



# Conference Digest

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## CONFERENCE ADMINISTRATION

Preparations for this April's annual meeting of NA's World Service Conference in Los Angeles are well under way, according to the March *Conference Report*. "Even though we have eight full days to meet together," writes the conference chairperson, "we will surely not have enough time for all of us to say what we want to say. I don't know why, it just always works out that way.... Any participant who needs to talk will have the opportunity to do so. We only ask that everyone use care and respect in the time they use to speak." Conference leadership hopes that an orientation program being conducted the evening before the conference opens will help new participants navigate their way through the WSC's perilous parliamentary seas and across the conference floor to the microphone.

Plans for the two-day development-forum portion of the WSC'93 agenda are nearly complete, according to the trustee chairperson. The conference will break down into small groups, as it has for the past two years, for discussions of issues affecting NA growth around the world. The trustees will ask some RSRs to serve as leaders for the three discussion group sessions this year, others to give short presentations on specific topics at the beginning of each group session. Toward the end of the week, the full conference will engage in a dialogue about where to go next with world development discussions and planning.

### Planning meeting produces specifics, budget for proposed CY 1993-94 world services inventory

The combined leadership of NA's world services met in Los Angeles over the weekend of February 18-19 to develop the specifics of a plan for inventorying conference, trustee, and WSO goals, resources, and procedures. The inventory, proposed in Motion 1 of the 1993 *Conference Agenda Report*, would be conducted during the coming conference year. A March 3 Interim Committee report on the planning meeting described the plan's components and timetable:

During the first six months of the new conference year, eight multiregional forums would be held in various locations around the world, allowing the fellowship-at-large to take part in the world services inventory. At the same time, an inventory core group drawing members from all branches of world services would meet to develop outlines for boards and committees to use in inventorying

themselves. The core group would also brainstorm ideas on how to evaluate board and committee inventories and how to combine and cross-reference them in an overall evaluation of world services.

Once the forums had been conducted and the evaluation outlines had been developed, a world services meeting would be held where the individual boards and committees could take their own inventories. Some extra funding would be provided to each world service body to help with travel costs for this event. Then, between December 1993 and March 1994, the inventory core group would meet two or three times to review the separate board and committee inventories, evaluate world services as a whole, and prepare reports allowing conference participants to review the core group's findings. At WSC'94, the conference itself would sort out the inventory findings and develop resolutions for change, growth, and reorganization to address the needs identified in the inventory process.

Costs for the eight forums, the world services meeting, the four core group meetings, and the training materials to be developed by the core group are projected at \$111-thousand. Costs for the basic functions necessary to keep world services in operation while the inventory is going on are estimated at about \$172-thousand, bringing the total projected CY 1993-94 budget to nearly \$283-thousand. Projected WSC donations should pay for \$243-thousand of that, with a \$40-thousand pledge from the World Service Office covering the remainder.

"If not us, who?," concludes the Interim Committee in its report. "If not now, when? There is no one outside of us (world services) that can do this, and this is certainly as good a time as any, perhaps better than any other, to do what we must: evaluate what works and what does not. For the sake of our fellowship, for the sake of the still-suffering addicts in and out of our rooms, we must!"

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### Interim Committee

In the March *Conference Report*, the Interim Committee chairperson gives an overview and analysis of the decisions his committee has made in the first three quarters of the current conference year.

From May through July 1992, contributions were substantially higher than expected. This led to the Interim Committee's decision in August to fund as many spending requests as possible, increasing the overall spending plan for the year by twenty percent. There were two problems with this decision, the chairperson writes: "[First], we did not fully appreciate the limitations of our income projections for later in the year. Secondly, departing from the fund management plan used in previous years, we drew from our reserve to allocate operating cash for use on current projects. These two decisions would seriously affect our ability to operate beginning midway through the second quarter."

The Interim Committee chairperson continues, "When we met at the October 1992 WSC workshop in Cincinnati, the final income figures for August and September indicated that actual donations for the period of June through September were \$30,000 below our revised projections. October figures available up through the time of that meeting only confirmed the downward trend. Based on the availability of \$9,475 in cash above already committed third quarter administrative, fixed, and discretionary expenses, we began to consider fourth quarter needs. Projected funds available for the fourth quarter after administrative, fixed, and necessary discretionary items were accounted for totaled \$30,475. We informed the WSC committee chairpersons of the strong possibility that we would have to cancel a planned February 1993 WSC workshop due to lack of funds. We also recommended that the World Service Board of Trustees consider cancelling its February 1993 meeting.

"The beginning of the third quarter was the most difficult period so far of this conference year. It seemed that everything was in a holding pattern; WSC committees and boards, even RSC requests, were awaiting word from the Interim Committee to plan their activities, while we were awaiting word that donations were on the rise. What contributed to the overall uneasiness of the period was the unfortunate miscommunication of some of our decisions. In

mid-December 1992, income was reported to be even lower than our cutback projections had forecast.

"In January 1993... looking ahead at our projected administrative expenses and our financial commitment of \$78,000 to the WSC and the development forum, with only \$39,000 in the bank, we allocated funds of just over \$20,000 for other activities in February 1993 and the fourth quarter.

"We regret that we did not keep you better informed at the time of our financial condition," writes the Interim Committee chair in closing. "Many of you were not aware of our dire financial straits until you received the letter from the WSC chairperson, and we sincerely apologize for that oversight."

### Inventory effect on outreach committee uncertain

In the March *Conference Report*, the WSC Outreach Ad Hoc Committee chair writes, "At this point I cannot answer the question of what will happen with outreach if CAR'93 Motion 1 passes.... My understanding is that the [planning meeting] proposal calls for all NA members involved in world services to participate in the inventory process. It also suggests that all current work on projects be set aside, thus allowing basic services to continue while the inventory process proceeds."

### Translation committee

The World Services Translation Committee is focussing attention on eighteen priority language groups, most with no translated recovery materials yet. Members from three of these language groups were given extra encouragement in their translation work by the Asia Pacific Forum held late last year in New Zealand: Malay, Maori (the language of the indigenous people of Aotearoa New Zealand), and Tagalog (the major language of the Philippines).

The World Services Translation Committee has forwarded brief summaries of the H&I and PI handbooks to local translation subcommittees for their use. These summaries are intended to convey the most significant aspects of the experience of our fellowship in these two fields of service in a brief, simple, easy-to-translate format for use by young, developing NA communities.

In November 1992, the committee met with two members of the WSB Additional Needs Panel to discuss work in progress on an American Sign Language video interpretation of the White Booklet.

The world translation committee sent two questionnaires out to local subcommittees. One mailed to Spanish-speaking NA communities asks for information that will be used to create more effective procedures for the development and approval of future Spanish-language translations. The other asks translation committee contacts to write back with notes on translation-related concerns they would like to have discussed at the WSC in April.

"Hearing the term *slow-down*," the committee chairperson writes concerning the proposed world services inventory, "many local translation subcommittees may be curious--if not worried--as to how this would affect their work... I'm sure that we can rely upon the conference to keep our needs in mind when decisions about this matter are made."

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**WSC FINANCIAL SUMMARY  
JUNE 1, 1992 THROUGH FEBRUARY 28, 1993**

Opening balance .....	\$59,181.29
<b>Income</b>	
General donations ...	\$201,763.93
Unity Day donations .....	7,564.49
Interest income .....	<u>539.91</u>
<b>Total income</b> .....	<b>\$209,868.33</b>
<b>Expense</b>	
CY 1991-92 expenses..	\$1,132.75
Administrative.....	43,771.28
H&I literature .....	5,013.18
Legal.....	6,316.50
Lodging .....	32,718.37
Meals .....	18,309.81
Meeting space.....	1,748.93
Non-NA events.....	2,431.35
Travel.....	<u>87,535.01</u>
<b>Total expense</b> .....	<b>(198,977.18)</b>
<b>Net gain (loss)</b> .....	<b>10,891.15</b>
<b>Closing balance</b> .....	<b><u>\$70,072.44</u></b>

**WSC LITERATURE COMMITTEE**

**It Works: How and Why**

The conference literature committee's entry in the March *Conference Report* gave a look back at CY 1992-93 activity, starting with the step-and-tradition book, *It Works: How and Why*, under development in one form or another for the last decade and now up for approval at WSC'93. Following composition in earlier years of review-form drafts, this year's task for the committee's four working groups was to factor input into the material on the Twelve Steps. The process was finished by November 1992, when the approval-form book was released to the fellowship.

Input on both the steps and traditions in earlier stages of the project was displayed graphically in the *Conference Report*. The input came from a variety of sources. Of 582 responses to surveys mailed out both by the literature committee and by the trustees, who were responsible for developing the traditions portion of *It Works*, 18% came from regions, half were from areas, and almost a third came from individual NA members.

Two questions asking for general reactions to the steps material received astoundingly positive responses, averaging 98% and 97% in favor. More substantive questions did not elicit such wholeheartedly favorable responses, but showed nonetheless that those answering the survey questions were still largely in favor of the approach being taken in *It Works: How and Why*. When asked whether there were "any concepts missing or unclear" in the chapters on the steps, an average of 76% of those surveyed answered in the negative. Favorable

responses averaged better than 86% for the question, "Does the [traditions] draft reflect the concepts contained in [the traditions] accurately?" When asked whether "any concepts [are] missing" in the material on the traditions, an average of 80% of responses said that they thought there were not.

Specific comments accompanying negative responses to the survey on review-and-input drafts were carefully scrutinized in preparing the approval form of *It Works*, giving the literature committee and the trustees the clues they needed to finish the step-and-tradition book in a way that addressed the fellowship's needs as effectively as possible. "We believe that the input provided by the fellowship strengthened the drafts considerably," the WSC Literature Committee chairperson writes in her report.

**NA Step Working Guides**

The NA Step Working Guides are the second of the two projects on this year's "A" work list for the WSC Literature Committee. After the committee made some basic format decisions about these guides at its August 1992 meeting, committee members were assigned to prepare preliminary outlines of each guide. The committee reviewed those outlines at the October "quarterly" workshop, then designated members of a working group to generate new drafts, suggest narrative material, and write specific questions. The plan was to refine the results of that working group's activity at a February 1993 meeting. However, conference budget shortfalls led to the cancellation of that meeting. Work planned for February will instead be carried out by a committee working group while WSC'93 is in progress next month.

**Literature development, inventory taking, and surveys**

Plans for work on the Step Writing Guides project next year are up in the air. "If the motion regarding a world services inventory passes," the WSCLC chair writes, "work on the guides may be postponed. As our discussions at the inventory planning meeting progressed, it seemed increasingly important for us to approach the inventory in unity should the conference make it the number one priority for next year."

Two surveys sent by the WSC Literature Committee to local literature subcommittees this conference year may help the WSCLC take inventory next year of itself and the literature development process in Narcotics Anonymous. The first survey, mailed in mid-1992, had a dual purpose. It asked which projects on the WSC Literature Committee's

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"C" and "D" work lists should be given higher priorities for development. It also asked for information about the role of local subcommittees in the literature development process. More information on the role of local literature subcommittees was sought in the second WSCLC survey, mailed in January 1993, asking respondents to rate the importance of various literature functions for the individual, group, area, region, and world.

"We believe that this information will not only help us revise our handbook in a way that is responsive to the needs and perceptions of the fellowship," the conference literature committee chairperson writes, "but will also give us a better idea of how many local literature subcommittees really are involved in the literature development process. Although we were not aware that world service inventory was a possibility for next year when we decided to undertake [these surveys], it seems clear that the information we [will] receive from [them] will assist us in inventorying our structure, processes, and communication."

**WSO BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Though the WSO Board of Directors deferred distribution of its annual report until early in April, it had one item to report immediately in the *March Conference Report*: The federal court file has been closed on the civil suit pressed by the World Service Office against an NA member who allegedly published and distributed an altered version of NA's copyrighted Basic Text on his own authority. The case, settled in January 1991, became active again last April when the defendant claimed the WSO had reneged on its part of the settlement. Shortly after the defendant's death in June 1992, the federal judge in the case informed the defendant's attorney that he would have until February 15, 1993 to file a motion requesting that someone else be allowed to pursue the case in the defendant's place. Contact with the court after February 15 confirmed that no motion for substitution had been filed; therefore, the case can be considered closed.

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**WSC PUBLIC INFORMATION COMMITTEE**

A majority of the PI committee's entry in the *March Conference Report* focussed on the world service inventory proposed by the Interim Committee in this year's *Conference Agenda Report*. "Each of us has a sackful of solutions and [each of us] wants... to help the addict who still suffers," writes the committee chairperson. "The problem is, we all have a different vision of how to accomplish our primary purpose, and [we] spend much of our time trying to convince each other of the correctness of our views. This is in total contrast to having a world services plan and then working together to carry it out."

"The conference leadership has proposed a year-long inventory process for all boards and committees," the PI chairperson continues, "in an attempt to get in touch with our fellowship's needs and our primary purpose.... It is my sincere hope that an inventory such as is being proposed will provide us with a unified direction for our world service efforts and be the crux of the next phase of growth for our fellowship."

If the inventory proposed in Motion 1 comes to pass, the WSC PI Committee will be responsible for taking its own inventory during the coming year and reporting its findings to the 1994 WSC. The committee's chair says that WSC PI will give special attention to communication efforts, committee focus, responsibilities, accountability, and financial impact to see if PI is truly being prudent and effective. The committee itself will continue to work on some projects. PI hopes to have the *PI News* and *NA Update* published twice each during the coming year. The committee will continue to develop a strategy for addressing issues related to the international development of Narcotics Anonymous. Finally, the PI committee hopes to complete work on its revision of *A Guide to Public Information*. A current 1993-94 WSC PI Committee workplan is available upon request.

The survey proposed in Motion 14 in this year's *Conference Agenda Report* is a more complex situation. While the WSC PI Committee unanimously agreed that a survey was necessary to help NA gain credibility with the professional community, support for the world services inventory motion possibly conflicts with initiating development of the survey.

**WORLD SERVICE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

"As hard as we try to present complete information," the WSB chairperson writes in the *March Conference Report*, "there always seems to be information from *Conference Agenda Report* workshops that we attend that indicates amendments are in order. This year is no exception." At WSC'93, the trustees will present amendments to their proposals related to NA intellectual property specifying that they are meant to apply to NA recovery literature, not service materials. Local NA communities, they said, should not be put in the position of wondering whether it's alright to adapt NA service material to their local conditions.