

Conference Report

Sunday – 24 April 2016

Starting Off on the Right Foot: Every morning at 7:00 am, and every evening at the close of Conference activity, you will find an NA meeting at the “Urban Oasis” by the pool. We also have meeting space available all week if participants want to organize a meeting during meal breaks.

Registration Desk	Open at 8:00 am
First Things First: The 33rd World Service Conference	9:00–10:30 am
Navigating the WSC: Orientation	11:00 am–12:30 pm
Lunch	12:30–2:00 pm
The Needs of a Global Fellowship	2:00–3:30 pm
Process for Business Sessions at WSC 2016	4:00–5:30 pm
Dinner	5:30–7:30 pm
Deadline for Old Business, Nominations, and Resumes	6:00 pm
Delegates Sharing with Delegates	7:30–9:00 pm

First Things First: Opening the 33rd World Service Conference

We open the Conference with a welcoming session touching on our theme, *Honesty, Trust, and Goodwill*, to ground us all in our best hopes for the week.

The World Board, Human Resource Panel members, and WSC Cofacilitators will all be introduced. Newly seated participants get a chance to introduce themselves as well. The only new seated participant for this Conference is the Dominican Republic.

We do a “Conference countdown” in this session, so that we can all see who is new to the WSC and who has attended many Conferences. This is the beginning of a long, sometimes overwhelming week. We can help each other through by noting who may need help and mentoring, and who has the most experience and may have answers. If you’re new to the Conference, don’t be afraid to ask for help, and if you’re a veteran, don’t forget to reach out to the “newcomers.”

Though this is a welcoming session, it’s hard to get heartfelt in such a short period of time. In the past we’ve had two different types of opening sessions scheduled back-to-back, but this time, we’re trying something new. As we mention in the introduction, we will not have the option to do this welcoming session in the “rounds” because of the new room set up. Instead, Conference participants will have an opportunity to talk and get to know one another in the afternoon during our first breakout session.

We will close this session in what has become a Conference tradition—by saying the Serenity Prayer in all the different languages of the Conference participants.

Navigating the WSC: Orientation

In this session we will try to give you a roadmap for the week ahead. Some of you may remember that at past Conferences this session has sometimes degenerated into a boring reading of the schedule, and we are

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trying not to do that again. You've let us know it's not helpful, so we're trying to focus only on the highlights in this session. Daily agendas, will be distributed throughout the week describing the sessions for the day with an evaluation form on the back. Your evaluations help us shape the next Conference.

We'll review Conference deadlines, the first of which are this evening: The deadlines for old business proposals (which will just be proposals to change old business motions) as well as nominations and resumes are tonight at 6:00 pm.

We'll go over your expense reporting. Funded participants receive an allowance of \$55/day for food and travel-related expenses. We deduct \$25 for the closing lunch from the advance provided to funded participants and give alternates the opportunity to purchase tickets for this lunch. You don't need to turn in receipts unless you exceed that allowance and are asking to be reimbursed. You are also entitled to reimbursement for additional expenses to get to and from your home to the WSC, providing you have receipts. All funded participants do need to fill out an itemized expense sheet and return any portion of the allowance you did not spend. See staff in the Malibu room if you need assistance.

Electronic Polling and Voting

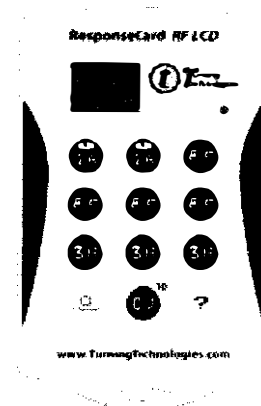
The session will also introduce you to your "remotes," the electronic polling and voting technology we will be using throughout the week. We have a full session dedicated to business orientation this afternoon, but we'll start to dip our toe in the water here.

This will be the first time we've used electronic polling at the WSC, so there may be a few bumps as we get used to the technology.

The tool is designed to help us do what we already do more effectively and efficiently, not to do something new. We will be able to straw poll more frequently and get results with exact numbers. Voice votes don't give the same kind

of precision, and standing counts take quite a bit of time. Electronic polling should be both less time consuming and more accurate.

What that means for the Conference is that participants will be able to see exactly where the body stands on a particular motion or proposal and whether discussion is moving the body at all. Frequent accurate straw polling should give us all a clearer sense of when an item needs more discussion and when the WSC is ready to make a decision.



How it Works

Each participant will have a remote with your Conference participant number on the back (one for each RD and Board member).

When we are taking a straw poll or voting on an item, participants will all poll or vote at once. You will:

Push **1/A** for Yes, **2/B** for No, **3/C** for Abstain, and **4/D** for Present, Not Voting.

Each remote has a small LCD screen that shows your choice as you push a button. If you change your mind, you can push a different button as long as polling/voting is still open. If you are not sure whether you participated in the poll or vote, you can push the button again. The system will only register one response per remote. The remotes do not provide real-time results, so we will not watch the count as it compiles.

Once polling or voting is closed, the Cofacilitators will announce results, and results will also be displayed on the overhead screen.

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It's really that simple. We will use the remotes for attendance as well so we won't need to take roll call (sorry Region 51), and we will probably use them at other times during the week—not just business sessions—when we are straw polling, voting, or prioritizing items. For instance, we may use them when discussing the *Conference Agenda Report* survey results or when prioritizing project plans.

In keeping with the practice of the last several WSCs to not have any roll-call votes, we are not planning to keep data from the electronic polling system about how any individual votes. This is consistent with the policies and practices of the Conference to this point.

Participants still have the ability to call for a roll-vote for a measure. If someone asks for a roll-call vote and the body agrees, that would happen as it always has, but we don't recommend releasing a record of how each participant responded to each poll or voted on each measure. It doesn't seem that knowing who voted which way moves us toward building consensus on individual measures or, in a general sense, toward a consensus-based process in the WSC as a whole.

In Sum

We hope you'll leave this session knowing some of the basics and knowing who to ask if you have a question.

The Needs of a Global Fellowship

As we mention in the introduction to this *Conference Report*, at the last WSC we tried breakout sessions for the first time and they seemed to be an effective way for us to have discussions where each participant can share his or her views on a topic and together we can begin to synthesize our ideas.

This time we are starting breakouts earlier. This is how we will do all of the small group sessions, partly because it is what the room setup allows, and partly because the WSC has become too

large to effectively process information from what is now 22 small-group discussion tables at once. A typical 90-minute session does not allow enough time to hear back from all tables when we are together in one room, let alone to be responsive to the discussions as they occur.

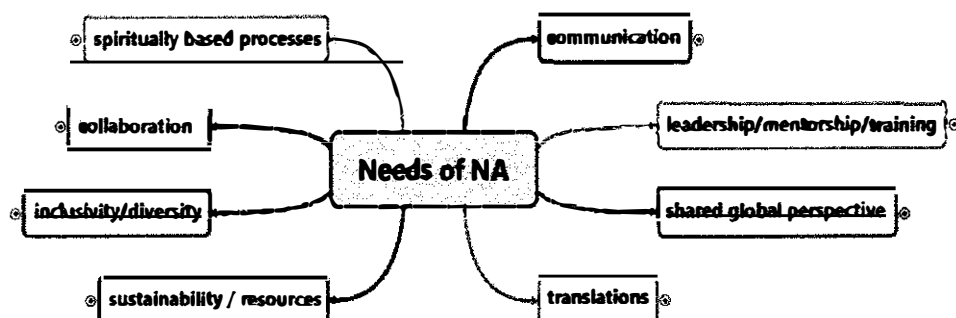
Breakout room assignments will remain the same all week—two RD rooms, two AD rooms, one Spanish-speaking room—but table choices are up to you. Feel free to mix it up and meet new people. Please note, because of the new room set-up, there will be no breakout session in the same room as the “gallery” where non-participants observe the Conference. We're sorry for the inconvenience to observers.

Breakout sessions seem to be the only viable way to have a productive discussion among all Conference participants that can actually develop ideas and make progress on issues. However, the breakout sessions at WSC 2014 were not an unqualified success. While we did not try to make any decisions through these sessions, there seemed to be some confusion or disagreement after the Conference about what conclusions were actually reached or how ideas were developed. With more than 200 participants, what any of us felt we did or did not hear may not be the combined results of the WSC discussions. We'll have to see what we can do differently this time to be sure we concur with what we agree on before leaving the Conference.

As we did at the last Conference, we will synthesize the results of discussions in the five breakout rooms, and we will distribute that synthesis to all participants. We will also continue to post discussion results for these sessions in the hallway so that you can see the ideas from each table for yourself.



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This is a collapsed version of the mind map created at WSC 2014.
An expanded version is posted at www.na.org/future

This first breakout session of the week is focused on the needs of NA. At the last Conference, we asked participants to identify what they believe are the needs of NA now and for the next five years. We were surprised that the results from the five breakout rooms were so similar, and we combined them into one unified “mind map” that is posted along with other WSC 2014 material at www.na.org/future.

We think it's a great summary of what we need as a Fellowship and we want to continue to build on it. During this first breakout session participants will have a chance to talk together about the mind map and make suggestions for changes or additions. Part of what will make this job easier is we will be asking you to refer to the regional report summaries, which are a fantastic digest of what is happening now in NA regions around the world. We are not planning to print out the regional reports for mailing with this *Conference Report*, just as we did not for the 2014 *Conference Report*, mainly to save paper and shipping costs. Many of you read most documents electronically, and we will post all of the regional reports and we encourage you to download a copy.

The regional reports are a good resource to find regions that have had success in service areas your region struggles with, and the Conference is a great opportunity to talk with the delegates from those regions. We do our best to capture the highlights of the reports and crunch the numbers in a data summary. We can't think of any other way to find out so much about NA in so many places at one time. We use the information from your reports to plan the sessions at the Conference and to get a vision of NA that helps us plan and carry out our work. An unprecedented number of regions submitted reports this time, and we thank you for that. Almost every seated region sent in a report. Go team!

Process for Business Sessions at WSC 2016

One of the challenges with a population as diverse as ours is that we don't all share a common understanding of decision-making processes or even how to handle discussion of an item. We come from such different types of regional service bodies that our practices vary widely, as reflected in your regional reports. Add

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to that the fact that discussion and decision-making processes are always evolving at the WSC and it makes for a potentially confusing Conference. Business sessions can run long, and at times they can be frustrating or overwhelming. We will do our best during this orientation to prepare participants for the business sessions at the Conference. We will review the basics of the processes used in these sessions as well as the proposed “rules and tools” included in the Conference Approval Track material. This session will also give us a chance to practice using our new electronic voting system that we introduced during the Navigating the WSC session.

One 90-minute session isn’t going to be enough for everyone, quite honestly, so we are asking you to try to come as prepared as you can. Make sure you have read pages 8-11 of *A Guide to World Services in NA* about decision making at the WSC as well as the proposed rules and tools in the CAT material. Read them more than once! Reach out to experienced delegates if you have questions.

Both the WSC Cofacilitators and the Conference Parliamentarian will be present at this session to share their experience and answer any questions you may have.

CBDM

For many years now, the Conference has been taking baby steps toward something more like consensus-based decision making and less like formal business dominated by parliamentary procedure. We have been trying to use processes that help the WSC have discussions and make decisions more easily. Many participants are not familiar with formal rules of order, and formal rules of order often limit discussion to three pros and three cons. We have been trying to adapt to a less formal set of practices so that we can hear from more participants, and so that our policies and protocols don’t limit who will or won’t participate.

What that means, practically, is that at this point, most of the time in business is spent in

the session that comes right before formal business—a session we have been calling “Business Discussion and Proposal Decisions.” Almost all of the discussion about business items, including motions, as well as all of the decisions about proposals, take place in this session. There is still a formal business session that utilizes parliamentary procedure where decisions about motions are made, but it tends to take much less time because of the discussion that happens on each motion before the formal business session begins.

Motions Versus Proposals

What is the difference between a motion and a proposal? Both motions and proposals are items for decision. The main difference is the processes we use to discuss them and make decisions about them.

Motions are voted on during formal business utilizing parliamentary procedure. The only motions at WSC 2016 will be the items in the *Conference Agenda Report*, a motion to approve the minutes from WSC 2014, a motion to adopt the “rules and tools” for this Conference, and motions to approve the 2016–2018 project plans and budget.

Proposals are voted on in the session that comes right before formal business, “Business Discussion and Proposal Decisions.” All new business, with the exception of the budget and project plans, will be in the form of proposals. Ideas to change motions—what we used to call “amendments”—are now a type of proposal.

Straw Polls Versus Votes

What is the difference between a straw poll and a vote?

Straw Polls are used to get a sense of where the body stands on an issue. It is a “pulse” not a decision. The only possible exception is the second straw poll during the 80/20 rule explained below.

Votes are decisions.

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Voting and Polling Options

Participants have four options when voting or answering a straw poll: yes, no, abstain, or present not voting.

Votes and straw poll results are displayed with four numbers in this order:

yes-no-abstain-present not voting

Proposals and motions get passed based on the number of participants present and voting in support of the proposal or motion. An abstention is part of the vote count. Present not voting is not part of the vote count.

So, for instance, if a proposal requires 2/3 to pass, and there are 100 participants on the floor of the Conference:

67-33-0-0 would pass the proposal

66-33-1-0 would fail the proposal

66-33-0-1 would pass the proposal

The results provided above reflect that with 100 voting participants, it requires 67 to reach 2/3rds. In the second example, there are still 100 participants voting, but only 66 are in favor of the proposal. In the final example only 99 are voting so it only requires 66 to adopt.

Measures of Support

In addition to the numbers after each straw poll and vote, the Cofacilitators will announce an outcome. For straw polls, those of you who have been to the Conference before may recall that we have used a scale (listed on page 10 of *A Guide to World Services in NA*) that ranges from Unanimous Support to Unanimous Opposition. We will be suggesting a slight change for this Conference to use the term “lack of support” rather than “opposition.”

The proposed straw poll language would be as follows:

Unanimous support = 100 percent of those present and responding to the poll push “yes”

Strong support = at least 2/3 of those present and responding to the poll push “yes”

Support = at least 50% + 1 of those present and responding to the poll push “yes”

Lack of support = 49% or fewer of those present and responding to the poll push “yes”

Strong lack of support = fewer than 1/3 of those present and responding to the poll push “yes”

No support = no one present and responding to the poll pushes “yes”

This language better reflects our voting practices and the potential impact of abstentions. Whether an item passes depends upon the number of voting participants who support the item.

Business Discussion Process

These are the usual steps that happen for each item of business in the Old and New Business Discussion and Proposal Decisions sessions:

1. The Cofacilitator reads the motion or proposal.
2. The maker speaks to the motion or proposal.
3. The World Board offers a recommendation.
4. An initial straw poll is taken. [Note: if the proposed rules and tools are adopted, the steps that follow #4 and #5 will be affected when the initial straw poll shows consensus support or consensus not in support. See the “Proposed Rules and Tools” section below for more information.]
5. If an idea for changing the motion or proposal has been submitted by the deadline, it will be introduced using the same steps (1–3) above and a straw poll will be taken to gauge initial support of the idea for change.
6. The idea for changing the motion/proposal will be discussed. If there are a number of ideas for changing the motion/proposal, the Conference may decide to discuss them together rather than one by one.

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7. The idea for changing the motion or proposal may be straw polled a number of times throughout the discussion process.
8. At the end of discussion, the idea for changing the motion or proposal will be voted on. If a majority of those voting support the idea for change, the motion or proposal will now be considered revised. If the idea for change is not supported, the original motion or proposal will remain unchanged.
9. The main motion or proposal (as changed or not) will now be discussed.
10. The main motion may be straw polled a number of times throughout the discussion process.
11. After discussion, proposals will be voted on and a decision will be made. Proposals require the same voting threshold as motions (e.g., a proposal to change policy would require a 2/3 majority to be approved). If the item of business is a motion, not a proposal, a final straw poll will be taken and the motion can be introduced in formal business for a decision.

Unfortunately, with so many items of business and so many participants, our Business Discussion and Proposal Decisions sessions don't tend to bear much resemblance to what people think of when they think of a consensus-based process. We get a bit closer each Conference—or we try to—but our change tends to be incremental.

One of our challenges in transitioning toward consensus-based decision making is that we have lacked a set of guidelines or protocols for how to have discussions and make decisions when not using parliamentary procedure. Each Conference we evolve a bit more and add a few more tools to the WSC processes toolbox.

For the last two WSCs, we have asked the Conference to adopt new processes on a trial basis, and the Conference has decided to adopt some of those processes as ongoing policy. This approach seems to have worked well—trying some new things to see if they work, and after trying them, making a policy decision about them (or some part of them) in new business. So, we are planning to continue that approach at this WSC. The first item discussed in the Old Business Discussion and Proposal Decisions session will be a motion to adopt the “Proposed Rules and Tools” that are included in the Conference Approval Track material.

As a Conference, we must strive for balance between efficient use of our time and the need to hear all views. It's a tough balance, and we believe the proposed ideas will allow us to focus more on what we really want to discuss as a body.

80/20 Rule

One of the most significant changes in the proposed rules and tools is the suggestion to limit discussion of motions and proposals that have “consensus support” or “consensus not in support” in an initial straw poll. The definition of consensus we are using is 80 percent. So “consensus support” means 80 percent or more of participants who participate in an initial straw poll of an item answer “yes.” “Consensus not in support” means 20 percent or less of participants who participate in an initial straw poll answer “yes.”

If the initial straw poll of an item shows the Conference has consensus support or consensus not in support, the Cofacilitators will ask two participants who are part of the minority (not part of the consensus) to speak and then the measure will be straw polled again.



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If the Conference is still in consensus support or consensus not in support, discussion of the item will be over. If the item is a proposal, the second straw poll will actually be a vote. It will be a decision. If the item is a motion, it will need to be introduced during the formal business session for a decision to be made.

The idea behind this 80/20 rule is that the Conference sometimes spends a lot of time discussing items that it really has already made up its collective mind about. If the body is in consensus and hearing from the minority does not sway that consensus, we believe our time can be better spent discussing other items.

How Discussion Will Work

In addition to a remote, each Conference participant will have a laminated card with his or her number on it. When discussion on a motion or proposal is open, participants who wish to speak raise their cards.

In previous Conferences, everyone who raised their card would be added to a sometimes long queue in the order their card was spotted. The disadvantage to this approach meant that those who raised their cards most quickly were generally recognized first. Our more reserved

At the last WSC, with the consent of the body, the Cofacilitators began to reorder the queue to ensure the body heard from the minority voice and a diverse range of participants. We would like to build on that approach this WSC; we are planning to try this process:

- Participants will raise their cards to be added to the “discussion pool,” an unordered grid of numbers that will be displayed on the overhead.
- Cofacilitators will determine speaking order and form a portion of the queue at a time to display on the overhead.
- Participants who have not yet spoken in a session will be recognized first. (“Old Business Discussion and Proposal Decisions” is considered one session)

This process allows the Cofacilitators to actually facilitate the discussion and help us, as a Conference, hear from our broad range of participants. *A Guide to World Services in NA* reminds us that “In order for the conference to make decisions that serve a worldwide fellowship, it is critical that all points of view are heard.” Being more strategic about the order of discussion should help us better realize that principle.

“Throughout the week, each participant is challenged to really listen to what is being said, to consider with an open mind what will best serve the Fellowship worldwide, and often to surrender to what seems to serve the greater good. With over a hundred participants, respect, patience, and trust are required. But we think the effort is worth the investment, and our experience from over twenty five conferences has taught us a lot about what works and what does not. The commitment to consensus-based decision making is a part of the means by which we invite a loving God to influence our decisions.”

A Guide to World Services in NA, pg. 11

participants sometimes didn't get to speak on an item if discussion was closed before the queue was exhausted. The Conference heard from some of its participants repeatedly and others not at all.

As we mention above, frequent straw polling should give us a better sense of how discussion is or isn't affecting the body.

If discussion has been extensive or the sense is that it not moving the body, the Cofacilitators can close the discussion pool or close the

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queue. Often they will ask the body if there is objection to doing so. They can also decide to do so without asking participants and simply inform the body. A participant always has the right to challenge the Cofacilitators' decision. If the proposed rules and tools are adopted for this Conference, at least 80 percent must be in favor of the Cofacs' decision for it to stand.

Formal Business Process

After the Old Business Discussion and Proposal Decisions session, motions will be introduced into business to formalize the decisions made in the Business Discussion session. If a proposal to change a motion was supported during the Business Discussion session, the motion will be introduced into formal business as changed.

Only motions are discussed and decided on in formal business. Proposals have already been decided in the Old Business Discussion and Proposal Decisions session.

Because formal business utilizes the WSC Rules of Order, there are a number of procedural motions that participants can make. The most commonly made motions are listed on pages 63–66 of *A Guide to World Services in NA*. Five of these motions are listed and defined on the yellow side of participants' laminated cards (and in GWSNA) because these five motions may be considered when someone else has the floor. These are the motions you would make if you have a question you need answered in order to know how to vote on an item, if you disagree with a ruling of the

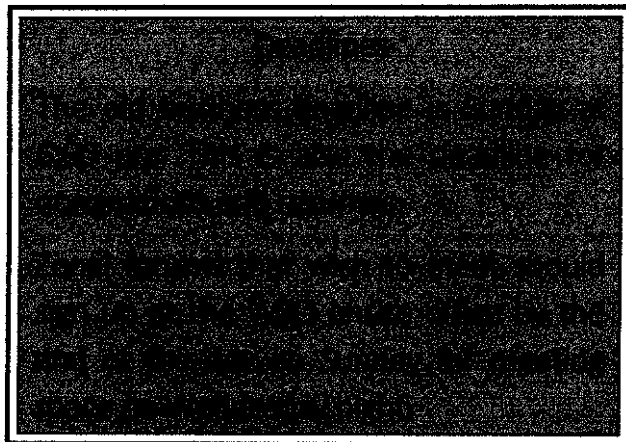
Cofacilitator, or if you can't hear the speaker, to name just a few examples.

Old Business Deadline

Participants are able to submit proposals to change old business motions (what we used to call "amendments") by 6:00 pm Sunday night.

If you are already planning to make a procedural motion (such as divide the question or commit) about an old business item, we ask that you submit that on a proposal form as well. We are hoping to make these decisions during Business Discussion and Proposal Decisions as we did at the last Conference.

There are proposal forms available at the staff table. If you are uncertain of the wording of your proposal or how to express your idea, we encourage you to ask for help. The Cofacilitators are available to assist with wording, and more experienced Conference participants may be able to help as well.



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DECISION-MAKING SESSIONS

OLD BUSINESS DISCUSSION & PROPOSAL DECISIONS	
CAR motions, proposals to change CAR motions & other CAR related material	discussed
proposals to change CAR motions	decided on through Informal voting*
FORMAL OLD BUSINESS	
CAR motions as originally printed or as revised, if a change was decided on in the previous session	decided on through parliamentary procedure
ELECTIONS	
trusted servant elections	ballot
NEW BUSINESS DISCUSSION & PROPOSAL DECISIONS	
budget and project plan motions as well as new business proposals	discussed
new business proposals	decided on through Informal voting*
FORMAL NEW BUSINESS	
budget and project plan motions	decided on through parliamentary procedure
MOVING FORWARD	
clarity on week's decisions and discussions	discussed
decisions culminating from the conference discussions	decided on through informal voting*

* Note: "Informal" is meant to indicate that parliamentary procedure is not being used. Decisions made through informal voting are binding decisions.

Future of the Process

Each Conference we take another set of steps toward a consensus- and discussion-based body. It means that each WSC we all have to adjust to new ways of doing things, but so far it seems to have been worth it.

We can already think of some things we'd like to work on for the next WSC such as further tuning of our terminology and processes. For instance, can we develop a term for a proposal that seeks to amend a motion or proposal? Given that there is no use of the yellow card in Business Discussion and Proposal Decisions, is there a way to make sure those with real questions can get them answered?

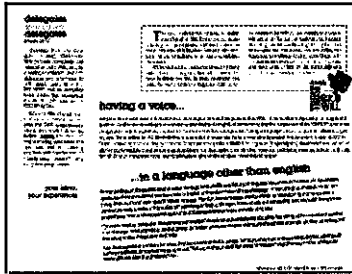
We also hope to work on developing a process for forwarding and discussing ideas at the Conference. We began to walk down that road, this cycle, but this is just a beginning. We tried

some new things like opening the Conference Approval Track for regional ideas and encouraging regions and RDs to use the *Conference Report* to forward ideas, but we still lack a process to help participants shape those ideas for discussion. We help motions become "CAR-ready," but there's no equivalent to help best shape an idea for discussion. Also, there is no mechanism to actually discuss an idea that the WSC may be interested in discussing unless it is introduced as a proposal for the New Business Discussion and Proposal Decisions session. We know we need to do more work to develop a real discussion track for the Conference in the future.

The Future of the WSC project plan calls out processes as part of that project's proposed work, and we expect we will continue to refine the ways we discuss and decide on business.

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Delegate Sharing with Delegates



The Delegates Sharing session was created as a result of Proposal BL, approved at WSC 2014, which requested that time be provided “for a sharing session at the WSC 2016 for RDs to talk to each other in order to foster unity.”

To plan this session, a virtual workgroup was created with delegates from all over the world (including a delegate as the workgroup point person), two World Board members, and a NAWS staff member. The World Board also asked the workgroup to help plan a pre-WSC Unity

Day workshop, which offered an opportunity to create two complementary sessions. Both sessions will be for delegates, by delegates, and developed entirely based on input from those of you who participated in a survey conducted by the workgroup. The survey also provided ideas that would be helpful to delegates before the WSC, so the workgroup compiled this input and distributed it with the CAR, CAT, and *Conference Report* mailings.

The Delegates Sharing session focuses on serving with honesty, trust, goodwill, and unity; and asks participants to think and share about how to personally apply these principles during the WSC. Along with this spiritual focus, the session will cover a variety of topics of interest to delegates, including:

- Effectively organizing and reporting information
- Balancing service demands with other aspects of our lives
- Approaching service with an open mind, humility, and tolerance
- Being prepared and reliable, and asking for help and delegating
- Inspiring others to serve and maintaining an atmosphere of recovery in service
- Sharing new challenges and successes

The Delegates Sharing Workgroup is grateful for the opportunity to work together with you to plan and present this session. We hope to get to know and understand each other better. And we hope this time together will help all of us move through the Conference week with a better appreciation of our fellow delegates and a commitment to approaching our business as a unified body.