phoneline chair, or group secretary—we see membership as a privilege that comes with a responsibility.

We progress from desperate people living on the margins to acceptable, responsible, and productive members of society. And in turn, we help others make this transition, as well, by sponsoring and mentoring members of the program. It's not always an easy position, helping others find their niche and inspiring them to reach their full potential. It involves active, honest feedback and hands-on help. We wouldn't think of sponsoring someone as merely consisting of nodding and smiling, giving them nothing but pats on the back. Similarly, acting as a mentor for those involved in service means pointing out strengths and weaknesses, being a good enough friend to tell them the truth, and a responsible enough member of NA to make decisions for the good of the group not necessarily the feelings of the individual.

Questions for Discussion

5. How do we, as a fellowship, better match people with positions—identify talent and match it to task?
6. What steps can we take to help trusted servants be more successful through mentoring, training, and orientation? (For instance, an incoming trusted servant can work side-by-side with the outgoing member; we can make it a point to give positive encouragement when our trusted servants do a good job, and so on.) How else can we help?
7. How can we instill a sense of personal responsibility, ownership, and stewardship for the roles we take on?
8. What do we mean when we refer to “leadership” in NA? What is the difference between “leaders” and “leadership”?

We talk a lot in the program about living our dreams, but dreams don't come true without the exercise of responsibility. Understanding the need to take responsibility in NA is something that helps define our leaders. When we talk about leading by example, one of the primary aspects of that example is the willingness to accept responsibility. Our members' passion for the NA program is one of our defining characteristics. When it is misapplied, it can present one of our most significant challenges, but when it is used to further our primary purpose and strengthen NA, it is a force that can change the world, one addict at a time.

‘Our Public Image’

Our vision statement looks forward to a future when NA has “universal recognition and respect as a viable program of recovery.” This kind of public image—this recognition and respect—helps addicts find their way here. Professionals are more likely to refer addicts to our program, and addicts themselves are more likely to find their own way into our rooms, if our image reflects the richness and diversity we have to offer. And yet our public image was the least embraced, the least popular, of the four issue discussion topics. We’re not exactly sure why that is.

Certainly everywhere we discussed the topic, we all agreed that we have plenty of work to do. While there was some discussion about positive aspects of our image—our visible success stories, the inroads we have made in the courts, and the like—most of the discussion focused around our negative image—the mistaken notions that there is no long-term recovery in NA, that we are a program exclusively for “low bottom” junkies, and, of course, that young women are not safe in our meetings. Often our workshop attendees talked about our lack of a public image at all—the fact that we are still a secret society in many cases. Sometimes there was confusion about the topic itself—the distinction between NA’s public image and our individual members’ personal images. No one is trying to suggest that NA sanitize itself or that our members try to present themselves as something they are not. Of course, if we are making a presentation about the program, we may want to pay attention to what we are wearing, our personal image, but in general, our program is colorful, and that can be an asset not a liability.

As with the discussion topic of leadership, we seem to have grown past some of our earlier misconceptions regarding public image. One of our longstanding myths used to be that a service body could only do certain kinds of public information work if we were solicited to do so. For instance, we would have to be asked to set up a booth at a public fair; it would be wrong to take the initiative to make this sort of public information work happen. Informing the public about who we are and what we do is not the kind of promotion that our traditions caution us about. There is a useful distinction to be made between “promotion” in the sense of making a TV commercial with a celebrity endorsement or proclaiming NA to be the best program of recovery, and telling those who are not in the program about NA. The latter is, in fact, an essential part of carrying the message. Professionals who have contact with addicts on a regular basis and advise them on their treatment paths cannot refer them to our program if they are unaware of NA. As a fellowship, we seem to have accepted the notion that we can take initiative in informing the public about NA, but we still don’t seem to be doing a lot of this kind of work.

Sometimes our NA communities fear that they will not be able to handle the influx of new members if they embark on a coordinated public relations campaign. It is true that NA communities that set out to build and maintain their public relations in a deliberate fashion often see an explosion of growth. The most important thing we can do is let people know we are here, and this sort of focus for our communities can help to achieve our primary purpose in a way that little else can. We can’t ever totally prepare in advance for a rapid burst in attendance, a sudden increase in addicts being referred to or learning about our program. When we do the right things, though, the right things happen. We manage as best we can, and we try to manifest our gratitude in the way we make our new members feel welcome.

One thing that can help the success of these sorts of public relations efforts is cooperation among service bodies. This is another way in which we are gradually changing our ideas—the increased willingness to work together in our service subcommittees. We are seeing more and more efforts coordinated between public information subcommittees, for example, and hospitals and institutions subcommittees. Our service structure was formed a long time ago, and sometimes the divisions between committees hinder our work more than help it. Thinking about the jobs that need to be done, and then asking what kind of structure is most effective to do that work, can help our effectiveness. (We will talk more about this under the next topic heading of “Infrastructure.”) This sort of “form follows function” approach is a new way of thinking about service in NA, and it has yet to take popular hold. We do see increased cooperation among committees as a first step in that direction.

As we’ve talked about over the course of this conference cycle, “our public image” means much more than just formal PI work. It also means our relations with the public in general, and the impression people hold (or don’t hold) of Narcotics Anonymous. Perhaps “Our Public Image” isn’t the right phrase to capture this broad topic. A large part of what we are talking about here is NA’s reputation—not just PI (public information/public image) and not just “image” in the negative sense that we sometimes attach to the word, but our reputation in general—how we are thought of by others. This is yet another topic where there are things we can do, and for which we are responsible as individual members, to positively impact how NA is perceived. There is also a variety of roles our service bodies—our groups, areas, regions, zones, and NA World Services—can play in improving NA’s reputation.

In some respects, we have made great strides in this area; in others, we have a long way to go. Two incidents at our recent world convention in Hawaii, to us, epitomize the mixed bag that is NA’s reputation. As some of you may know, the Governor of Hawaii presented NA with a proclamation at the opening ceremony of WCNA-31. It was quite an amazing moment for so many of us, a testimony to our legitimacy—our positive reputation—such a long way from our roots, personally and as a program. But then, in the evening of that same day, a woman worker from the convention center was pushed into a wall because some of our members were in such a hurry to get to a meeting. Those few problematic members who tried to shove their way into a meeting will leave an indelible impression on that convention center worker and others. We had an opportunity to overcome preconceived notions of addicts, and in some cases, we didn’t. That out-of-control scene, and the negative impressions of our program it created or reinforced, will be what some people remember of WCNA-31—not the thousands of members who were respectful and helpful.

That’s one of the biggest challenges we face as a program: It only takes a minute to give someone an impression of NA that will last a lifetime. We present a vision of our program every time we wear an NA tee-shirt to the store, when we drive our cars with NA bumper stickers, when we congregate in the parking lot before and after meetings, and so on.

Questions for Discussion

9. How do I take responsibility for NA's image/reputation? How do service bodies? How can a sense of personal responsibility and ownership develop in me, and how can I help others develop this?
10. How does a negative image/reputation affect our ability to carry the message?
11. What about our image/reputation makes some people feel NA is not appropriate for them? What about our image makes some people feel NA is not where they would refer a client?
12. How can better cooperation among services improve our public image?

When we talk about our public image—our reputation—we're not just talking about wanting people to like us or wanting to reflect our personal growth and recovery; we're talking about our ability to reach the addict who still suffers. How well we are able to reach out to addicts who have not found us yet depends upon our public reputation. As with the atmosphere of recovery in our groups and the cultivation of leadership in our service bodies, many of us feel that helping to ensure the good nature of that reputation is one of the responsibilities of membership. This is our program; the health of its reputation rests with each of us.

'Infrastructure'

The fourth and final issue discussion topic from the 2004–2006 conference cycle, "Infrastructure," is related in some ways to each of the three other topics. A strong infrastructure facilitates both the atmosphere of recovery in our meetings and the image we present to the world. Leadership, of course, is integral to that strength. In this context, leadership is part of what motivates us to work for NA—not just being of service in a general sense, because everyone is of service in some way or another, but committing to carry out the duties of a position within our infrastructure. Our ability, as a fellowship, to carry the recovery message depends on this kind of commitment, and "it's all about carrying the message."

The material in the 2004 *Conference Agenda Report* about "Infrastructure" echoes this idea and touches on the relationship between infrastructure and the other issue discussion topics:

We struggled for a word to describe this topic, and we chose "infrastructure," which the dictionary defines as the base or foundation of an organization, and for NA that means many people working together. The primary purpose of an NA group is to carry the message to the addict who still suffers, and a broad foundation of trusted servants and service committees help to make that possible. Accurate meeting lists, reliable phonelines, and members who provide information to the public—to name just a few services—all help addicts to find our program. ...

There is a direct connection between the strength of local services and our fellowship's overall ability to carry the message. The growth and continuation of our program of recovery depends on each level of service to provide specific, ongoing support. ...

The work we do together will determine how accessible we are to addicts, the

impression we make on society, and how well we carry our message. We look forward to discussing these issues at the conference.

It makes sense that our discussions about infrastructure would be taken up with the relationships among these other topics and challenges. “Infrastructure” is not just about the structure itself. The prefix “infra” means below or beneath, and infrastructure is concerned with what underpins the different elements of our service structure and the relationships between these different elements. This *Conference Agenda Report* opens with a quote from our Basic Text that reminds us, “Everything that occurs in the course of NA service must be motivated by the desire to more successfully carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers.” That desire to carry the message infuses all that we do; it is the foundation upon which our service structure rests, and what animates our infrastructure.

Our service structure was originally designed to meet the needs of a much different fellowship. At the time when our service structure was first being developed, NA was smaller, more homogenous, and less geographically far-flung, to point to just a few of the ways in which we’ve changed over the decades. Although the principles that motivate our service remain, and will always remain, the same, it seems time that we reexamine what we do and how we do it and see if what we have meets our needs. This is another instance where form *should* follow function but often does not. There is no perfect structure that will address all of our needs, but what we have heard from these discussions is that there certainly could be improvement.

Most of us didn’t come to NA with many models of how to have good relationships on a personal level, and the learning curve we experience in our individual recovery is reflected in the infrastructure challenges with which we grapple in service. We struggle with making service attractive, with keeping members involved and engaged, with taking responsibility for the health of NA’s infrastructure, and with using our resources wisely, to name just a few of our challenges.

Many of the same principles and practical solutions that come up when we discuss “Atmosphere of Recovery” on a group level are applicable when we ask how we can make service more attractive. Sometimes we seem to think the best approach is to badger members into involvement, but of course, that doesn’t work for very long. The fact of the matter is that service really isn’t very attractive in many cases, and we would better serve our fellowship to think about why that is and try to make the necessary changes so that service can appear and feel as rewarding to others as we ourselves have found it to be.

The same sorts of efforts that make our recovery meetings attractive can go a long way toward making our service meetings more appealing. When we offer members opportunity, support, and affirmation, they are more likely to get and stay involved. When we’ve discussed infrastructure at workshops throughout the cycle, one thing that has come up repeatedly is the ways in which we can infuse our service meetings with an atmosphere of recovery. There are those among us who would love to see the false distinction between “service” and “recovery” disappear. That is, some of our members talk about “service-based recovery” or “recovery-based service.” Perhaps thinking about the two things—service and recovery—as inextricably intertwined, rather than inexorably opposed to each other, would go some of the way toward approaching our infrastructure as part and parcel of our recovery program. Let’s start sharing about the spiritual benefits of being of service.

It's easy to get caught up in the perception that service is a burden or a chore instead of the privilege that it is. When we take a step back and think about our infrastructure in terms of purpose and plan, it reminds us that, indeed, it's all about carrying the message.

The key level of service, our area committees, is the linchpin of our service structure. Our area service committees are usually the principle vehicles for the delivery of NA services. Certainly we have encouraged regions and zones and have tried to support them in whatever way we can, but our developmental efforts need to be aimed primarily at the area service level. How can NAWs, as well as regions and zones, help to support the hands-on efforts of our local area committees? Many service committees never ask themselves the basic questions: What are the most pressing needs of NA locally? What services should we provide? What are we doing to support and help our groups? We often fail to ask ourselves whether the structure of our committees is the best setup by which to provide services. The blueprint for our infrastructure was developed more than a quarter century ago; since then, most of the changes we have made in that structure have constituted fine tuning more than significant retooling. It's not surprising, then, that sometimes it feels like our structure isn't necessarily best-suited to provide the services we most need. We have heard repeatedly in our discussions about the need to create a more attractive environment and to plan and coordinate our efforts better.

The first thing to ask ourselves is always: What are we trying to accomplish, and does our current service structure meet those needs? Our vision statement provides a touchstone for the work we do at world services. We share a vision, and it helps to ground us when we are planning and executing our work. Similarly, a shared sense of purpose can help to focus work on an area level. During the next conference cycle, world services will be working on more tools for the group and area, but even without those tools, we can think about taking a more strategic approach to meeting the challenges of our infrastructure. Many, perhaps most, international organizations engage in some kind of strategic planning, but Narcotics Anonymous has an advantage over most other organizations in that we already share a primary purpose and a set of foundational principles. From that primary purpose, we can develop a set of goals, and then take a careful look at our infrastructure to see if it is best structured to fulfill those goals. In the questions that follow, one of the crucial things to ask ourselves is: What would the most effective infrastructure look like?

Questions for Discussion

13. Is the current structure in your local NA community best suited to carrying the message? What about the current structure could be better suited to carrying the message?
14. What are we trying to accomplish (what is most needed in your community) and how can we best meet those needs (how is the service structure meeting those needs)? What are the underlying principles involved, and what is the basic minimum structure required?
15. What are we doing for those we serve? If we are an area, what are we doing for our groups? A region, for our areas? A zone, for our regions?
16. What can I do to make service more effective? Why should I be of service?

On the Horizon

So much discussion over the course of the last two years helps us in planning the work to undertake in the cycle ahead that will most help the fellowship. Those of you who looked at the Conference Approval Track material from the last conference will probably remember the NAWS Strategic Plan that was included in the packet. (You can access the 2004–2006 strategic plan from the page of our website devoted to material for the 2004 conference: www.na.org/WSC2004/index.htm.)

Our strategic plan helps us to structure our work for the upcoming cycle and beyond. The projects for any given cycle are developed from the approaches to the objectives in the strategic plan. Each conference cycle, we revise that plan and think about what work to prioritize for the upcoming two years. The discussions we've had, fellowshipwide, are helpful in that planning process. We will be sending out a copy of the 2006–2008 NAWS Strategic Plan prior to the conference, and it will be posted as part of the Conference Approval Track material on a password-protected part of our website accessible from a link on the conference page: www.na.org/conference. (If you do not have a password already, clicking on this link will take you through the process to obtain one.)

Among the things we have determined to be important to work on in the years ahead are (1) targeted literature and (2) basic tools for groups, areas, and regions. Neither of these “to do” items should come as a surprise. We have heard these needs reiterated throughout the fellowship in our travels; we have discussed these ideas at the conference; the conference has even passed project plans addressing these needs, though we—the board and the conference—have not always prioritized the corresponding work.

In both of these cases—targeted literature and basic tools—there are countless options from which to choose specific work to undertake. We wanted to give you some idea of what has hit our radar screen, so to speak, and see if those are the things you think are most important.

Targeted Literature

The first short list, that for targeted literature priorities, comes from the project plan passed but not prioritized at the last conference:

Priority (not necessarily in order)

- youth and recovery
- medication and recovery

Second ranking (not necessarily in order)

- the benefit of service to personal recovery
- the spiritual development of members with longer clean time, and how to continue to engage them in the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous

Third ranking (not necessarily in order)

- older members and recovery
- issues regarding gender

The project plan goes on to explain that youth and recovery could be focused on by creating a new *Youth and Recovery* IP. Revising (and broadening) *In Times of Illness*

could address the need for literature dealing with medication and recovery. The short list above comes from our surveys, discussions at worldwide workshops and other events, correspondence and calls, and other interactions. What do you think? Are these our top needs for targeted literature? Let us know—through your delegate or directly.

Basic Tools for Groups, Areas, and Regions

The other short list about which we want your input—tools for groups, areas, and regions—is also part of an ongoing discussion. We have needed new and revised tools for our groups and service bodies for a long time. In our strategic plan, one of the objectives that most directly speaks to this need, the objective from which this list springs, is Objective Four: “Increase the effectiveness of the service structure at all levels by instilling a greater sense of purpose, plan, role, accountability, and responsibility.”

We have heard ideas from you all about how to meet this objective, and we’ve had discussions at our board meetings about what work to prioritize to make progress here. Obviously, the objective itself is broad in scope and covers a great deal of ground. To break it down a little, some of the things we think new tools could address include improved planning, more effective meeting leadership (e.g., discussion facilitation, handling difficult behavior, etc.), increased awareness of spiritual principles, and better understanding of the service structure and its components. That is a very short list of some of our ideas. In truth, we could take up the entire length of this *Conference Agenda Report* talking about the constituent parts of a goal like “increase the effectiveness of the service structure” and how to meet those component goals.

Lest we sound discouraging, let’s say right away that we know two of the things on our plate for the next cycle—implementing the *PR Handbook*, and introducing an area planning tool to the fellowship—will both go a long way toward meeting some of those needs. Other tools we’ve talked about creating or revising include:

- ◆ Updateable materials that cover group trusted servant roles and responsibilities and how to carry them out
- ◆ Discussion tools for running certain types of meetings
- ◆ Simple, interactive tools (with more contemporary packaging) for leaders to use to increase member understanding and practice of the principles, including the “why”s and concepts (in both a generic, and a capital “C,” sense) of service
- ◆ Puzzle of the components of the service structure

Where possible and appropriate, we want to try to address our needs through existing literature, but we know that our existing tools and literature are limited and, in many cases, outdated. We may, for instance, be able to use some of the material in *The Group Booklet* in putting together a tool like that mentioned in the first bullet here, but we also would want to ask ourselves whether that material is comprehensive, current, and inviting. It’s possible we could use information from an existing piece of literature as a starting place to create a new tool.

Regardless, we are wondering if the short list above looks like your short list. These are our ideas; do they match yours? Again, we will be discussing this at the conference and we would love to know your thoughts.

Projects

As is always the case, and as we indicated at WSC 2004, there were far more projects passed and prioritized at the last conference than we ever thought we would get a chance to implement. We did, however, make progress of some kind on a number of the projects. For some, such as “NAWS Communications and Publications” and “Leadership Identification and Development,” we did not employ a formal workgroup to make direct progress on the project plan, but we did move ahead with discussions about and thinking on the topic. “Leadership,” as we reported above, was one of our four issue discussion topics this cycle, and we are very pleased about the fellowshipwide discussion we have been having and the ways in which NA’s thinking about the topic is evolving. These sorts of discussions are paramount to moving forward as a fellowship to meet some of the challenges we face in tough areas. In the communications area, we have made some progress and had some setbacks. We were unable to publish *NAWS News* on a consistent basis this conference cycle because of limited resources at world services, a challenge that we believe will be mitigated in the upcoming cycle. Nonetheless, our ability to carry on a consistent conversation over the course of the conference cycle, to communicate about a key set of issues, and to conduct a real dialogue within NA as a whole seems to be improving a great deal. For that, we are grateful.

Following is a more in-depth report on three of the major projects passed at WSC 2004: the Basic Text, the *Public Relations Handbook* (passed under the title of “Service Handbooks” at WSC 2004), and the PR Strategy. These three projects all used workgroups to complete the tasks outlined in the project plans passed at the last conference. Each has been a success thus far, and we are grateful to the volunteers on the workgroups as well as the interested members of the fellowship who stayed informed, gave us input, and remained engaged throughout the cycle. The work we have done will help us—all of NA—better carry the message to addicts who might otherwise never be exposed to Narcotics Anonymous.

Public Relations Handbook

One of the projects on which we have focused much of our attention during this conference cycle is the *Public Relations Handbook*. Most of our existing handbooks were created in the 1980s, so new service material of this kind is sorely needed. We hope, with the *Public Relations Handbook*, not only to offer a handbook that is more up-to-date than the *Public Information* and *Hospitals and Institutions* handbooks presently in our inventory, but to be providing a revision in the sense of seeing things in a new way—a “re-vision.”

We understand that some members are still wondering about the term “public relations”—where did it come from, and what does it mean for NA services? Quite simply, public relations is how we relate to people—the people who rent us our meeting space, the phoneline service providers, the drug court personnel, our own members, and so on. We believe the material in the handbook will help us improve the services we are currently providing; broaden our service scope; and help us understand the importance of consistent, reliable communications, positively maintained relationships, and regular follow-up with professionals. This public

relations handbook will assist us with our aim of carrying the message of recovery to realize the ideal stated in the NAWS Vision Statement.

Of course, this is a new approach for us—and that can be scary. An idea that has recurred repeatedly in our discussions of infrastructure during the conference cycle is our tendency to try to shove square pegs into round holes in our service endeavors. Why? Because the holes are round. Why are they round? Because they've always been round. In other words, for a group of people who are so prone to rebelliousness, we are very much ruled by our resistance to change; we tend to regard our historical past as a road map for the future, much of the time. Most of our service bodies have a structure that was formed decades ago, that may or may not best serve our present-tense needs. The *Public Relations Handbook* is part of a larger attempt to look judiciously at our infrastructure and ask, as the questions in the last section prompt us: What are we trying to accomplish, and how can we best achieve that? We see this as part of a larger attempt to adopt an outlook in which form follows function rather than vice versa; in our service structure, function often follows form.

With that in mind, the *Public Relations Handbook*, which will be included in the Conference Approval Track material, doesn't just address a narrow slice of our interactions with others; it attempts to take a more holistic approach to our relationships. The project plan passed at WSC 2004 explains:

Our vision of what would best serve the fellowship, however, would be something with an even broader scope, a *Public Relations Handbook*, that would cover all of the external focuses of our service committees—public information, hospital and institutions, websites, phone lines, etc. We plan to have a discussion with the conference about which focus for a handbook will best serve the needs of our fellowship.

Of course, those conversations about how to best serve the needs of the fellowship are ongoing, but in this particular case, we have talked with a great many of you, and we feel confident that this approach is the most helpful for most of the service bodies that will be using the handbook.

The *PR Handbook* is primarily focused toward our members who provide services at the area level; however, the materials can be adapted to any level of service, including groups where no area exists. The handbook is set up for user ease. Each chapter can stand alone, but we do encourage our members to use the handbook in its entirety, as there are helpful tips for service provision in each chapter. The handbook also contains an introduction, index, table of contents, conclusion, and addenda. These addendum materials are chapter-specific and can be considered as service resource tools.

Review and Input of the Handbook

The project plan for the *PR Handbook* committed us to a review and input period for the material—either altogether or, as it has turned out, in stages. At the time of drafting this essay for the *Conference Agenda Report*, we have sent out two sections of the handbook for review.

The first four chapters (Section I) were released for a ninety-day review and input period on 1 May 2005. These chapters were: “Public Relations & NA,” “Core Principles with Public Relations,” “Effective Services” (with a focus toward areas and an area planning tool to assist areas with planning for services), and “Interacting with

Professionals.” These are considered the foundational chapters that can be applied universally with service efforts. The review and input period generated sixty-seven pieces of input. This input was forwarded by individuals, area committees and subcommittees, regions, and a group. The majority of the input came from the United States, with members and areas in Germany, Turkey, South Africa, Canada, and New Zealand also participating in the input process.

We released the second section—chapters five through nine—on 24 August 2005. These have a specific service focus and include the “Media,” “Criminal Justice,” “Treatment,” “Healthcare,” and “Phonelines” chapters. As of this writing, these chapters are being reviewed for a ninety-day period that will end 30 November 2005. Following that date, we will be readying these chapters for the Conference Approval Track material.

The remaining chapters (section three)—“Web-based Technology,” “Government,” “Event Planning,” and “Fellowship Development”—have been drafted. These chapters will be released 1 December 2005, for a ninety-day review and input period. We will be racing to revise these chapters, based on this input, in time for the conference, but the conference will be able to approve chapters ten through thirteen as, unlike recovery literature, we are not bound by policy that requires an approval form to be published in advance of the conference. We know that this is not an ideal situation, but in attempting to accommodate both the dictates of our policy and the needs of the fellowship, this seems like the wisest plan to us. The first nine chapters of the handbook will be published in the Conference Approval Track material, and while these last four will not, the fellowship will have seen them and given input on them. It seems irresponsible to us to wait two more years before the conference approves the handbook as a whole. We understand this is a departure for us, and that is why we are talking about the matter here in the *Conference Agenda Report* so that you have time to discuss it and give your delegates some idea of how you feel about the issue.

Put Practice and Purpose into Policy

Part of our challenge is that we have never tried to put our service-material approval policies fully into practice before. Since establishing our current policies for approving service materials, we have only used them for a minor revision, a copyedit, of the *Treasurer’s Handbook*. This is the first time we are using them for new material, and what we are finding is that some of our policies are too rigid and don’t serve our fellowship’s needs very well. Were we to be driven entirely by these policies and the project plan from WSC 2004, which is even more rigorous in its requirements, we would not be able to publish the *PR Handbook* in its entirety until 2008 at the earliest.

In particular, the addenda mentioned above have not been sent out to the fellowship for review—nor, frankly, are we certain that is the best way to approach this material, regardless of time constraints. Much of the addendum material is drawn from mailings we already send out from fellowship services when we get requests for certain kinds of materials (things such as sample letters to professionals, an area planning tool, sample outlines for presentations, and so on). Now, because that material would be included as addenda in the proposed *Public Relations Handbook*, it would require conference approval and necessitate a label on the handbook for the next two years “pending conference approval.” This makes little sense to us.

We do believe this sort of addendum material should, like our bulletins, be able to be approved by the World Board. In this specific case, this would allow us to publish the *PR Handbook* as a whole without a qualifying label. In a more general sense, it would allow us to update materials like the planning tool or presentation tools without having to wait two years before making new or revised materials available to the fellowship in the handbook addenda.

Again, this is a departure for us, and one that will require some discussion, so we wanted to publish our thoughts here in advance of the conference, where we will be discussing our service-material approval process with delegates.

For more information on the *Public Relations Handbook* project, see the *NAWS News* issues from this conference cycle. Each issue reports on progress with all of the projects summarized here.

Public Relations Strategy

The handbook project was not the only public relations project we were working on during this conference cycle. WSC 2004 also passed a plan for the development of a public relations strategy project. This was the first time this board has undertaken two related, but distinct, projects at the same time, and it was a challenge. The two staff project coordinators attended and participated in meetings of both workgroups and shared information between the groups, and the two groups had joint meetings as well. This helped to ensure that both PR projects were working in tandem. Even though we recognized having two simultaneous public relations projects was not the ideal, the communication and collaboration between the workgroups and the board seemed to work with these projects.

The strategy project took a look at our public relations efforts at a broad, visionary level and also considered the significant detail of the many fellowship and NAWS PR activities. The group used the NAWS Strategic Plan as a model, identifying long-term goals and key result areas and developing objectives and approaches to address each of these. For instance, some of those objectives are:

- ◆ Develop and increase the range of resources and tools available for PR efforts.
- ◆ Establish, expand, and improve mutually beneficial relationships with key target audiences.
- ◆ Increase accessibility of information about and visibility of NA.

Once the objectives and approaches of the plan were established, the workgroup identified needed public relations resources and tools. Some of the kinds of resources and tools we have been discussing are:

- ◆ Materials targeted to (specific types of) professionals (e.g., drug court, health care, etc.)
- ◆ Targeted literature
- ◆ Protocols for NAWS participation in professional events
- ◆ Videos and PSAs: update or create new
- ◆ Training DVD for members

- ◆ Improved survey data
- ◆ Member responsibility informational pamphlet

Some of the workgroup recommendations for objectives and approaches have, in fact, already been incorporated and prioritized in the NAWS Strategic Plan draft for 2006-2008. The project plans that are part of the budget in the Conference Approval Track material will reflect this work.

What's more, we still hope to have an internal and external public relations statement included in the Conference Approval Track material. The internal PR statement would function to guide the fellowship in public relations efforts, explaining why we do what we do. The external statement would contain the bare bones of what we say about NA to the public. These statements would be offered to replace the current Public Relations Statement in *A Guide to World Services in NA*.

Basic Text

The third project we want to report on here is the Basic Text project. Most of you reading this report know that the last World Service Conference passed a motion to replace "some or all of the current personal stories" in the Basic Text, as well as add a new preface to the text and a brief introduction to the personal story section. This conference marks the halfway point for the Basic Text project. As such, we don't have too much to bring before you right now except for a progress report and a reminder of the decisions that have yet to be made about the project. If you have any feedback about the project or ideas about any of the below, we look forward to hearing it.

Background

This project has been a long time in coming—though the vision for the Basic Text is not so new. Even when the stories were being collected for the First Edition, more than 25 years ago, the hope for the end result was very similar to the sort of collection we are attempting to compile right now. Back in the 1970s, a letter went out to the fellowship calling for personal experience for the as-yet-unwritten Basic Text:

We need contributions from all geographic areas, as well as from a wide variety of drugs used. We would like to emphasize the recovery phase in the addict's story—share our strength and hope rather than give a long "drug-a-log" ending with "and then I joined NA and now everything is all right."

That letter, written so long ago, foreshadows much of what we have been saying this year in our attempts to collect new material. Our desire to have a collection of personal experience that reflects our diversity (geographically and in all ways, really) and the depth and richness of our recovery experience is merely the most recent incarnation of a vision that has been shared for decades now.

Nonetheless, our journey to this point has hardly been straightforward. For a decade, we were bound by a moratorium, passed by the conference in 1988, and revisions to the text were out of the question. When that moratorium ended in 1998, we spent six years trying to determine what, if anything, to recommend regarding our Basic Text. We surveyed the fellowship (more than once); we talked to members; we had discussions at board meetings. Finally, we put forward the motion in the 2004 *Conference Agenda Report* that initiated this work, and it passed with enthusiasm.

The project plan for the proposed Sixth Edition Basic Text revision calls for a two-cycle project. That is, the project was approved at WSC 2004 and, barring unforeseen circumstance, the approval-form Sixth Edition Basic Text will be voted on at WSC 2008.

Where We Are Now

Through most of the past year, the project has been in the collection phase. In February 2005, we put out a call to the fellowship explaining the project, our hopes for a revised collection of personal experience, and the sorts of submissions we are looking for. We mailed this solicitation flier to conference participants, posted it on the web, brought it along with us on all of our trips, and encouraged local NA communities to distribute it. Over the months, it has been translated—in whole or part—into nine other languages. We performed some of these translations; others were executed on a local level; all are posted on the web at www.na.org/conference/bt/index.htm.

We also drafted a shorter announcement for use at conventions and other local events and posted this on the web so that members can easily download it and spread the word in this way. In response to some requests, we also drafted outlines for a couple of workshops related to the project—one shorter sharing-session workshop, and a longer writing workshop. We led the shorter session at several events, including the world convention. And we have heard from members in NA communities around the world who have led workshops on a local level. Not only have those events helped spread the word about the project—and, hopefully, generated material for the revision—they have been very inspirational and moving for the participants.

Where We Are Going

As we move from 2005 to 2006, we are shifting from the collection phase of the project to the point where we begin to put the draft text together in earnest. The first part of 2006 will be spent assessing what we have, making decisions about the draft, and collecting pieces that fill the gaps in the material we have so far. We will be finalizing the draft text through the first half of 2006, and the review and input period will begin in September 2006.

Of course, in putting together a collection such as this, many decisions need to be made. We've already come to consensus concerning some of those decisions, reporting them to the fellowship even as early as the CAR for the last conference. For instance, we are aiming for roughly the same size as the current personal stories section (give or take perhaps twenty percent in size). We will include abstracts that summarize each of the pieces of personal experience.

Other decisions, however, have yet to be made. We have discussed the possibility of eliminating the designations "Book One" and "Book Two," for example, in favor of "Part One" and "Part Two" or "Section One" and "Section Two," or perhaps dropping any such distinction at all. We have also talked about the prospect of dividing the personal experiences into sections of some kind—perhaps based on stages of recovery. We haven't come to a decision about either of these issues. Our discussions will continue, and as our work in putting the text together progresses, we will have preliminary decisions to share with you.

Some or All

Of course, one of the biggest decisions we need to make has to do with the disposition of the existing stories. The motion passed at the 2004 conference calls for “the replacement of some or all of the current personal stories,” and we have begun discussing what that might mean.

We are challenged in this project between potentially conflicting impulses: We want to create something very fresh that speaks to the very present tense of our fellowship, and at the same time, we want to preserve and respect the legacy of our Basic Text. When we think about our desire to represent the broad diversity of our fellowship in the personal experience, it seems only fitting that we would be struggling with these sorts of challenges. A Basic Text that really represented our diversity would satisfy both of these impulses.

It’s a tough issue, and we’ve by no means made any final decisions about the details of a recommendation. We have, however, reached consensus as a board to recommend retaining some of the existing stories in the draft Sixth Edition Basic Text, and while we haven’t yet determined how many or which ones, we are leaning toward 15 to 25 percent of the existing stories, selected partially on the basis of their historical relevance—both the historical role of the members who wrote them and the historical contents of the stories themselves—and partly based on the recovery content of the stories.

In addition to that percentage of stories, we may also determine to retain some other stories. These would be evaluated alongside the incoming submissions, using the same criteria. Loosely defined, we are evaluating submissions on the basis of criteria such as recovery content, quality, style, structure and length, and how it fits into the work as a whole.

These are just our preliminary thoughts about the existing stories and what kind of decision we might make about the meaning of “some or all.” We share them with you here because we want to know what you think. If you have passion about this issue or any others related to the project, we want you to share it with us. The delegates will be discussing the Basic Text project at the conference—and, of course, you can always write to the World Board. Share your passion.

Regional Motions

At the beginning of this report, we jokingly referred to this as a hybrid CAR. We are still in transition from a CAR and conference focused on motions and debates and one characterized by strategic planning, coordination, and discussion. Each conference moves us a little closer to the latter model, but every two years when we begin conference preparations including writing the *Conference Agenda Report* we think about the distance we still have to travel.

As we wrote in the last *Conference Agenda Report*, communication during the conference cycle is the key to an effective partnership between regions and world services, and we are still a long way from that ideal. It is true that more members and service committees are realizing that there are abundant opportunities for dialogue apart from the CAR. Really, a regional motion should be a last-resort action to direct the board and world services when other efforts at discussion and dialogue have failed.

We have gotten better at having discussions about substantive issues on a local level throughout the fellowship. The four issue discussion topics we report about in this CAR are evidence of that. We led sessions around the world—at worldwide workshops, zonal forums, and other events—and we heard from communities that conducted their own sessions. To a large degree, NA as a whole is talking about common issues and challenges, and that is a huge accomplishment for us. The degree to which the issue discussion topics resonated with everyone is testimony to our success as a fellowship in learning to have a dialogue.

What we still need to work on is capturing back what we've heard and giving NA communities the tools to do so on a local level. Our ability to have widespread dialogue throughout the fellowship has greatly improved. Our ability to synthesize that dialogue and feed back the local discussion has not grown by leaps and bounds, however. We hope that devoting the heart of this year's *Conference Agenda Report* to the issue discussion topics—what we've heard over the course of this cycle and how to move discussion to the next level—is a step in the right direction.

Nonetheless, there is still not widespread knowledge of how to use the system to communicate and build consensus. Some regions even now rush to publish a motion in the *Conference Agenda Report* about an issue they have not previously attempted to raise. This is only using half the system, at best, and it's just not the best way to be heard or to be effective. The good news is that this number is dwindling; our channels for dialogue do seem to be working. Many members and delegates are still only comfortable availing themselves of face-to-face communication. Some of the dialogue we've been able to have at worldwide workshops and other fellowship events has reduced the perceived need for some regions to submit motions to the CAR. And some regions are realizing that opening discussion with the board about an issue can be more effective than submitting a motion to the CAR. We are growing and learning together. World services has to work harder to make vehicles of communication more accessible and more consistent. Local communities can make things easier by taking advantage of the opportunities for dialogue. Perhaps one day we can look forward to a *Conference Agenda Report* with no motions whatsoever.



Motion 1: To direct the World Board to develop a project plan, timeline, and budget for WSC 2008, to create/develop a glossary of recovery terms typically used in Narcotics Anonymous

Intent: To provide a resource of common meanings for frequently used NA recovery terms.

Maker: Northern New York Region

Financial Impact: The financial impact would be whatever time it took the World Board to have the necessary discussions to frame this project plan for presentation to the conference and for the conference to consider the proposal. The cost of any potential project would depend on the details of the project plan.

Policy Affected: None.

Rationale by Region: It is the belief of this area that a need has arisen to create a glossary of recovery related terms. While many of these words can be found in a dictionary, some of these definitions may not reflect recovery, also the recovery terms used in the fellowship are not found in dictionaries. A sponsor is a tool for addicts to use to gain an understanding of recovery terms, but it is the belief of our group conscience that a glossary will be extremely beneficial to the sponsor/sponsee relationship. A glossary of terms may also help newcomers, who we, as experienced members, need to take "a special interest in a confused addict who wants to stop using." When created, it will provide a resource for addicts and promote a common understanding of recovery terms. This will further enhance unity in the fellowship, instead of allowing different meaning of words separate addicts.

World Board: *Our recommendation is not to adopt.* We are concerned about the intent of this motion which seems to want to create an "official" definition for a variety of NA language. We fear that these sorts of "official" definitions and attempts to standardize understandings of our principles may encourage a dogmatic attitude or an inflexible understanding. Many of our words and phrases are open to interpretation by their very nature. We do not think an attempt to define, dictionary-style, "surrender" or "conscious contact," for instance, would be either practical or helpful.

Even were we in favor of this idea, however, in our current system making a motion in the *Conference Agenda Report* is not the best way to get work considered. Talking with or writing to the board is one way to initiate a conversation with us about an idea. Attending a world services event or an event that world services is participating in also provides an opportunity to have a conversation both with NAWS and with other regions about the idea. The *Conference Reports* and the online bulletin boards also offer a forum for regions that have ideas they want to discuss with other regions. The board takes all of these interactions with the fellowship into consideration when planning for the upcoming cycle. We draft project plans for conference consideration according to the overall strategic approach that has been directing our efforts since the restructuring of world services. We would ask that the conference let us take the idea of a glossary under consideration when

framing project plans for the next conference, but we do not recommend mandating the creation of a formal project plan.

Motion 2: To direct the World Board to create a project plan for the development of a fellowship-approved Identity Statement to be presented at WSC 2008.

Intent: To obtain literature that will recognize the distinguishing characteristics of the Narcotics Anonymous fellowship from other twelve-step fellowships.

Maker: Ohio Region

Financial Impact: The financial impact would be whatever time it took the World Board to have the necessary discussions to frame this project plan for presentation to the conference and for the conference to consider the proposal. The cost of any potential project would depend on the details of the project plan.

Policy Affected: None.

Rationale by Region: There are currently in existence several different versions of an Identity Statement that circulate throughout the Narcotics Anonymous Fellowship. Many home groups have chosen to make them part of their group readings. Additionally, they are read at several Area and Regional conventions, and even some service committees have chosen to include them as part of their reading materials.

Although they are unofficial in nature, these statements have gained wide support from the fellowship. They have been embraced for the simple reason that no such fellowship-approved literature is available. Therefore, addicts have been left to the vices of developing literature for themselves.

We believe that our fellowship would be better served if there were available a single fellowship-approved Identity Statement. This would provide a means of having a message that is consistent and would alleviate many of the problems associated with the many unofficial statements currently in circulation.

World Board: *Our recommendation is not to adopt.* While we do understand that some groups include an identity statement of some kind in their meeting format because they feel that such a statement helps to clarify the language and program of NA, we do not feel it is necessary to have such a statement become the focus of a world services project. Groups who choose to use a clarity or identity statement are, of course, free to do so; the principle of group autonomy ensures that. To develop such a statement on a world level, however, could imply that all groups should read such a statement, an implication we do not support.

Motion 3: To change the time frame for approval form recovery literature from the current minimum of 150 days to a minimum of one year.

Intent: To extend the time frame for approval form literature to allow sufficient time to communities who choose to make a rough translation.

Maker: German Speaking Region

Financial Impact: There is no direct financial impact as a result of this motion.

Policy Affected: This action would directly amend the following WSC policies:

A Guide to World Services In NA

(www.na.org/pdf/2004GWSNA_final.pdf)

Page 32, Approval Process for Recovery Literature

B. Approval-form Literature

1. Approval-form literature is prepared by the World Board and is distributed for a period of time, considering translations, determined by the World Board of not less than ~~one hundred fifty (150) days~~ **one year**. The length of this approval period is determined by the World Board based on the needs of the fellowship and the piece being considered for approval.

Rationale by Region: New literature is presented in English. Thus it is not accessible to large parts of our fellowship. To reach an informed group conscience, literature has to be available in our language as a rough draft translation. To do this, we need at least 6 month time ADDITIONAL to the usual approval period.

Timelines of 6–9 months for recent projects appear to be enough time for the whole process of reaching an informed group conscience—under the condition, that members are able to read the language in which it is written! Obviously, this procedure is not possible for us as a non-English-speaking fellowship—without having a rough translation draft available.

For any substantial piece of literature, 12 months would still be extremely short! But approving this motion would at least be a step towards giving us and any other non-English-speaking Region an equal chance to participate in the literature approval process.

World Board: *Our recommendation is to not adopt.* We continue to believe that we need to become more responsive yet efficient in literature development. Extending the approval period for literature projects could result in a longer development period for the project as a whole, thus turning a one-cycle project into a two-cycle project, or it would collapse the amount of time available for other parts of the project such as review and input. And with a mandated minimum, the extended approval period would apply across the board—to IPs as well as books. Our experience with the Sponsorship Book, which was effectively out for nine months in approval form, did not indicate that extending the time period made the book become more of a priority for translation committees or more subject to fellowship-wide review. What's more, while many if not most translation committees know this, it bears repeating here nonetheless: Other language communities can choose whether or not to translate any given piece of English-language literature. That is, if a

given piece of literature does not meet a community's needs, they do not have to translate it.

Determining whether to approve a piece of literature or not is one small part of the development process. The last literature project, the *Sponsorship* book, and the current project, the Basic Text revision, both depend on participation from members around the world for their success. Contributing material toward a literature project or giving input on it allows much more influence on NA recovery literature than a yes or no vote on a piece, and participation at this level has been accessible to any community for the past two projects.

WSC 2006 Summary Sheet: Discussion Questions and Motions

You will notice that this year's *CAR* only contains three motions. An Abbreviated Motions List could probably be contained on an index card. We hope that means that you have more time in your groups to give attention to the discussion questions that are listed on the following page as well. We have tried to keep the *Conference Agenda Report* at a reasonable length this year, and perhaps that will inspire more people to pay attention to the report as a whole and not just the few motions that it contains. We want to make this document as easy for you to use as possible, and we know that offering the motions on one sheet makes it easier for you to refer to them and write down your group's vote and conscience. But anyone who has been to a World Service Conference recently can tell you that the time at the conference devoted to those motions pales in comparison to the time we will spend discussing the issues described in the rest of this report. If your group wants to be genuinely engaged with the focus of the conference—to weigh in on the issues that are being discussed around the world and will be discussed by the delegates in April—you will pay attention to the report as a whole and pull out the following page and use the questions listed there as a guide for your group discussions.

Discussion Questions

In the 2004 *Conference Agenda Report* we included discussion questions for the first time. As you see, this *CAR* has far fewer motions, and we hope that means you have more time to discuss the issues that will dominate most of the agenda at the conference. Following are discussion questions related to each of the issue discussion topics for the 2004–2006 conference cycle. These questions are designed to carry the discussion of these topics forward to the next level.

‘Atmosphere of Recovery’

1. What is working within your group? That is, in what ways is your group carrying the message, rather than the disease?
2. Who, from your local community, is missing from your group, and why do you think they might be missing? (For example, if you live in a racially diverse community do the people attending your meeting reflect that diversity?)
3. What are some things that you can do as an individual to create and maintain the atmosphere of recovery in your home group? (For example, greet someone you don’t recognize; make a commitment to listen while each person is sharing and not participate in side conversations; etc.) What can you do when you see things happening that take away from that atmosphere?
4. What are some of the things the group can do? (For example, change the room set-up so that it’s more conducive to an atmosphere of recovery; acknowledge newcomers in some way—with phone lists or introductions; etc.)

‘Leadership’

5. How do we, as a fellowship, better match people with positions—identify talent and match it to task?
6. What steps can we take to help trusted servants be more successful through mentoring, training, and orientation? (For instance, an incoming trusted servant can work side-by-side with the outgoing member; we can make it a point to give positive encouragement when our trusted servants do a good job, and so on.) How else can we help?
7. How can we instill a sense of personal responsibility, ownership, and stewardship for the roles we take on?
8. What do we mean when we refer to “leadership” in NA? What is the difference between “leaders” and “leadership”?

‘Our Public Image’

9. How do I take responsibility for NA’s image/reputation? How do service bodies? How can a sense of personal responsibility and ownership develop in me, and how can I help others develop this?
10. How does a negative image/reputation affect our ability to carry the message?
11. What about our image/reputation makes some people feel NA is not appropriate for them? What about our image makes some people feel NA is not where they would refer a client?
12. How can better cooperation among services improve our public image?

‘Infrastructure’

13. Is the current structure in your local community best suited to carrying the message? What about the current structure could be better suited to carrying the message?

14. What are we trying to accomplish (what is most needed in your community) and how can we best meet those needs (how is the service structure meeting those needs)? What are the underlying principles involved, and what is the basic minimum structure required?
15. What are we doing for those we serve? If we are an area, what are we doing for our groups? A region, for our areas? A zone, for our regions?
16. What can I do to make service more effective? Why should I be of service?

Targeted Literature

17. Does the list below reflect our top needs for targeted literature? What can you think of that should be on this list that is not?

Priority (not necessarily in order)

- o youth and recovery
- o medication and recovery

Second ranking (not necessarily in order)

- o the benefit of service to personal recovery
- o the spiritual development of members with longer clean time, and how to continue to engage them in the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous

Third ranking (not necessarily in order)

- o older members and recovery
- o issues regarding gender

Basic Tools for Groups, Areas, and Regions

18. Does the list below reflect our top priorities for tools to create or revise? What can you think of that should be on this list that is not?
 - o Updateable materials that cover group trusted servant roles and responsibilities and how to carry them out
 - o Discussion tools for running certain types of meetings
 - o Simple, interactive tools (with more contemporary packaging) for leaders to use to increase member understanding and practice of the principles, including the “why”s and concepts (in both a generic, and a capital “C,” sense) of service
 - o Puzzle of the components of the service structure

Regional Motions

Motion 1: To direct the World Board to develop a project plan, timeline, and budget for WSC 2008, to create/develop a glossary of recovery terms typically used in Narcotics Anonymous

Maker: Northern New York Region, page 34

Motion 2: To direct the World Board to create a project plan for the development of a fellowship-approved Identity Statement to be presented at WSC 2008.

Maker: Ohio Region, page 35

Motion 3: To change the time frame for approval form recovery literature from the current minimum of 150 days to a minimum of one year.

Maker: German Speaking Region, page 36

NOMINATION INFORMATION

Dear NA Member,

The service positions available for nomination and election at WSC 2006 include two positions on the Human Resource Panel, two for the WSC Cofacilitator, and up to ten on the World Board. Information about these positions and the nominations and elections process is available in *A Guide to World Services (2004–2006 Conference Cycle)*. In accordance with the process outlined in the guide, the HRP will forward a list of nominees for these positions, which will be published in the *March Conference Report*. Upon arriving at WSC 2006, conference participants will receive a Candidate Profile Report for each HRP nominee.

As part of the nominations and elections process, seated regions have the ability to nominate members for the service positions identified above. Any member receiving such a nomination must complete a World Pool Information Form (WPIF). Sometime prior to elections, all conference participants will receive a copy of the World Pool Information Form for regional nominations. If you do not have a current WPIF in the World Pool, and are to be considered for a regional nomination, please complete and return the following WPIF or download the WPIF from our website, www.na.org. Be advised that the WPIF will be copied exactly as submitted to us. We encourage you to take the necessary time to complete the form without error.

In addition to this and in order to provide our fellowship with the very best level of service possible, we ask that you carefully consider the responsibilities of the various world service positions. These positions require a commitment of at least two years, and possibly up to six years. This can be a considerable investment of time, which includes attending various meetings and events that may take you away from your family, your job, and your home as much as one weekend every month and also for the week of the biennial WSC. You will likely be expected to complete work between meetings, such as reading or writing reports or discussing the plans and objectives of your work with other members. In addition, you may be asked to participate in conference telephone calls that may last several hours.

In considering this commitment, you may wish to consult your employer, your family, and your sponsor. Also, talking to members who have served at the world level may give you additional insights into the time and resources required. Service on this level has many rewards and can have a profound positive effect on your life and personal recovery. However, it does not come without hard work, long hours, dedication, and personal sacrifice.

Please be advised that the above information should not be confused with the newly adopted process that allows Regional Service Committees, Zonal Forums, and the World Board to forward potential candidates to the HRP for consideration. The deadline for that opportunity has passed. For more on that, interested members should review the February 2005 and October 2005 HRP reports also available at www.na.org.

Again, if you are to receive a regional nomination and you do not have a current WPIF in the World Pool, one must be completed.

World Pool Information Form

(Formerly the World Pool Resume)

Please type or print legibly in English and return to:
Human Resource Panel, NA World Services, Inc., PO Box 9999, Van Nuys, CA 91409 USA
Fax (818) 700-0700

Day _____ Month _____ Year _____

☐ First Submission

☐ Updated Form

Personal Information

Name: _____ Clean Date: _____/_____/_____

Day Month Year

Address: _____

City: _____ State/Province: _____

Postal/Zip Code: _____ Country: _____

Home Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Email Address: _____

Your Region: _____

General Service Interest

(Please mark your preference based on your skills and background)

☐ World Board

☐ Conference Cofacilitator

☐ Human Resource Panel

☐ WSC Projects

Languages

For each language, please indicate your skill level as **FLUENT (F)**, **AVERAGE (A)**, or **MINIMUM (M)**. Write in additional languages if applicable.

Language	This is my 1 st Language	Can Write	Can Read	Can Speak
English				

Translate *into* English

I can translate this Language <i>into</i> English	When Written	When Spoken

Translate *from* English

I can translate <i>from</i> English to this Language	When Written	When Spoken

Education

Please complete *all* sections that apply.

Secondary/High School Completed ☐ Yes ☐ No			
College/University/Technical School Completed ☐ Yes ☐ No			
☐ Degree ☐ Diploma ☐ Certificate/Course	Qualifications/Status Obtained:	From _____	To: _____
_____		_____	_____
☐ Degree ☐ Diploma ☐ Certificate/Course	Qualifications/Status Obtained:	From _____	To: _____
_____		_____	_____
☐ Degree ☐ Diploma ☐ Certificate/Course	Qualifications/Status Obtained:	From _____	To: _____
_____		_____	_____
☐ Degree ☐ Diploma ☐ Certificate/Course	Qualifications/Status Obtained:	From _____	To: _____
_____		_____	_____
Professional and/or Community Organization Memberships			

Occupational Skills - Work Experience

Usual Occupation/Job Title: _____	From: _____
_____	To: _____
Other or Previous Occupations(s): _____	From: _____
_____	To: _____

Please check *current* skills/experience you are able to demonstrate:

<u>General Skills</u> (Check your <u>five</u> best skills only) ☐ Accounting ☐ Arts & Graphics ☐ Communication ☐ Contractual ☐ Corporate Law ☐ Customer Service ☐ Decision Making ☐ Domestic ☐ Editorial ☐ Ethics ☐ Evaluation ☐ Facilitation ☐ Health Care ☐ IT Specialist ☐ Law/Legal ☐ Liaison ☐ Marketing ☐ Math/Statistical ☐ Policy Development ☐ Presentation ☐ Professional Translator ☐ Public Relations ☐ Research ☐ System Analyst ☐ Team Building ☐ Training ☐ Writing ☐ Other _____ ☐ Other _____	<u>Business Experience</u> (Check usual status- <u>one</u> only) ☐ Administrative ☐ Executive Management ☐ Middle Management ☐ Senior Management ☐ Team Leader ☐ Other _____ ☐ Other _____	<u>Specific Management Skills</u> (Check <u>all</u> that apply) ☐ Corporate Management ☐ Event Planning Management ☐ Financial Management ☐ Human Resources Management ☐ Informational Management ☐ International Management ☐ Project Management ☐ Sales Management ☐ Strategic Planning ☐ Other _____ ☐ Other _____
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Service Experience

Current/Recent Service Position(s)

Dates	Position	Length of Service	Group/Area/Metro/Zone Region/World Service
From: _____ To: _____			
From: _____ To: _____			
From: _____ To: _____			
From: _____ To: _____			

In the “M/L” boxes below please enter **number of years** that applies. The first column is for how long you were a **MEMBER (M)** of the group or committee. The second column is for how long you held **LEADERSHIP POSITIONS (L)** such as chair, vice-chair, treasurer, or secretary of that committee.

M	L	World Service Experience
		Ad Hoc Group
		Cofacilitator
		HRP
		RD/RDA(RSR/RSRA)
		Special Worker
		Work Group
		World Board
		World Board of Trustees
		World Convention Corporation
		WS Translations Committee
		WSC Admin
		WSC H&I
		WSC Literature
		WSC PI
		WSC Policy
		WSO-BOD
		Other
		Other
M	L	Zonal Service
		Events/Activities
		H&I
		Literature
		Outreach
		Phone/Helpline
		PI
		Policy
		Translations
		Zonal Delegate
		Zonal Forum Admin
		Other
M	L	Other
		Other
		Other
		Other
		Other

M	L	Regional Service
		Events/Activities
		H&I
		Literature
		Outreach
		Phone/Helpline
		PI
		Policy
		RCM/ASR
		RSC
		Translations
		Website
		Other
M	L	RSO/ASO
		Board of Directors (BOD)
		Committee Member
		Special Worker
		Volunteer
		Other
M	L	Regional/Area Convention
		BOD or Exec. Committee
		Committee Member
		Volunteer
		Other
M	L	Area or Metro Service
		ASC/Metro
		Events/Activities
		GSR
		H&I
		Literature
		Outreach
		Phone/Helpline
		PI
		Policy
		Translations
		Website
		Other

References

List three (3) current references of people you have served with: (Please complete all information)

First and Last Name	Address, City, State, Zip/Postal Code, Country	Area Code Telephone	Email Address

General Questions

1) What is your vision for NA World Services?

2) With your service experience and accomplishments in mind, please elaborate on any skills or talents you can bring to NA World Services.

3) Give an example of how you brought energy and/or creativity to your service work.

4) In a committee or work group setting - what are your strengths?

5) Would you describe yourself as a: (please check all that apply)

- ☐ Leader ☐ Team Player ☐ Detail Oriented ☐ Discreet ☐ Visionary ☐ Trustworthy
☐ Philosopher ☐ Open-minded ☐ Orator (speaker) ☐ Doer ☐ Thinker ☐ Time-line-oriented
Of those checked, choose one or two that best describes you and tell us how you demonstrate them in service to Narcotics Anonymous.

6) What do you find most rewarding in your job, in service, and throughout your life in general?

Thank you for completing this form

Glossary

Biennial

Occurring every two years.

CAR

Acronym for *Conference Agenda Report*.

Conference Agenda Report (CAR)

A publication that consists of business and issues that will be considered during the biennial WSC meeting. The CAR is released a minimum of one hundred and fifty (150) days prior to the opening of the conference, with translated versions released a minimum of one hundred and twenty (120) days prior. The front portion of the CAR, in all the languages in which it is published, is available at no charge on the web at www.na.org.

Conference-Approval Track (CAT)

A term used to describe items sent to conference participants ninety (90) days prior to the World Service Conference. Included are any proposals for seating of regions, the draft budget and project plans for the upcoming conference cycle, and any material being presented for consideration under the service-material approval process.

Conference Cycle

The two years between conferences. For the current conference cycle, that refers to the two fiscal years running from 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2006.

Conference Participants

For the purposes of decision-making, conference participants are defined as regional delegates and World Board members. Only delegates vote on old business items that have appeared in the *Conference Agenda Report*.

Conference Report

The full report of all world service activities sent to WSC participants; Delegates and regions may also have reports published. Typically issued two times a year. Mailed to conference participants and subscribers and also posted at www.na.org. March issue customarily contains board, HRP, and regional reports.

Fellowship Intellectual Property Trust (FIPT)

A legal trust that serves as custodian for NA's recovery literature and logos (trademarks). The document creating the FIPT is called a *trust instrument*; it explains how NA's literature and trademarks are managed and protected for the benefit of the fellowship as a whole. Approved by the fellowship in April 1993.

Guide to Local Services In Narcotics Anonymous, A (GLS)

A service handbook, approved in 1997, intended to serve as a resource for NA groups, areas, regions and their subcommittees in establishing and providing local services.

Guide to World Services In NA, A (GWSNA)

A compilation of policy decisions that have been approved by the World Service Conference, including WSC guidelines. The name was changed from *A Temporary Working Guide to Our World Service Structure (TWGWSS)* in 2002. TWGSS, its precursor, was first published in 1983 as the temporary successor to the *NA Service Manual* (a.k.a. *The NA Tree*), which in turn was first published in 1976.

Human Resource Panel (HRP)

Provides the World Service Conference with a list of qualified candidates for election to the World Board, the Human Resource Panel, and the WSC Cofacilitator positions. Is also responsible to administer the World Pool. Consists of four individuals elected by the WSC.

Infrastructure

The dictionary defines this as the base or foundation of an organization. For our purposes in NA this means the service structure and that which supports the service structure. Three of the main components of NA's infrastructure that we have discussed quite a bit recently are resources, communication, and leadership.

Issue Discussion Topics

Specific topics selected by the WSC that concern the fellowship as a whole, to be discussed by the fellowship during the next conference cycle.

NA Way Magazine, The

Published quarterly, *The NA Way Magazine* currently offers articles about service, recovery-oriented stories, and entertainment as well as a calendar of international NA events. Available by request in English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, and German, and posted at www.na.org.

NAWS

Refers to Narcotics Anonymous World Services, the legal name for world services.

NAWS News

A newsletter sent out by the World Board after each board meeting reporting on their current activities. Published in English, French, German, Portuguese, and Spanish. Sent to all conference participants, registered areas and regions and posted at www.na.org.

Project Plan

Developed by the World Board for all prospective, non-routine world service projects. Includes the proposed scope of the project, budget, and timeline. Included in the Conference Approval Track material as part of the budget.

Public Relations

Creating and maintaining relationships with members, professionals, families, and loved ones in an effort to more effectively carry the message of recovery.

Regional Assembly

A gathering of group service representatives (GSRs) and regional committee members (RCMs), conducted by the RSC, to discuss issues affecting NA worldwide, usually in preparation for the biennial WSC meeting. The regional delegate is sometimes elected at the assembly.

Regional Delegate (RD)

Attends the WSC as a voting delegate from an NA region (or equivalent service body). Is responsible to help communicate between the region and world services throughout the conference cycle.

Regional Service Committee (RSC)

A body that draws together the combined service experience of a number of adjoining areas for the mutual support of those areas. Composed of RCMs, the regional delegate, alternate delegate, and others as needed.

Strategic Plan

A long-term strategy for world services to provide new or improved services and support that facilitates the continuation and growth of Narcotics Anonymous worldwide. The project plans stem from the objectives in the strategic plan.

Twelve Concepts for NA Service

Fundamental NA principles guiding our groups, boards, and committees in service affairs. WSC-approved in 1992; published with essays and study questions as a self-titled booklet.

Workgroups

Small working bodies of the World Board created for a specific purpose.

World Board

The World Board is the service board of the World Service Conference. The board provides support to the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous in the fellowship's effort to carry the message of NA. Oversees the activities of NA World Services, including our primary service center, the World Service Office. The board also holds in trust for the NA Fellowship the rights for all its physical and intellectual properties (which includes literature, logos, trademarks, and copyrights) in accordance with the will of the fellowship as expressed through the WSC.

World Pool

A pool of members' service resumes (World Pool Information Forms) demonstrating a variety of recovery- and service-related experience as well as any skills necessary for the successful completion of world-level assignments. All NA members with over five years clean are eligible and encouraged to complete the information form.

World Service Conference (WSC)

Unlike all other service bodies of NA service, the conference is not an entity; it is an event—the coming together of the NA Fellowship from around the globe. Every two years regional delegates, the members of the World Board, and the executive director of the World Service Office meet to discuss questions of significance to the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous. The World Service Conference is the one point in our structure where the voice of NA as a whole can be heard regarding issues and concerns affecting our worldwide fellowship. The conference is a vehicle for fellowship communication and unity: a forum where our common welfare is itself the business of the meeting.

World Service Office (WSO)

The name of the physical location of the primary worldwide service center for NA World Services. The headquarters is located in Chatsworth (Los Angeles), California, USA, with branch facilities in Mississauga, Ontario, Canada; Brussels, Belgium; and Tehran, Iran. The WSO prints, stocks, and sells NA Fellowship- and conference-approved literature, service handbooks, and other materials. Provides support for new NA groups and developing NA communities. Serves as a clearinghouse for information about NA.

WSC Cofacilitator(s)

Two individuals who preside over the business meeting of the World Service Conference. Elected by the World Service Conference.

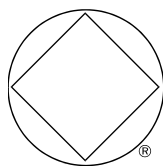
Zonal Forums

Locally organized, service-oriented sharing sessions that provide means by which NA communities can communicate, cooperate, and grow with one another. Involves participants from neighboring regions.



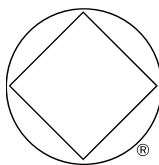
The Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous

1. We admitted that we were powerless over our addiction, that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. We came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*.
4. We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. We humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. We made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. We made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. We continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to addicts, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.



The Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on NA unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or NA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.
6. An NA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the NA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, or prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every NA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Narcotics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. NA, as such, ought never be organized, but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Narcotics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the NA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.



Twelve Concepts for NA Service

1. To fulfill our fellowship's primary purpose, the NA groups have joined together to create a structure which develops, coordinates, and maintains services on behalf of NA as a whole.
2. The final responsibility and authority for NA services rests with the NA groups.
3. The NA groups delegate to the service structure the authority necessary to fulfill the responsibilities assigned to it.
4. Effective leadership is highly valued in Narcotics Anonymous. Leadership qualities should be carefully considered when selecting trusted servants.
5. For each responsibility assigned to the service structure, a single point of decision and accountability should be clearly defined.
6. Group conscience is the spiritual means by which we invite a loving God to influence our decisions.
7. All members of a service body bear substantial responsibility for that body's decisions and should be allowed to fully participate in its decision-making processes.
8. Our service structure depends on the integrity and effectiveness of our communications.
9. All elements of our service structure have the responsibility to carefully consider all viewpoints in their decision-making processes.
10. Any member of a service body can petition that body for the redress of a personal grievance, without fear of reprisal.
11. NA funds are to be used to further our primary purpose, and must be managed responsibly.
12. In keeping with the spiritual nature of Narcotics Anonymous, our structure should always be one of service, never of government.