



Conference Report

WORLD SERVICE OFFICE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Introduction

The WSO Board of Directors and World Service Office management have been heavily involved in the development of a five-year business plan, internal restructuring of the office, development of new products, preparation of the 1996 budget, providing support to the resolution process and the WSB Fellowship Development Plan while continuing to provide the basic services of translation, production, and distribution of conference-approved literature to the fellowship in a fiscally sound and prudent manner.

Business Plan

For approximately the last five years, the WSO Board of Directors has been trying to develop a business plan. Having the ability to lay out a plan for the fellowship's business for the next several years has been an absolute necessity. This need has been intensified by dramatic fluctuations in the costs to produce the items in our inventory, as well as a significant increase in fellowship demand for services. Now that we have some ideas of where the fellowship may be going in the coming years, the need to have a business plan in place is that much more important.

With the assistance of a consultant, a team composed of four members of the BOD, four senior staff, and one member each of the WSB and the Administrative Committee worked through a facilitated and structured process to create a business plan outline. This was done during the weekend of February 2nd and was presented and accepted by the BOD at its February 9th meeting.

The business plan resulted in the adoption of a mission statement for WSO, as well as the development of a set of values which support the mission statement. It also resulted in the identification of fourteen goals, to be accomplished over the next several years. The board then decided to send the mission statement, values, and goals to the rest of the world services leadership for their comment.

The goals identified are specific to the business operations and routing service delivery, and do not appear to be in conflict with any of the resolutions or motions presented by the Resolutions Group. They are necessary objectives if the fellowship's primary service center

and literature publisher is going to remain a stable and dependable resource for our fellowship. More information about the goals will be in the WSO Annual Report.

The mission statement for WSO is:

"The mission of the World Service Office, Inc. is to provide the services and support which facilitate the continued growth and development of the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous worldwide."

In support of this mission, the WSO is committed to the following:

- NA's philosophy and principles as embodied in NA's Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, Concepts of Service, and Fellowship-approved literature.
- Fiscally sound and effective decision making.
- Quality management as:
 - a constant effort to strive for improvement;
 - a commitment to remain a reliable, dependable, and stable resource for our customers;
 - suitable facilities and equipment.
- Providing an environment of honesty, integrity, mutual trust, and respect.

Having this broadly stated mission and values will allow WSO management to develop specific plans which make WSO operations better able to conform to these objectives.

Sales Policy

The Sales Policy Committee of our board has been waiting for the development of the business plan before developing a procedure for the sales and distribution of literature to non-North American NA committees. One of our major objectives to address the needs of both established and emerging NA communities. The process involves a variety of overriding considerations, such as the FIPT, focusing on existing and/or expired sales agreements, creating a fair and equitable agreement, and simultaneously providing for a process which will permit the necessary translations to take place.

After much discussion by members of the WSO Board and the World Service Board of Trustees, there was an increased awareness of an underlying issue of literature pricing--the feeling that those who can afford to pay a uniform price should do so in order to provide emerging NA communities with an opportunity to receive literature at a lower price. This is understood by the fact that the income from literature sales is expended, in part, to provide translations of fellowship-approved literature, thereby aiding the growth of NA as a worldwide fellowship. The April 1996 BOD meeting will have the preparation of this plan as a priority agenda item.

Translations Production Schedule

We, along with the World Services Translation Committee, have approved a new auxiliary production schedule to assist established language groups in expediting their translation efforts. Once a language group or community has met certain established criteria, the WSTC will let go of overseeing a language group or community's translation process and

turn it over to the WSO for prioritization and production. This will allow the WSTC to focus on assisting and supporting newer local translation committees, and to clear some of the existing backlog for established communities who no longer need assistance or pose a concern about conceptual fidelity. It will allow the WSO to place into active production more translation projects than the current system permits. The WSTC will communicate the details of this new schedule to all registered local translation committees. We will keep you informed as to whether this assists the processing and production time of translations work.

NA Way

The magazine has been a part of NA world services for almost fourteen years. The conference and the office share the responsibility for editorial matters and WSO acts as the publisher. The magazine has always been viewed as a routine service provided by the office, even though the revenue it produces through subscriptions has never drawn close to equaling the expense to produce it. (Figures for 1995, for instance, will show that expenses will exceed revenues by approximately \$100,000.)

The subscription base for the magazine has steadily declined in the 1990's. The base number for subscribers reached its peak at about 8,600 in 1990, and our figures for 1995 show there are currently about 5,500 subscribers. Ninety-nine percent of those subscribers live in North America.

Faced with escalating costs and a dwindling number of subscribers, the board last fall requested that a consultant analyze the magazine's situation to give the board an indication of what it would take to make the magazine successful. The report showed very clearly that the magazine would have to increase about ten times the subscribers it has now, or increase the subscription rate substantially to where it would be out of reach for most members.

At our most recent board meeting, we weighed the current value of the magazine's service to our members against the cost and whether or not those resources used to produce the magazine could be better utilized to improve other services. At the end of our discussion we took action to notify conference participants and *NA Way* subscribers of "*our intent to discontinue The NA Way Magazine as a WSO service as of the December, 1996 issue.*" The board will have a more detailed report about the magazine in our annual report. We expect to receive feedback at the conference and from our subscribers prior to implementing our decision.

Come visit us at our new Web Site

As we reported in the most recent *Newsline*, we have been in the process of setting up a home page on the World Wide Web of the Internet. We are pleased to announce that, as of 25 January, the primary service center for the NA Fellowship is online. The address (or URL) for the web site is <http://www.wsoinc.com>. We're confident that our home page will meet the needs of our members and others who are looking for information about us.

The opening screen serves as the "entryway," allowing the visitor to choose a portion of the site to visit by selecting one of five "doors." The doors are:

- **Basic Information About Narcotics Anonymous:** This contains narrative that explains what NA does, how it does it, who we are, and how to contact us. The worldwide NA phonenumber directory is in this section. The trustee bulletin, "What is addiction?" provides a clear picture of our philosophy about recovery.
- **Service Material:** This area contains a variety of information for use by our members. It gives visitors the opportunity to download trustee bulletins addressing a variety of issues, Fellowship Intellectual Property Trust bulletins, and other general information about NA. As new bulletins are published and others revised, they will be available in this area. In fact, the revised version of FIPT Bulletins Two and Four will be up on the WebSite by the end of March. We also plan to publish future issues of the Conference Report and Digest, and the WSO Newslines in this area.
- **We hope that sometime in the future we will be able to add a listing of group and service committees here.** It is our hope that this can be an interactive section, allowing members to update their group and service committee information as necessary.
- **Product Information:** This area is our "online catalog," albeit without an order form. We are working on making this section interactive sometime in the future so that members can purchase products online in the future. We hope to have an order form in this area by the end of March.
- **Information of Interest to Professionals:** This area provides presentation papers about NA, articles from NA Update, and other pertinent information. It is geared primarily toward professionals and agencies in the drug treatment and addiction research fields.
- **Search Engine:** We spent some time deciding whether or not we should provide links to other local sites. Due to the linkages of some of those sites, we felt that it would not be appropriate for us to do so, but we still wanted to provide visitors with a means to search the Internet if they did not find the information they were looking for at our web site. Rather than affiliating with a search engine provider, we chose a generic site where all modes of Internet-wide searches can be conducted.

We also revisited our decision about providing an e-mail address. We felt it essential that a means be provided to visitors who wanted to send comments or request catalogs or other information. So there is an e-mail button; it is linked to the person at the office who is responsible for the maintenance of the web site. We still have some concerns about the volume of e-mail we might receive and the possible expectation that e-mail will be handled with a higher priority than mail received through other means. We intend to handle e-mail in the same way we do other mail. We'll see how everything progresses, and we'll keep you informed about any changes.

FIPT Activity

Since our last report, we continued to review all requests for use of the fellowship's intellectual property and, while we granted permission to the vast majority of those who sought to use the trademarks of reprint portions of the literature, there was an instance in which we did not. Prior to our most recent meeting, we received a formal request to reprint via electronic media the individual entries of the meditation book, *Just For Today*. We had no choice but to refuse, in keeping with the Internal Use Policy passed by WSC'93. The

policy is clear about the criteria for granting permission to reprint. We felt that, until there was a change in the policy, we had no choice but to stay within its guidelines.

There is, however, another aspect to the whole question of copyright protection on the Internet. There are two sides to it, the legal and the practical. Without the practical ability to enforce the legal ownership, it becomes almost worthless. If we grant permission for reproduction on the Internet, or knowingly turn a blind eye to such practice, we have in effect stated that we do not have any intention to enforce the fellowship's copyrights. This, at least in our opinion, is completely contradictory to the trust the fellowship has placed in us to protect its intellectual properties.

In a similar vein, we have become aware of reports regarding a resurgence in the production of the illicit Basic Text. As many of you will recall, this was an issue that deeply divided our fellowship some years ago, causing some wounds that are still healing. We will devote a portion of this year's WSO Annual Report to a report about the Basic Text: its development, significant conference actions regarding it, and a complete financial picture about costs and where the proceeds of Basic Text sales go.

New Product Update

We have received a request from an Additional Needs subcommittee requesting that we include IP #22, *Welcome to Narcotics Anonymous*, IP #16, *For the Newcomer*, and IP #11, *Sponsorship*, in the list of items we have available in large print. We agreed with the request, and these items will be available through the office in the near future. Another request focused on making *It Works: How and Why* and *Just For Today* available in Braille. We authorized the production of the Braille masters for these items as funds become available.

We have become aware of some changes within the policies of some TV stations regarding their willingness to air Public Service Announcements and the time constraints they are facing. Apparently some TV stations are less willing to provide thirty-second time slots, but are willing to provide a large number of ten-second slots. We received for review some samples of ten-second PSAs developed by area PI subcommittees in the Northern California Region. After some discussion, we decided to go ahead and produce in-house these shorter versions of the PSAs and distribute them to local PI committees at cost. We appreciate the work done by Northern California PI Committees.

Personnel Update

Since the last conference report, the WSO has lost or is in the process of losing several of our senior staff. Steve Sigman has been very ill for an extended period and unable to perform his duties. Long-time WSO employee Vida Moro has been working reduced hours due to health reasons. Steve Lantos has advised management he will be leaving the WSO after WSC '96.

These vacancies, coupled with the BOD's direction to the Co-Executive Directors to hire an administrative assistant to assist in their continuing delegation of tasks, made it necessary to seek someone to fill the long-vacant position of Assistant Executive Director. The

individual in this position should be able to perform any task that the Executive Co-Directors would perform themselves, as well as tasks that other staff would not necessarily be assigned.

Between July and December, 1995 a series of discussions were held, involving the Co-Executive Directors, the BOD Executive Committee, and Becky Meyer in order to fill this position. All communication regarding the hiring process was very limited at the request of the prospective employee to allow her to personally communicate any final decision to her family, her sponsor, and other world trusted servants.

In December, 1995 these discussions resulted in the hiring of Ms. Meyer and she resigned her position as Trustee effective January 22, 1996 and began work the following February 1st.

WSO - Chatsworth

For the last several months we have felt it important to advise world services leadership of the need to begin planning for the upcoming changes in the service system. In that vein, we have been busy planning for what the office needs to do to be in the best possible position for these changes. At the recently completed off-site management meeting in San Diego, we had extensive discussions about this issue. Our overall objective was to determine what internal changes need to be made in the office so that by June 1st, we are as stable as possible and ready for whatever comes down the road.

We used a process called an "affinity diagramming process" to evaluate the present and future functions of the WSO. We then took those functions and grouped them into the most logical order possible. We used that framework to place the functions and staff. Although this was an extremely taxing process, it worked very well.

This was also the first meeting of the Fellowship Service Working Group. In our opinion, it was very effective to have the trusted servant leaders present for a portion of our planning process. We believe that this relationship can work and may serve to help bridge some of the communication gaps that constantly affect us. We will keep you apprised as we move into this process. You will receive a more comprehensive report on the management in the Annual Report.

New WSO Headquarters

The WSO is extremely pleased with the new building which is located approximately nine miles west of our previous location. We are in a 35,000 sq./ft office building that has approximately 14,000 total feet of warehouse space. The old facilities were three 4,500 sq./ft buildings with a total of approximately 2,800 feet of warehouse space.

We can hold four simultaneous meetings for up to ten people and three other meetings with up to six people. Or we can use two of the smaller rooms for one large meeting of approximately 38 people. Needless to say there has been an increase in staff efficiency as a result of everyone being in one building. Narcotics Anonymous finally has a facility that

looks the headquarters facility of a global organization. We will have pictures of the new facility at the upcoming WSC.

Financial Update

The office is still feeling the effects of using our cash to move into the new building. We knew when we made the decision about the new building that this problem was going to occur. We expect that this cash crunch will subside in the third quarter of this year. As usual the WSO will publish the unaudited financial statement in the WSO Annual Report.

World Service Office - Canada

The World Service Office - Canada has done some re-vamping during the past year. In the early fall of 1995 we were notified by our primary staff, Brian W., that he was planning to move to British Columbia. In the weeks prior to his departure, Brian was assisting us in lining up suitable candidates for the position. We were successful in hiring a primary staff member, Heide J., to replace Brian. We also hired an additional employee to train for emergencies and to relieve Heide during the annual vacation period. Since she has come on board Heidi has instituted several new filing and tracking innovations, as well as, evaluated and upgraded the existing telephone answering system. With these new systems in place we feel we are now able to service the customers just that much better.

World Service Office - Europe

The year 1995 has been an interesting year to say the least for the World Service Office - Europe. This year has witnessed the end of the European Branch Office Committee (EBOC) and its relationship with the office as a committee that was created to assist as an advisory body in the operation of the WSO-Europe. In its 18 months of existence EBOC was helpful in its many interactions with the WSO - Europe. The idea was right for this concept, but the timing was not quite right. In reviewing the operational status of the WSO - Europe it became apparent that in order to survive and to serve the European fellowship better under its current circumstances, the WSO - Europe would have to be downsized operationally. Part of that downsizing was the need to dissolve EBOC and create an aggressive reduction plan for the office's day-to-day operations. The downsizing option chosen was one that would still allow for a modicum of service provisions to the fellowship in Europe. We have put this plan into practice and look to evaluate its effectiveness by the end of 1996.

The good news is that in aggressively downsizing our operational costs we have been able to locate and secure a new, larger facility which should take us into the next century. The move into the new facility was completed in early March. It should be noted that this facility was leased at considerable annual savings to our overall operational costs. We look forward to servicing the fellowship from this new location and hope that the consolidation of our operations will prove to be helpful in our quest to become more effective and efficient in delivering services and products.

**The new address for the World Service Office - Europe is:
WORLD SERVICE OFFICE - EUROPE
Rue de l'Été 48
B-1050 Brussels, Belgium
Phone# 011-32-2-646-6012
Fax# 011-32-2-649-9239**

Elections

The BOD is requesting early submission of resumes from individuals who have at least eight years clean with professional and/or business skills who would be interested in serving the fellowship as a member of the Board of Directors. There are three one-year terms available and currently there are no individuals in the pool. The two directors elected to one-year terms at WSC '95 will automatically be placed in the pool prior to the June board meeting.

If you know of anyone who might be interested, please have them contact any member of the board, if necessary, to obtain any information. Again, resumes are encouraged so that the board can achieve consensus on any nominations it makes. The next BOD meeting is April 12, 13, and 14 at the WSO in Chatsworth, California.

Conclusion

Some of the projects summarized in this report will be reported in more detail in the Annual Report, which will be mailed prior to WSC '96. If any conference participant or any member of the fellowship has any questions or concerns after reading this, any member of the BOD is available to assist with answers or to provide information. Thank you for allowing us to serve as members of the BOD and as Trustees of the Fellowship Intellectual Property Trust.

Tim Banner, chairperson