

# WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS



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## **Memorandum**

To: WSC participants  
From: Support Team for the world services inventory  
Date: Wednesday 9 June 1993  
Re.: recap of conference actions, update on activity since WSC'93

The Support Team created by the conference to provide the administrative assistance required by the inventory is pleased to report that we have been able to accomplish the initial tasks assigned to us by the conference and that the project is on schedule. In this memo we will recap the development of the inventory plan and the decisions made at this year's World Service Conference regarding inventory administration. We will also bring you up-to-date on inventory-related activity that's taken place since the gavel fell on this year's conference.

## **Before the conference**

The concept of the world services inventory was first discussed at the WSC "quarterly" workshop last October in Cincinnati. The call was initially for a world services "slowdown" that would reduce the excessive demands made of many world-level trusted servants. The idea soon evolved into a moratorium on new projects that would allow for a comprehensive examination of world service operating systems. The basic proposal-in-principle for such an inventory was presented by the Interim Committee in the January 1993 *Conference Agenda Report*. The motion asked "that the World Service Conference engage in an inventory process, taking on no new projects during CY 1993-94."

That proposal was fleshed out into a detailed work plan in three stages. A rough plan was developed at a February meeting of the chairpersons or vice chairpersons of the WSC standing committees with the World Service Board of Trustees Steering Committee, the WSC Administrative Committee, and the officers of the WSO Board of Directors. That rough plan was unanimously supported by meeting participants. The WSB Steering Committee and the WSC chairperson further developed the plan. Then just prior to the opening of WSC'93 the Interim Committee filled in the details of that rough plan, producing the proposal the World Service Conference used as its starting point for discussions and decisions.

On a 1 April conference call the WSB Steering Committee asked Bob McK, a trustee, to work with the WSO executive director to identify resources outside NA that might assist us in an inventory. Twenty-four organizations were identified as potential resources, including eight organizations that offer consulting services. Information about these resources was compiled into a 215-page binder that was distributed to members of the World Service Board of Trustees Steering Committee.

### **At the conference**

At the 1993 World Service Conference, the motion to conduct a world services inventory was divided into two questions: first, whether to engage in an inventory process; and second, whether or not to take on new projects during the coming conference year. The first part of the motion gained ready approval, but many conference participants had many questions about the second portion, most of them having to do with the details of the inventory administrative plan.

After taking a straw poll, the conference decided to create a small working group to examine the new-project moratorium idea within the larger context of the complete inventory administrative plan. The working group would examine all WSC input related to the plan and return to the conference floor with a revised proposal. The WSC second vice chairperson, who presided over most of this year's annual meeting, appointed the following people to the working group: Leah H, RSR, Chesapeake-Potomac Region; Rogan A, Chair, WSC-PI; Donna M, Trustee; Rubén M, RSR, Puerto Rico; Lib E, RSR, Australia; Mike C, RSR, Mountaineer Region; Jenny D, RSR, Nebraska; and Michael M, RSR, Northern California. After the second vice chair's appointments were announced, the WSC ratified the group's composition. All motions, amendments, and substitute motions regarding the inventory plan were given to the working group to consider as it revised the proposal.

After reviewing input and going over WSC debate, the working group came back midweek with a report outlining the points it believed the conference wished to alter in the inventory plan. Three straw polls indicated the conference's concurrence with the working group's direction, giving the group the support it needed to finish.

On Friday 30 April the working group returned to the conference floor with its final version of the inventory administrative plan. Key elements of the plan were:

- ⇒ The inventory period would be extended to two years from the original one-year proposal. The first year would be devoted to background research, surveys, and internal inventory taking; the second, to fellowship forums, analysis, and recommendations for change.

- ⇒ During the inventory period, only basic services would be maintained by world services, leaving free as much time and budget money as possible for the inventory process.
- ⇒ Designation of the four-member *Support Team*, created to meet the project's administrative needs, and the twelve-member *Composite Group*, responsible for the development of the actual materials to be used in the inventory and the analysis of the results.
- ⇒ Use of a consulting firm throughout the project to help with the technical aspects of the inventory.

Many WSC participants had questions about the role the WSC Ad Hoc Committee on NA Service's newly completed *Guide to Service in NA* would or should play in a world services inventory. After discussions with the committee, the conference passed a motion specifying "that *A Guide to Service in Narcotics Anonymous* be set aside until the completion of the world services inventory. At that point, the *Guide* will be assessed to determine whether it addresses any of the issues raised in the inventory. If it becomes apparent that additional revisions to the *Guide* are needed, they will be made, after which *A Guide to Service in Narcotics Anonymous* should go out for a one-year input and review period."

The members of both the Composite Group and the Support Team were chosen by the WSC Administrative Committee from among volunteers at the conference. After their selection, the WSC voted to ratify their membership. The rosters for both are as follows:

- ⇒ **Composite Group composition:** Leah H (RSR, Chesapeake-Potomac Region), Paul T (RSR, Spain), Jeff B (RSR, Indiana), Jamie S-H (Trustee), Bob S (Trustee), Tom R (WSO director), Rogan A (WSC Outreach Ad Hoc), John H (WSC Policy), Jane N (WSC Literature), Susan B (WSC-PI), and Mandy F (WSC-H&I). The conference took action "to not fill the WSC Administrative Committee seat [*as called for in the working group plan*] on the inventory Composite Group, leaving one seat available for rotating membership to be determined by Composite Group direction." The group selected Rogan A to serve as temporary chairperson until the group's first meeting in June.
- ⇒ **Support Team composition:** Vaughan K (RSR, Ontario), Carol K (RSR, Michigan), Ron S (WSC treasurer), and Jim E (WSC second vice chairperson).

The inventory plan approved by the conference called for funding only basic services and inventory-related activities. However, some motions passed earlier in the week of WSC'93 required funding for their fulfillment. Additionally, some conference committees were unclear on what kinds of activities were and were

not "basic" services. The conference dealt with these questions by means of two straw polls. In the first, WSC participants specified that 1993 motions creating new projects unrelated to the inventory had been passed in principle only, not as funding mandates. In the second straw poll, the WSC expressed its wish that all world service boards and committees place the inventory at the very top of their priority lists.

With these two points clarified, the conference proceeded to approve a budget for basic services and rank a list of eighteen discretionary priorities. Participants were instructed to specially mark those items they would like to see dropped off the priority list entirely and rank the rest from first to last. The world services inventory project was weighted first in the rankings. Interestingly enough, however, the next highest weighted ranking was not second, not third, but *sixth* on the discretionary priority list. The World Service Conference had expressed its conscience concerning spending priorities for CY 1993-94 very, very clearly.

The approved WSC basic services budget came to \$167,951. Adding estimated 1993-94 inventory project expenses of \$86,990 results in a total of \$254,941. (The other fourteen items on the discretionary priority list total \$159,640.) In its pre-conference inventory proposal, the Interim Committee had projected WSC contributions for CY 1993-94 at \$242,281 and had secured a pledge of \$40,000 in additional inventory funding for the year from the World Service Office. It would appear that, practically speaking, the Interim Committee will be in a good position this year to fully fund the inventory project but not much else except basic services.

### **After the conference**

The inventory administrative plan approved at WSC'93 calls for the Support Team to retain a consulting firm at the beginning of the project to work with the inventory Composite Group. In June the consultant will assist the group in developing fellowship surveys for distribution in July. In September the consultant will help the group prepare internal inventory instruments for use at the world services meeting scheduled for October. Immediately after the WSC, the eight consulting organizations previously identified were sent a copy of the plan developed by the RSR working group at the WSC. Each firm was invited to send in a proposal describing how they could assist us in the inventory process and how much they would charge for their services.

Based on the Support Team's initial review of consulting firms, it appeared that it might be difficult to find a consultant prepared to do the tasks identified in the inventory plan for the \$5,000 approved by the conference. Consultants responding to our request for proposals for participation in the project were

estimating costs up to \$100,000 for the two-year project. All consultants contacted also indicated that a greater effort in designing information-gathering instruments up front would pay off by providing responses that would be much easier, and thus much cheaper, to tabulate and interpret. Based on this, the team asked the WSC treasurer--who is both an advisory member of the Interim Committee and a member of the inventory Support Team--to talk with the Interim Committee about the possibility of dedicating additional funds to the inventory at the front end of the project. The Interim Committee transferred \$12,500 that had been identified in the budget proposed for the second year of the inventory project into the budget for the first quarter of CY 1993-94 so that funds would be available for a consultant if we needed them.

The Interim Committee has confirmed the WSO inventory support pledge made in March. At a May conference-call meeting of the committee, the chair and vice chairpersons of the WSO Board of Directors said they foresaw no difficulty with providing the WSC treasury with \$40,000 this year to cover inventory expenses. They suggested that perhaps these funds might be made available at the rate of \$10,000 per quarter, but agreed that flexibility should be the watchword--if more is needed in one quarter and less in another, then so be it, they said.

Immediately after WSC'93 adjourned, the World Service Office began studying how to assign the special workers needed by the inventory process. After many hours of careful consideration by WSO management, a unanimous consensus was reached. Joe Gossett, WSO Executive Director, will serve as team leader for the duration of the project. Dottie Radatz, Joe's executive assistant, will provide administrative support, and Lee Manchester, WSO Senior Editor, will assist with communications coordination. A fourth special worker will be added to the staff team on a rotating basis to help with different kinds of coordinating tasks at the office. The current rotating member is Stephan Lantos, WSO Publications Team Leader. As some of you may recall, Steve staffed the RSR working group that developed the final version of the inventory administrative plan at this year's conference. More WSO employees may be assigned to the Inventory Team later in the project as needed, but initially much staff time will be consumed in preparation of committee and board histories.

Staff has begun preparing historic summaries of decisions, discussions, and projects of each world service board and committee. This research, scheduled to continue through August 1993, will be made available in September to each respective board and committee as it prepares to take its internal inventory at the October world service meeting.

At this writing, the inventory Support Team has had three conference-call meetings. The first, held on Wednesday 12 May, gave us an opportunity to

select a liaison between the Support Team and the rest of world services, Ron S (WSC treasurer), and to review the inventory administrative plan approved by the World Service Conference. The second call, held Wednesday 26 May, was focused primarily on the search for a consultant, narrowing the field from eight firms to three. During the third, held Wednesday 2 June, the Support Team interviewed key individuals from each of the three finalist consulting firms, ending the call by selecting Barbara O'Hearne and her associate, Karen Carter, to assist the inventory Composite Group with the survey, internal inventory, and analysis aspects of the project. Ms. O'Hearne, whose practice is based in Kansas City, Missouri, USA, recently completed consulting with the Unity Church in the United States on a nationwide internal self-examination very similar to our inventory project. We are negotiating an initial contract with Mmes. O'Hearne and Carter for their assistance at the Composite Group's first meeting, after which we will have a better idea of what kind of support we will need from them for the remainder of the project. Rogan Allen, *pro tem* chairperson of the Composite Group, will work with members of the WSO Inventory Team to bring the consultants up to speed for the Composite Group's meeting scheduled for 24-27 June at WSO-Van Nuys.

**This concludes the first report of the inventory Support Team to WSC participants.** Further reports will be issued after the Composite Group meetings in June and September. In the meantime, if you have any questions about this report in particular or the inventory project in general, please contact us via the WSO Inventory Team.