

**REPORT  
COMPOSITE GROUP MEETING  
MANHATTAN BEACH, CALIFORNIA, USA  
29-30 JULY 1994**

The world services inventory Composite Group met Friday and Saturday 29-30 July 1994 in Manhattan Beach, California. The following Composite Group members were present: Jane Nickels, Rogan Allen, Jeff Baker, Susan Blaue, George Hollahan, Leah Harris, Bob Smith, Stu Toordeman, Mitchell Soodak, Paul Tanner, Mandy Fraley, and John Halverson. WSO staff present were Carol Kenney and Steve Lantos.

### **REPORTING**

After an initial review of ground rules and the weekend's agenda, the Composite Group discussed how it planned to report to the fellowship and other world service bodies. Steve L explained that, as of the outset of the meeting, no individual had been delegated the responsibility of reporting Composite Group information to those entities. After some discussion, it was agreed that the delegation of reporting responsibilities would be done on a meeting by meeting basis, and that the designated reporter would rely on Carol's notes to use in developing the report. Jeff B volunteered to report on the current meeting.

It was further agreed that the reporter and chair of the Composite Group would review the Inventory Update (a separate document from the Meeting Report) and approve the final draft prior to copy edit.

### **ORIENTATION**

Rogan began the orientation by reviewing the April, 1994 meeting. The decisions of the meeting included that the inventory plan remain in the CAR as is, and that the Composite Group members all agreed to remain on the group for CY 1994-1995. The Composite Group agreed to work with admin if there were to be any revisions to the plan. The WSO Tools group had minor changes, and the WSC Self-Evaluation Group planned small working groups coordinated by individuals with similar background and experience with small working groups for the inventory at WSC '94. Committee summaries were going to be reviewed by the liaisons of the committees prior to their distribution. The issues that remained undecided were: 1) the issue of the consultant; 2) the fellowship forums; and 3) the resolution phase. There was a meeting at the cafe in Atlanta where the Composite Group formed a to-do list and decided who would do what. The group also decided that Conference Calls would be used for reporting from team leaders about their respective groups, with the Composite Group chair facilitating the call. It was agreed that participants would try to avoid major decision-making during these calls. It was decided that Jane would be the chair through the November meeting, with new leadership serving through the

conference. Rogan then read the compromise statement to the group that was passed at WSC '94.

### **WORLD SERVICES PLANNING MEETING PROPOSAL**

The third agenda item for Friday was the World Services letter outlining a resolution-phase plan to be discussed at the upcoming September World Services meeting. A number of Composite Members spoke about the various perceptions, ramifications, and possible misunderstandings surrounding the World Services letter. Bob S stated that he believed it to be the Composite Group's responsibility to develop the routine for WSC '95. However, he conceded that, after having looked at all of the inventory material having to do with the problem-resolution phase, he could find nothing conclusive as to who was responsible for doing what during this final phase of the process. In short, his view that it was a mistake for world service leadership to act on their own in developing a problem-resolution phase was echoed strongly by a few other Composite Group members.

Mitchell, on the other hand, expressed that, in light of the absence of any clear direction regarding the problem-resolution phase, especially in conjunction with issues not going to the CAR from the Composite Group along with the Final Report coming out in March, World Service leadership was left with the perception that there was a large question about the resolution phase of the inventory process. Rather than their letter representing any power struggle over the resolution phase between World Service leadership and the Composite Group, the letter was simply an attempt to begin to develop a plan for resolution which would address this apparent hole in the process.

After more discussion, it became clear that much of the misunderstanding about the resolution phase issue stemmed from separate interpretations on the parts of the Composite Group and World Service leadership of the Compromise Statement. While some members, for example, felt that item number one in that statement implied the Composite Group's relinquishing of the problem resolution phase, other members stated that they had always assumed that the Composite Group would be involved in some manner with the resolution phase, and therefore interpreted number one simply as not binding the Composite Group to a CAR deadline for its report.

At this point, Mitchell voiced his concern that the Composite Group and World Service leadership not get to a place in which they were at loggerheads with one another and thus lose focus on the real issues at hand. He expressed that one of the most positive things that had come out of the World Service leadership's June meeting was a commitment to laying aside each board and committee's individual agendas in order to work together toward a resolution of the inventory process. He feared that this unanimity might be jeopardized if the Composite Group were to show up at the September meeting at odds with World Service leadership.



The discussion then turned to the World Service leadership's plan itself, and Jeff B stated that he felt that the resolution phase as it was outlined there was unrealistic. He expressed concern as well that it seemed foolish not to show any indication of relying on the Composite Group's last year and a half of plan development and research tool development experience in developing the plan for the problem resolution phase. Stu felt also that there should be a plan for problem resolution, but that World leadership should not be the ones to do it. He felt the timeline for the entire inventory project ought to be three or four years, and that we shouldn't jump the gun in entering into or in conducting the problem resolution phase.

George echoed the concern regarding a lack of a concrete plan for the resolution phase, and stated that he believed that someone was actually going to have to take the lead in this thing and come up with a viable plan for problem resolution. Otherwise, we'll have generated all of this information and won't have anywhere to go with it. Rogan agreed with this assessment, and added that, based on the Composite Group's experience with plan development, World Service leadership doesn't appear to have any idea just how large a task they're talking about. He stated that he felt the Composite Group had the responsibility for taking the lead in this.

Paul was concerned that the entire discussion felt as though, as addicts, we often base our self-esteem on wanting to be indispensable, and therefore we were unwilling to trust the work of others.

At this point, Jane asked where the group could go from here. It seemed to be agreed that no one was right or wrong, and yet there was obviously a problem and no apparent way to get around it. Jane felt that the group needed some kind of Composite Group consensus on the leadership's plan before the September meeting, where they were sure to be asked what they thought of it.

Jeff B proposed that the Composite Group attempt to form a small working group consisting of members of the Composite Group and some members of World Service leadership which could meet before the September meeting and try to deal with the problem resolution phase. In this way, the specific task of problem resolution could be addressed by a specific working group formulated for that task. Paul questioned the need for other individuals' involvement, and Stu stated that, currently, there are two groups who each have written a different plan. A group of twelve people put one together, and a group of seventeen made the other. What is being proposed is to take a segment of each group to work together on the problem resolution phase.

Mitchell raised the question of staff support, and George stated that if it didn't generate a lot of staff work, it probably wouldn't be a problem. Leah was concerned that it probably would generate a lot more work, and that there was not enough time to come up with something that everyone (Composite Group members and World Service leaders) could agree on.

John H was concerned that, if the group didn't try to do something before the Conference, that there was the possibility of creating a real monster on the floor of the conference which might add two years to the process. Bob S stated

that he did not see this small group as developing a definitive plan, but that it could maybe develop a means of gathering input at the September meeting without necessarily making any decisions at that point about the resolution phase. He also stated that the Composite Group does have a mandate from the conference to make changes in the plan so long as they are approved by Interim, so this idea doesn't violate the spirit of the conference's direction. After a few more pros and cons, Jane asked for a straw poll on the proposal that the Composite Group recommend a small group comprised of two Composite Group members, two leadership members and one staff member. The straw poll revealed that the group agreed in concept to the small group (seven in favor).

The discussion of the small joint group continued on Saturday, with Susan voicing her uncertainty about the idea. She stated that she did not see the group as having goals and objectives (as the Composite Group had developed for itself at the beginning of the Inventory project), and that she was not clear as to exactly what the working group was going to do.

Jeff summarized the situation as follows: The Composite Group had a problem with the way that world leadership had outlined the plan, and this group might be a way to sit down and take our plan and their plan and then come to some agreement that includes much of what their plan wants, with one or two members of the Composite Group acting in an advisory capacity. We have gone through all of this time working on the inventory, and to be left out of the problem resolution phase altogether is unacceptable. This small joint group can be a means by which problem resolution can proceed in a way that is amenable to both bodies. At this point, Leah voiced her objection to this proposal, and asked that it be noted.

Mitchell suggested that a memo be drafted to the Interim committee asking them to work with this small group towards a resolution of this conflict. At this point, the group discussed the points of conflict that they had with the leadership's plan. The issues were 1) the use of the consultant, and 2) the involvement of the Composite Group in the problem resolution phase. At this point, there was some discussion about whether or not the Composite Group ought to be involved in the problem resolution phase. A straw poll revealed that eight members were in favor of Composite Group involvement. Subsequent discussion and straw polls revealed approval of the small joint group proposal (6 pro), an approval of two separate memos regarding conflict resolution and more Composite Group involvement in the resolution phase (8 pros - unanimous). Jane then announced that the following Composite Group members would be placed in a pool for the small joint group: Leah, Jeff, Mandy, and John H.

## **MULTIREGIONAL FORUMS**

The Composite Group took up the discussion of Multiregional Forums with Bob S reminding the group that Multiregional forums are in the Inventory plan, and he sees them as being helpful. He asked if the group could send this recommendation to Interim along with a list of Composite Group members who

would be willing to go to the forums. A number of group members echoed this desire to keep the Multiregional forums, though there was somewhat less agreement as to their time and purpose.

Leah suggested, for example, that letters be sent to members letting them know that if they want Composite Group members to come and talk about the inventory then they could contact the Office and request their attendance. Jeff felt that the forums ought to be deferred until after the conference as part of the resolution phase.

The group agreed after some discussion to draft the letters for this CY's forums, and also agreed to make a recommendation to the small joint group that multiregional forums be used during the resolution phase of the inventory.

### **CONSULTANT**

The consultant issue discussion began with Steve reminding the group that there had been discussion at one point as to what stage the consultant would enter the process. Would they be used for the problem resolution phase? Would they be used to gather data? He also reminded the Composite Group that they had agreed to decide at this meeting whether or not they wanted to have a consultant, and if so how they would go about choosing one.

Stu stated that he had met with one candidate, and that everything is on hold until the Composite Group decides what it wants to do. Mitchell stated that one of the premises of the leaderships' plan was that a consultant would not be necessary at this point. Susan stated that she was at that meeting, but felt then as now that a consultant was needed. Jeff felt that he didn't have enough information to make a decision. Paul stated that he feels we do need a consultant and that any reluctance to hiring one may be the result of fearing that a consultant may come up with an idea that we are very threatened by. Rogan stated that he had changed his mind and was not in favor of a consultant, and was unsure about how committed we are as a fellowship and as the Composite Group to having a consultant. Mandy felt that she too needed more information to be able to make a decision.

George stated that he did not believe that any consultant would be able to take the information gathered and come up with any brilliant idea about what needs to happen with world services. He also stated that he believed that only another recovery person could be able to give us what we need. The consultant he and Stu interviewed was familiar with our fellowship and has the ability to do something with the information we give him.

Steve offered that the group needs to be mindful of the preparation time required to bring a prospective consultant up to speed. He estimated from six weeks to two months as being necessary, citing the Composite Group's earlier experience with consultants in the survey formulation phase.

Stu stated that the consultant is going to take all of the information we give him/her and then measure his/her results against ours. The resolution phase is thus where this is really necessary - we will need the skills of a



consultant badly at that point, because we have a difficult time seeing what is wrong and changing it.

Leah agreed with Susan that the group needs someone outside of themselves: she doesn't think they'll see anything the group doesn't see, but the consultant is necessary for integrity. John sees two questions: what is the need of a consultant, and how long will it take to get him/her up to speed.

Both Stu and George thought that the person whom they interviewed was impressive and that it would take less time with him, since he is already familiar with the way the fellowship does things. Mitchell asked what is the price tag. George said around \$25,000. Paul asked Bob S what his opinion is regarding the use of the consultant - what "product" might we expect from him/her? What would it look like? Would it be useful for the conference? Bob answered that he only sees the consultant as useful in a public relations effort, but in that area he sees him/her as very useful.

Jane suggested that the various issues on the table be dealt with one at a time. First straw poll: Do we understand what we would need from a consultant if we were to hire one? (eight yes) Do we want a consultant? (eight yes) How many want to bring the consultant on now within the context of this Composite Group and base it on H in the Inventory Plan? (three yes) Do we want to recommend bringing on a consultant during the problem resolution phase? (6 in favor) Do we want both (now and next year)? (five in favor)

After more pro/con discussion, Jane asked how many want to bring on a consultant now? (six yes) How many are in favor of the consultant? (eight yes) Jane says now, then next question is, how do we go about doing what we've just agreed to do? The group then approved that the WSO Evaluation Working Group choose and hire one consultant and let the Office write the contract up to \$30,000 (10 yes). It was also decided to recommend to the small joint group that a consultant be used in the resolution phase.

## **FINAL REPORT**

The Composite Group evaluated the WSC Evaluation Working Group's Final Report Proposal, and was in general agreement that it was the best option for formulating the report. Stu believed that it made sense in that it recommended one Final Report which would cover all of the information of all the various bodies.

At this point, Bob S asked what form the Composite Group would like the Survey information to be put in for this comprehensive report. He stated that he had always assumed that there would be one final report, rather than four or five separate reports. He suggested that the overall report should also include appendices to point out all of the problems. He does not see the final report as simply a collation of all the information.

Jane then asked, Do we want a comprehensive integrated detailed final report? (unanimously in favor). Jeff suggested that the group form both a separate writing group and then a work team for the comprehensive report.

At this point, the objection was made that there is no staff to copy edit all of the proposed written reports. Jane then asked the group to consider Susan's recommendation: that the appendix be left up to the current report team, whether or not to have an appendix, and how it will be written (there was no objection stated). Jane then asked the group that before the small group leaders meet that each team meets and brings back input to the group regarding this process.

### **RSR LETTER**

Paul asked that the group ask Mickey Riffin (former NJ RSR) to let them know if he has any knowledge of anyone who wants to know about the inventory, to forward that to them. The other request was that the group ask Mickey to give them the addresses of the individuals who feel disenfranchised. The group agreed on the letter that will be sent to Mickey and the New Jersey RSC with some changes.

### **RECAP OF FRIDAY'S DISCUSSIONS**

Steve gave a brief synopsis of the previous day's decisions. Rogan then asked that a copy of the notes from this meeting be sent out as soon as possible. Mitchell then expressed some concern with the group's decisions about the consultant: he feared a potential stand-off with the Interim committee. After some discussion, Bob explained that he is in firm opposition to any other body dictating what the group does. He will always argue against any body dictating what the group does. Jane then asked if the group was OK with the previous day's decisions (yes).

### **SURVEY ANALYSIS WORKING GROUP**

John stated that one of the problems which needs to be addressed is how the group should identify problems. The working group used 30% as a problem if identified. He added that there didn't seem to be anyplace in the forms for resolution. Stu then asked if the procedure ought to be to use a curve of negative responses and come up with a median?

Jeff stated that his understanding was that the surveys had been designed as a perceptual tool, and now they were being used to identify problems. We cannot say that because sixty percent of the regions think that the way world services spends money there is therefor a problem with the way world services spends money. What this says is simply that the regions see the way money is spent as a problem.

Bob then said that the group simply reported the percentages - it did not interpret them. What John is talking about is simply coming up with a way to report the information.

Jane then asked how many questions had fifty percent "don't know" answers. She believes that these need to be included. She recalled that the

group had discussed the surveys and had agreed that "don't knows" were a significant piece of information. They might tell world services a lot.

John stated that the working group felt that this body should be the one to make that decision. If over fifty percent of the don't knows should be reflected then we could show that.

Mitchell stated that the charts in the working group's example were misleading, that both charts need to be shown together (that is, both the percentage of those responding, as well as the actual answers of those who responded). Mitchell felt that the whole picture was not being represented.

Steve raised the concern of the numbers who had responded, and stated that he didn't think that those at the conference understood that fifteen percent is actually a good sample. Maybe there should be a paragraph explaining this.

The discussion continued regarding presenting the information in as fair and understandable a way as possible, and then Stu stated that, because the data might be interpreted any number of ways, it really put the Composite Group in a double-bind. The group is expected to develop an opinion of the findings, but the actual viewpoint could go any number of different ways. A lot of what will need to happen requires philosophical decisions. He could look at it and say sixty seven percent of the groups are satisfied and that is who we serve, so World Services must be doing all right. Or, on the other hand, he could look at it and say the fifteen percent of the regions say they are not satisfied and that is who we serve, so World Services is not being effective. The issue is, how do we report this, and is it the group's responsibility to offer interpretation?

Susan then asked if any of these interpretations identify problems. John says they can, if the working group is given a percentage line to work with. Paul believed that the group needed to respect standard practice and take on the advice of people that know about these things. He was prepared to trust Bob's opinion. Stu added that the consultant will make things more colorful - he will give us an opinion.

Steve stated that this was the only component that was designed to gauge feedback and awareness. This was the only piece of the inventory that could give the group feedback on the "customer" and their satisfaction. He felt that the group was trying to fit a square peg into a round hole - this may be the only component of the inventory where there is not an evaluation.

Susan's biggest concern is that the report offer some clear understanding.

The group then decided to go with option two from the working group's proposal, and decided also to have a field test at the September World Services meeting (unanimous). The sampling audience will be twenty randomly selected participants, and the sample will consist of pie carts and verbal explanation.

## **WSO EVALUATION GROUP**

George reported that the WSO has two teams that have finished their assessments and evaluations, and one of these teams has completed its report. The shipping and conference services teams are still in the process of doing



their evaluations. A number of small problems was encountered by each team as they started their assessments, and this allowed teams to help each other as they were struggling. The administration team had some difficulties with their assessment because they had never acted as a team, but as support for all the other teams. One area which will be delayed is the management team, which will not be able to complete its work as scheduled. They will be informing the Composite Group of a postponement or delay as soon as they know how long it will be.

Leah asked how long they thought it would be, and George answered that it may be from two to three weeks. He also asked that he be removed from the WSO Evaluations group. Steve asked George if it would still be possible for him or Anthony to continue to work with the consultant. George said that he would.

### **PLAN REVISIONS**

Steve informed the group that decisions were made that would be changed in the inventory plan accordingly. Steve asked the group who the changes should go to. Leah asked that the plan changes be dated. Steve told the group that they would have the revised plan by the September meeting.

### **LIAISON ROLES**

Bob asked the group whether it wanted to continue with the liaison roles. Steve reminded the group that it decided last year that the role of the liaison was to act as a conduit of information to the committees and boards, and that they are not representative of the board or committee in any way. Leah was in favor of having a liaison to Outreach, because they have a liaison to every other board and committee. Finally, the group decided that it would continue to provide information on a monthly basis through the liaisons.

### **WSC EVALUATION WORKING GROUP**

Susan reported that this group's task was to take all of the information from the conference and to organize it and report it. They listed problems and solutions. The group chose to use the same problem identification form that the boards and committees would be using in their self-evaluation during the September meeting. Many of the discussion groups were redundant. This is why more problems are not evident.

Paul remarked that the Spanish translations group had made specific points about their problems not being translated. The translations they were concerned about were service items. Jeff remarked that he would like to have seen one or two more levels of specificity. Susan pointed out that the forms were more specific than the reporting sheet.

John then asked whether the group thought the same forms could be used to identify assets. Susan replied that she didn't know how many assets

were actually identified. John stated that if the group is going to use these as the basis of change then they need to know what works as well as what doesn't.

Leah feared that by trying to look for this other stuff they may be creating a nightmare. Jeff felt that the asset information had already been solicited, and that we could give further direction to boards and committees to identify their assets from the self-evaluation responses from last year. Mandy felt that assets needed to be included. Susan then suggested that the small group look at whatever the assets are that have been identified and then list them. Jane asked the WSC Working Group if this was their consensus, and they said yes (unanimously). It was also recommended that all groups tie everything back into the scope of the inventory. This was clarified in the recommendation.

### **COMMITTEE/BOARD EVALUATION WORKING GROUP**

Mandy stated that the group will identify a single place or individual that each board and committee will give its completed evaluation to. Mandy stated that what she has told the boards and committees is that they are to hand in their work, and then the work is to be copied and collated and then given back to the working group.

Jeff stated that there should be an orientation so that there would be some uniformity in the evaluation process between boards and committees.

Susan stated that the boards and committees will need to have one to two weeks after the September meeting to put their evaluations in a form that is presentable.

Mitchell's suggestion is that the group send something out to explain this and that they have a follow up call to make sure everyone understands. Susan added that they should give each board and committee a set of papers and get them to fill in the blanks with a list of assets, etc. It was finally decided that the group would send a letter along with these blank forms to all boards and committees. They would also have the RSRs rove the September meeting as a safety net to answer questions.

Leah stated that the group ought to compare the self-evaluations against last year's SAT information so that there would be a system of checks and balances.

The orientation for the September meeting will be presented by members of the WSC Committee/Board Working Group, and will occur at 7:30 p.m. Thursday night. The deadline for material to be returned from committees and boards is one week after the world services meeting.

### **RSR POOL CREATED BY CONFERENCE**

Jane gave an explanation of the pool that was created by the conference. She asked if they had any role and if the group wanted to send them any material. Mitchell said that they should be sent all the material so they can be brought up to date. Jane read the draft of a letter to the pool members and

Mitchell asked that a line be added welcoming any input. Leah asked that the phone list of Composite Group and Interim members be included.



## **ASSIGNMENTS**

Because the WSO member came off the WSO self-evaluation working group, Paul has been placed on this group. The WSO member is moving to the WSC Committee and Board Self-Evaluation Working Group, which now consists of Mandy, Jeff, John and WSO member.

## **WORLD SERVICES MEETING**

The Composite Group will meet at 6:00 p.m. Thursday evening prior to the orientation, and again at lunch on Saturday.

## **NOVEMBER MEETING**

The Composite Group is tentatively planning their November meeting for 11-14 November 1994. The location has not yet been determined.