

# WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS



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To: The Fellowship  
From: The Select Committee  
Date: April 28, 1987  
Re: Select Committee Report

The Select Committee on the Service Structure was created by the World Service Conference in 1984, in an attempt to get away from the annual revisional process and to produce a more comprehensive manual on N.A. service. This committee began its task by reviewing the 1984 Policy Committee report to the World Service Conference. This report advanced new concepts to resolve the issues confronting a rapidly growing Fellowship.

Meeting several times during that year, the Select Committee produced and presented at the WSC 1985, a work in progress entitled *A Guide to Service in Narcotics Anonymous*, for review and input. This document introduced many new approaches, ideas, and procedures to N.A. services and was met with somewhat mixed reviews. Criticisms were few but consistent. The argumentative style of the draft was not acceptable and unnecessary. However, there were more favorable comments regarding content and approach.

In September 1985, the Select Committee reconvened with several new members to evaluate the input and complete the work on Chapters One, Three, and Five, which were not included in the original draft. Much to our dismay, there was not one piece of input from the Fellowship. We discussed the reasons for this and proceeded to question others as to the reasons why. The following conclusions became evident:

1. The Fellowship was experiencing tremendous growth and change, consequently its efforts and energies were directed to more localized affairs including the establishment of service centers.
2. There were other important projects such as *IT WORKS: How and Why*, and changes in our world level committees (i.e., convention corporation), that needed immediate attention.
3. The misunderstanding that the Select Committee no longer desired input from the Fellowship and that the work was now "secretive" and cloaked in mystery and intrigue.

Earnestly considering these factors, the members of the Select Committee agreed to slow their efforts and perhaps wait for a more opportune time to proceed with the work. Unfortunately, that time did not arrive until after the next Conference.

The World Service Conference meeting in 1986 brought new enthusiasm and determination to the committee. Many new members were appointed who brought with them time, dedication, and purpose. The committee held a meeting at the Conference workshop in Minneapolis. This first meeting of the year was open to any member of the Fellowship who wished to address the committee. Many members took advantage of the opportunity to provide guidance to the committee's work. It was a productive session and accomplished a new openness with the Fellowship.

The committee began work in September by reviewing input on Chapters One, Three, and Five. Chapters One (The N.A. Member) and Three (Group Conscience and the Trusted Servant), were developed from substantial drafts. Chapter One came from the original committees' work that was never published. Chapter Three was initiated by the Policy Committee in 1985 and recommended to the Select Committee as a draft which would be the basis for discussion and work. It was sometimes a difficult chapter to complete as we looked for all the various concepts that were applicable to Narcotics Anonymous.

Chapter Five (The Regional Service Committee), challenged us to look closely at the service structure as a whole and the vital role the RSC maintains in our overall service efforts. Many long hours of discussion preceded the actual drafting of this section which included at least two major rewrites. A few issues in particular, presented the Committee with a number of concepts to address. One of these regarded the function of RSC subcommittees. Were they necessary or could the RSC function better without them? The answers to these questions were provided by an independent evaluation of this chapter by four members selected for their service experience and knowledge. They evaluated a draft of Chapter Five without subcommittees at the regional level. Their input helped guide the Select Committee to recommend the current draft in the revised guide. We would like to thank them again for their effort and dedication.

Chapter Five also contains a new perspective on the re-formation of regions. The addition of new regions and the division of existing ones, is something that should concern us all. We realize we are growing at a rapid pace and sometimes that growth brings a multitude of problems along with it. It is the committee's consensus that the re-formation of regions has to be thoroughly considered prior to the decision to do so. Creating new regions should be based on the need to provide better local services and communications and not for philosophical differences to secure a vote at the WSC. If we are not careful and consider the consequences of a Fellowship of sectioning itself into rural and urban populations, it is very possible that we will experience more problems in the future than we can solve.

The Select Committee continued to meet on a monthly basis in the past six months. These meetings were supplemented by both individual efforts and conference calls. In March, we began to revise the existing chapters to provide the Fellowship with a complete document to review and input. This was not as thorough a process as we would have preferred, but we believed that even these lightly revised chapters were better than what had been written previously.

During this process, other questions became evident that we didn't have time to adequately address. For instance, Chapter Six, The World Service Conference includes the provision for a Nominating Committee. The concept is important to present but the details need to be carefully constructed as to how to implement the procedure. This will take more time and study to complete.

This project has taken a great deal of time, energy, money, dedication and perseverance. We are sure that at times we have extended the patience and tolerance of the Fellowship, to the limits. It has become increasingly difficult to stand in front of this room and say, "we are not ready yet," but the nature of this project is of such importance that to present anything other than the best possible

material would prove even more senseless. We have to be thorough and search all possible methods, ideas, and suggestions for this project to be worthy of Fellowship consideration. We need this manual now and for the future. But first we have to be sure in our hearts that our efforts will serve the needs of our members, groups, and service committees in the years to come.

The committee members have worked very well together this past year. We have become a cohesive group, determined, dedicated and ready to move ahead. It is our goal to present to you at WSC 1988 a comprehensive manual on service in Narcotics Anonymous. At that time, you will have to decide the most appropriate course of action. If we, as a Fellowship, are to be successful in this endeavor, it is our sincere desire to have members, service committees, and groups, take the time to work with us by sending your input to the Committee in the coming months.

Besides the motion which appears in the Conference Agenda Report, we would like to recommend to the Chairperson of the World Service Conference, to continue with the present members of the committee and to appoint an additional two or three members, whose experience, knowledge, and dedication will enhance the quality of the work to be completed.