

Service System Project from 2012 – 2014

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* No Conference Record

[2012 CAR \(2011-11\)](#) 240 pgs

[2012 CAT \(2012-01-23\)](#) 48 pgs

[Conference Report \(2012-04-20\)](#) 448 pgs

[Summary of Decisions \(2012-06-11\)](#) 26 pgs

* No-WSC 2012 Conference Record

[NAWS News \(2012-06-23\)](#) 12 pgs

[NA Way \(2012-07-09\)](#) 18 pgs

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World Board Report

These past two years, we have continued to discuss and report on ways that we might improve our service delivery so that we can reach more addicts in more places. You'll see many of those ideas captured in the [Service System](#) Proposals in Addendum A and in the resolutions and straw polls that begin on page 11.

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As with the last *Conference Agenda Report*, the first major section is devoted to the [Service System](#) Project. That section gives some background to the project, especially to the proposal report that is contained in Addendum A. The [Service System](#) Proposals outline in detail proposed changes to our [Service System](#). You aren't being asked to vote on the proposal report itself or the details of those changes, but the report does provide the background thinking for the [Service System](#) resolutions and straw polls.

The last items in the *CAR* are the addenda, which include the third draft of the [Service System](#) Proposal Report, the *Living Clean* Approval Draft, and the proposed new world convention map. Addenda to the *CAR* are not translated by World Services, but some local communities may wish to do so.

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Even though we don't know the specifics of the schedule for the 2012 conference, there are certain sessions that are consistent from conference to conference:

<snip>

In addition to these sessions, we know that throughout the conference, we'll be focused on discussing the [Service System](#).

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[Service System](#)

This *Conference Agenda Report* asks you to consider several different items about the [Service System](#) Project: the third draft of the [Service System](#) Proposals Report is contained in Addendum A and explains in detail ideas for possible improvements to our [Service System](#). This report is included in the *CAR* not for formal decision but to provide background information for the items which are included for decision here: the resolutions and straw polls.

There are eight resolutions related to the [Service System](#)—as resolutions they don't require a specific action; they set a general direction for the project. Over the years since the [Service System](#) Project was approved at the 2008 World Service Conference, the board has presented a number of ideas for potential changes—some of which represent significant differences from the way we are currently structured or our current processes. Before developing an actual plan for transition and drafting the motions that will accompany it, it's important that we make sure there is actual agreement on the basic ideas—a service body devoted to group needs, geographically-based boundaries for service bodies, a purpose- and plan-based system, and so on. The resolutions which follow this essay are intended to measure this support.

In addition we have, for the first time, included straw polls in the *CAR*. As straw polls they are designed to measure support for some of the specifics of the proposals without making binding decisions at this time. Without a plan for transition it would be premature to decide on the details of the proposals, but it's important to measure the level of support for those specifics before moving forward. The board will use the results of the straw polls and resolutions to inform their work in the upcoming cycle.

Technically, decisions relating to the [Service System](#) are “service related” and it's our practice to include those sorts of materials in the Conference Approval Track. Policy only mandates that we include a plan for the next phase of the [Service System](#) Project in the Conference Approval Track material and include motions for changes to the [Service System](#) in the CAT material when those motions are framed in 2014. But it makes sense to us to include resolutions and straw polls related to the [Service System](#) here. We want to use the *CAR* to get a sense of how the fellowship as a whole feels about these ideas as soon as possible. Just as involving the fellowship early in the process of writing *Living Clean* resulted in a better book, we know that engaging as many people as possible earlier in the process of change will result in a more effective, stronger [Service System](#).

Background

Through the life of this project we've been reporting on its history and we aren't going to devote a lot of space to the history that pre-dates the project since there is already so much to absorb in this *CAR* about where we are

right now. For more information on the history of the [Service System](#) Project (or any other aspect of the project), see the webpage: www.na.org/servicesystem.

Briefly then, the [Service System](#) Project grew out of an increasing awareness that some of our struggles in service (apathy, lack of mentorship and training, duplication of efforts, no atmosphere of recovery in service meetings, and so on) may require a more holistic look at the [Service System](#) as a whole to alleviate. For years at workshops and in input from Issue Discussion Topics, we have been hearing about, talking about, even lamenting, the same issues. At the 2008 World Service Conference we presented a plan for the [Service System](#) Project and that plan was renewed at the 2010 WSC.

Creating a Common Vision

The first major piece of work from the project was to create a “common vision for all NA services.” We used the NA World Services Vision Statement as a foundation, adding a bullet about the growth and fulfillment members feel from service and expanding the language to cover all service bodies, not just world services. The resulting “Vision for NA Service,” was unanimously approved at the 2010 WSC.

A Vision for NA Service

All of the efforts of Narcotics Anonymous are inspired by the primary purpose of our groups. Upon this common ground we stand committed.

Our vision is that one day:

- Every addict in the world has the chance to experience our message in his or her own language and culture and find the opportunity for a new way of life;
- Every member, inspired by the gift of recovery, experiences spiritual growth and fulfillment through service;
- NA service bodies worldwide work together in a spirit of unity and cooperation to support the groups in carrying our message of recovery;
- Narcotics Anonymous has universal recognition and respect as a viable program of recovery.

Honesty, trust, and goodwill are the foundation of our service efforts, all of which rely upon the guidance of a loving Higher Power.

Ideally: A Vision for NA Service focuses us on the same set of ideals—a shared, common vision.

First Draft [Service System](#) Proposals

With that common foundation laid, we drafted a set of proposals in August 2010 and distributed them as widely as possible. The proposals outlined our ideas about a revitalized [Service System](#) (see Addendum A for the latest draft of the proposals). They talked about a “system” of service consisting of structure, process, people, and resources. The work that happens in such a system is collaborative and plan-driven. The service bodies themselves are formed deliberately. Their boundaries are logical, drawn along city, county, state, country, etc. lines. We proposed splitting the dual function of ASCs into two separate bodies, one devoted to discussing group needs and the other devoted to providing local services. We suggested that these local service bodies coordinate their efforts at state-, province-, or countrywide service bodies to make public relations efforts easier.

All of the ideas in the proposals, and these are just a few of them, were underpinned by four core principles: purpose-driven, group-focused, defined by geographical boundaries, and flexible. These ideas are foundational to all of the changes being proposed.

We posted these proposals on the web, announced them in our periodicals, held a series of weekend-long US workshops about them and did sessions at zonal forums and conventions in locations around the world.

We asked for input until 31 December on the first draft proposals and used that input together with our experiences at workshops and talking to members to make decisions about revising the proposals.

Changes in the Second Draft Proposals

Most of the changes to the proposals since they were first published are more “evolutionary” than “revolutionary.” In the second draft proposals we elaborated on how a local service body might work. Rather than monthly meetings focused largely on administrative matters, we suggested quarterly meetings focused on stages of the planning process. The day-to-day administration of service efforts would be handled by a local service board, project coordinators, and committees all overseen by the local service body as part of the quarterly planning sessions.

We also added a fifth “foundational principle,” collaborative. The notion that all elements of the [Service System](#) work together to achieve our primary purpose is absolutely central to our thinking about what constitutes a “system,” and it seemed right to call out that idea as fundamental to the proposals.

Our thinking about some of the options that had been presented in the first draft proposals started to come into sharper focus. Initially we had presented two different possible ways to structure local services, but by the second draft proposals, fellowship input and our further thinking about quarterly planning meetings led us to recommend what we are calling the “two-track” model as the norm or standard. We also had initially offered two different seating models: seating by zones or seating based on state/national/province service bodies. The more we discussed it, the more we realized that changing to zonal seating needs to be further thought through. State/nation/province seating seems more realistic and it’s the model we are recommending at this time, as reflected in the resolutions.

Changes in the Third Draft Proposals

We released the second draft of the proposals in March 2011 and continued to collect fellowship input about the ideas and, of course, we had more discussions about the ideas in our meeting. Once again we have revised the proposal report draft, this time to be released with this *Conference Agenda Report*.

In addition to relatively minor changes to clarify points and update information, the third draft proposals have new material on zones and literature distribution and fund flow. We added diagrams to the appendix that gives examples of how the proposed structure might work in different contexts, and we added an explanation of how service body boundaries may be collaboratively determined.

Despite our many discussions and the several versions of the report we’ve published, there are still some aspects of the proposals that we know need more clarification and discussion—things like how to best sync planning cycles throughout the system; what to recommend for large states and nations that currently have several service bodies such as Brazil, Mexico, and California, for example; and further seating criteria beyond the state/nation/province criterion. These are among the details that we will discuss in the cycle ahead, providing the project plan for work on a transition process.

In some respects this continues to be a work in progress despite there being resolutions and straw polls for consideration in this CAR. If we move forward to transition into a new system, aspects of the proposals will, no doubt, be refined and adapted. The proposals in this *CAR* represent our thinking at present. We look forward to continuing to refine them with your help.

What It Means to Be a [Service System](#) Not Just a Structure

What will remain constant, however, is the fact that we are talking about a [Service System](#), not just a new structure. As we mention above, that means that structure, process, people, and resources all work together to provide services and help the groups to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.

It also fundamentally means that the service work we do is cooperative and collaborative. Service bodies coordinate their efforts internally and with others throughout the system. As we discuss in the following essay on the resolutions themselves, this is why we are suggesting service body boundaries be collaboratively decided upon and no longer self-determined, so that collectively we can decide how services might best be delivered and how to most effectively serve all parts of a state, nation, or province.

Better collaboration and syncing of planning cycles will help make our communications more effective and eliminate duplication of services. We will be able to roll out workshop sessions, trainings, and other service efforts on a state- or nationwide basis more easily.

Our Second Tradition speaks to a leadership that is motivated by service not governance. We are all reading and deliberating about this *Conference Agenda Report* and the ideas before us in a spirit of service. Collaborative decision-making and service work are about a system not made for us but by us. We hope you will consider these resolutions in that spirit. As we've said over and over throughout the life span of this project, we cannot successfully undergo systemic change unless we work collectively.

Resolutions

These resolutions are the broad-based ideas about which we need to reach consensus before we can move forward in the transition to new [Service System](#). This is not the first time a *Conference Agenda Report* has included resolutions. When world services restructured, many of you may remember, we went through a similar process: First we presented a set of resolutions in the *Conference Agenda Report*. After those resolutions were voted on, a transition group was formed and, upon the basis of those resolutions, created proposals for fellowship consideration for world services to restructure. We are at a similar place now where we are offering a set of resolutions to be voted on to make sure we have agreement on the basic ideas that underpin the [Service System](#) proposals. We will offer a plan for a transition project in the Conference Approval Track material and discuss the details at the World Service Conference. The results of the votes on these resolutions and the straw polls that follow will form the basis upon which we will move forward.

These are resolutions rather than “motions” because they are calling for an agreement in principle, but not for any specific action at this time. Motions call for specific actions; resolutions establish the conceptual foundation of any future change. If the conference adopts them, these issues will be “resolved”: The principles outlined in the resolutions will be binding insofar as they will determine the direction we will take in transitioning to a new [Service System](#). Adopting these resolutions does not, however, mean agreeing to any concrete action. If we are resolved, as a fellowship, to move forward in this direction, the results of the discussions, votes, and straw polls at this conference will help the board develop a set of motions for the 2014 *CAR*. These 2014 motions will call for specific actions.

The ideals described below are important principles we feel need to be realized to achieve our vision and be true to the spirit of the traditions and concepts. At the same time, we are attempting to design a system that is flexible and practical; variations in the application of the ideals laid out here are expected. For instance, while one of the agreements in principle below mentions consensus decisions, many service bodies will still want to use voting for elections. To give another example, seating by national/state/provincial boundaries is mentioned, but the cases of very large or small nations/states may differ.

Our Basic Text explains, “Everything that occurs in the course of NA service must be motivated by the desire to more successfully carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers.” These resolutions are offered in that spirit.

Resolution 1. Our service efforts will be carried out through a system that includes structure, process, people, and resources.

Resolution 2. The [Service System](#) is group-focused and includes a local level body dedicated exclusively to addressing group concerns.

Resolution 3. Training and mentoring of trusted servants are essential functions of the [Service System](#).

Resolution 4. Service bodies are purpose- and vision-driven.

Resolution 5. Service bodies work together to utilize planning processes to organize and coordinate their efforts.

Resolution 6. Service bodies make decisions by consensus.

Resolution 7. The service structure includes local service bodies, state/nation/province service bodies, and intermediate bodies if needed. Service bodies follow established geographic boundaries. They are not self-determined, but are formed, based on need, through a collaborative planning process and agreement with other affected service bodies at the next level of service.

Resolution 8. State/national/province boundaries are the primary criterion for seating consideration at the World Service Conference.

These resolutions are broad statements. As we mentioned above, in some respects, they are like the resolutions that were proposed in 1996 that led to the restructuring of world services. While the conference agreed to all of those resolutions, when it came time to create proposals for their implementation, it wasn't always obvious how to proceed. In some cases, people agreed to a broadly stated resolution but actually disagreed on what that resolution might mean concretely. Perhaps the most obvious example is the second item in Resolution A: which called for "a change in participation at a new WSC...to provide for equal representation from all geographic entities." There was overwhelming support for the resolution, but the transition group was really challenged when putting together proposals when they realized that there were so many different ideas about what "equal" might mean. They offered several proposals to the conference, but the WSC was never able to agree on a single model.

When putting together these resolutions we worried about the same sort of potential confusion. In fact, one could argue that these resolutions are even more potentially ambiguous because they are at the level of principle or philosophy. For instance, Resolution 7 above says that service bodies will be formed "through a collaborative planning process." Here we are trying to capture the idea that it may best serve the needs of addicts within a particular state or country, for instance, to take a holistic view of the state or country and make collective decisions about the borders of the service units within it. How the boundaries of local service units are determined would be a decision made, not just within each individual service unit, but through a discussion with neighboring service units and the next level of service. This would better ensure that all parts of the state, country, or province are served, even the remote or sparsely populated areas, and it would limit the duplication of service caused by the proliferation of service bodies within the same county or area code, for instance. Part of what is implicit in a [Service System](#), not just a service structure, is that service provision is something that is coordinated among bodies. Just as the bones in a skeletal system are connected and the planets in a solar system act in concert, the bodies in a [Service System](#) are connected through communication, cooperation, and planning. This is a big change from how we do things now, and we're not at all certain that it's a change everyone will agree with. That's why we're offering Resolution 7. We think geographically bounded service bodies and collaborative decisions about boundaries is the best approach to carrying the message effectively throughout the state/province/nation, but we need to make sure there is agreement within the fellowship about this approach.

That's a lot of explanation for just one word ("collaborative") in one resolution. You see the challenge here: We've tried to make the resolutions as clear as possible, but there are a lot of implications to each of them. If you haven't read the [Service System](#) essay in this *CAR* or the proposal report (Addendum A), we urge you to do so. We know that the *CAR* can feel like a long, dense document and not everyone reads every page, but we want to make a particular plea about the [Service System](#) material. The proposal report outlines some of the specific ways those broad resolutions might shape a new [Service System](#). Reading (or rereading) the proposals will help provide some of the background to make an educated decision about the resolutions. We really need to know how the fellowship feels about these ideas. Sometimes we hear the protest "Why should I bother to vote? This is

a done deal.” Not so. We cannot move forward successfully in this project unless we have broad understanding and agreement. These resolutions are designed to measure that, so please help us by letting us know what you think.

In addition to taking a vote on the general agreements in principle expressed in the resolutions, we would also like to gauge your level of support of some of the specifics outlined in the proposals. In order to create a proposal for a transition plan that reflects the wishes of the fellowship and to make sure we share a common vision of what those agreements in principle might look like in actual practice, we plan to take a number of straw polls on more concrete ideas. As with the resolutions, the items to be straw-pollled below will make much more sense if you have read the detailed descriptions in the proposal report. We have provided page numbers next to the items to be straw-pollled to make it easier to reference the relevant sections of the proposal report and get caught up.

We plan to straw-poll the ideas in the bulleted list below to get a sense of the fellowship’s preferences about some of the specific ideas in the proposals. In those proposals, we’ve described a great deal of the specifics of what a new [Service System](#) might look like. We don’t yet feel like we are ready to vote on motions that are as specific as the following because we know that there are still details to be worked out and because we have not yet worked out all of the detail of how a transition to a new system might actually take place. We do, however, need to make sure that the basic ideas in the proposals have broad support. We’ve already spent several years (two conference cycles) and thousands of dollars on the work to date and now is the time we need to know whether there is agreement (or not) on the specific ideas being proposed. The results of these straw polls will help gauge the strength of your support and guide the board in the next steps in the process of developing and transitioning to a new [Service System](#).

Straw Polls

- A. There is a small, neighborhood-sized body devoted to group needs. This group forum, which is typically not part of the delegation stream, is informal in nature and operates through conversation not formal decision making. (See page 56 for a detailed explanation of the body devoted to group support.)
- B. Groups send a delegate quarterly to a local service planning meeting. One of those quarterly meetings is a general assembly where all interested members are encouraged to attend and input is given to help plan service activities for the cycle. (See page 61 for a detailed explanation of the local service body.)
- C. Services are coordinated by a local service board and carried out by members, committees, and project workgroups who report to that board.
- D. Local service bodies follow county, city, or town boundaries, where practical. (They are much larger than the group forums mentioned above and in many cases larger than the current ASCs.)
- E. The boundaries of those local service bodies are agreed to at the state or national level.
- F. Planning cycles are synchronized from level to level (local to state to global) as well as across each level.
- G. When service needs cannot be accomplished effectively by local service bodies and state/national/province bodies, an intermediate level of service can be added. (See page 64 for a detailed explanation of an intermediate service body.)
- H. Most states, provinces, or countries have one state-, province- or nationwide service body that is responsible for state- or national-level public relations and coordinating efforts such as training across local service bodies. (See page 67 for a detailed explanation of state-, province-, and nationwide service bodies.)
- I. Zonal boundaries are decided through a collaborative process with neighboring NA communities, other zones, and the WSC.

A Vision for NA Service ends by assuring us, “Honesty, trust, and goodwill are the foundation of our service efforts, all of which rely upon the guidance of a loving Higher Power.” We have faith that the group conscience spoken of in our Second Tradition and Sixth Concept will guide us in the direction best for NA. Change is

difficult, and we've heard from many of you about strife in your communities or service bodies over the prospect of change or over the details of proposals (from world services and elsewhere). It is our sincere hope that this conference represents a turning point of sorts and that we can move forward in unity in the direction of whatever course the resolutions set for us.

**"Honesty, trust, and goodwill are
the foundation of our service efforts,
all of which rely upon the guidance of a
loving Higher Power."
A Vision for NA Service**

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A Vision for NA Service

One of the first tasks of the [Service System](#) Project was to draft a vision statement for all NA service. The end result, A Vision for NA Service, was unanimously approved at WSC 2010. Adapted from the NA World Services Vision Statement, which it replaced, A Vision for NA Service focuses our service efforts so that we are all working toward the same set of ideals—that “every addict in the world has a chance to experience our message in his or her own language and culture,” to name one. The IDT session about A Vision for NA Services asks members to look closely at the various parts of the vision statement and discuss how we can better work toward each of the ideals it expresses.

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Looking Ahead

This *CAR* therefore asks you, among other things, to consider the draft of *Living Clean: A Journey Continues* as well as the work of the [Service System](#) Project over the last several years. The decisions you make about the [Service System](#) resolutions will “resolve” issues that will help frame the work that will be done on the [Service System](#) Project during the next two years.

The results of the resolutions, straw polls, and discussions about the [Service System](#) Project at this conference will all be considered by the World Board if we are to develop a transition plan. We know that this *CAR* contains a lot of difficult material on the subject. However, understanding and making decisions about the items before us at this conference may prove to be relatively easy compared with the developing a transition plan and, if it's approved at the 2014 conference, undergoing that transition. We continue to need “all hands on deck” for this project. It affects us all, and we cannot be successful unless we are unified in our efforts.

Included in the project plans will be a transition plan for the [Service System](#) Project, a project plan for workshops with particular emphasis on developing effective affordable workshops,

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Proposal E: Upper Midwest Region: Our idea is to revisit the discussion of the world board members no longer having voting status at the world service conference.

Regional Rationale: This thought, or similar forms of it, have been brought forward in motion form eleven times to world service conference since 1989. Currently there is a change in our [Service System](#) going on;

WSC 2012 Summary Sheet Motions, Resolutions, Straw Polls, & Proposals

World Board Resolutions

Resolution 1. Our service efforts will be carried out through a system that includes structure, process, people, and resources.

Resolution 2. The [Service System](#) is group-focused and includes a local-level body dedicated exclusively to addressing group concerns.

Resolution 3. Training and mentoring of trusted servants are essential functions of the [Service System](#).

Resolution 4. Service bodies are purpose- and vision-driven.

Resolution 5. Service bodies work together to utilize planning processes to organize and coordinate their efforts.

Resolution 6. Service bodies make decisions by consensus.

Resolution 7. The service structure includes local service bodies, state/nation/province service bodies, and intermediate bodies if needed. Service bodies follow established geographic boundaries. They are not self-determined, but are formed, based on need, through a collaborative planning process and agreement with other affected service bodies at the next level of service.

Resolution 8. State/national/province boundaries are the primary criterion for seating consideration at the World Service Conference.

World Board Straw Polls

- a) There is a small, neighborhood-sized body devoted to group needs. This group forum, which is typically not part of the delegation stream, is informal in nature and operates through conversation not formal decision making. (See page 56 for a detailed explanation of the body devoted to group support.)
- b) Groups send a delegate quarterly to a local service planning meeting. One of those quarterly meetings is a general assembly where all interested members are encouraged to attend and input is given to help plan service activities for the cycle. (See page 61 for a detailed explanation of the local service body.)
- c) Services are coordinated by a local service board and carried out by members, committees, and project workgroups who report to that board.
- d) Local service bodies follow county, city, or town boundaries, where practical. (They are much larger than the group forums mentioned above and in many cases larger than the current ASCs.)
- e) The boundaries of those local service bodies are agreed to at the state or national level.
- f) Planning cycles are synchronized from level to level (local to state to global) as well as across each level.
- g) When service needs cannot be accomplished effectively by local service bodies and state/national/province bodies, an intermediate level of service can be added. (See page 64 for a detailed explanation of an intermediate service body.)
- h) Most states, provinces, or countries have one state-, province- or nationwide service body that is responsible for state- or national-level public relations and coordinating efforts such as training across local service bodies. (See page 67 for a detailed explanation of state-, province-, and nationwide service bodies.)
- i) Zonal boundaries are decided through a collaborative process with neighboring NA communities, other zones, and the WSC.

Glossary

[Service System](#)

The [Service System](#) in NA consists of four main components: people, processes, resources, and structure. One of our current projects is focused on creating and framing a discussion about alternatives or improvements to our current [Service System](#).

Service System Proposal Report

A document including the ideas and recommendations for the changes to the NA Service System. These ideas were developed and formulated as a part of the Service System Project to provide a background for discussing the resolutions and straw polls at the 2012 World Service Conference.

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Addendum A

Service System Proposal Report

Service System

Proposal Report

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This is a third draft of the World Board’s proposals about the Service System. The first draft was released in August 2010. The second draft came out in March 2011, and the third draft was put together for this *Conference Agenda Report*. This proposal report forms the background for the resolutions and straw polls in the *Conference Agenda Report*. The resolutions stem from some of the basic principles that underpin these suggestions and the straw polls try to capture some of the specifics explained here. The votes on those items, together with the discussions at the conference, should give us a good sense of whether we have broad agreement among conference participants to move forward or not.

Some of the major changes since the second draft of these proposals include:

- Some of the background material was revised and moved to the essay in the body of the *CAR* itself
- References to second draft proposals were updated, and we added some references to where we are now in the process
- Some of the descriptions of the foundational principles were revised for clarity
- The two-track model of local services is more clearly the default or standard being proposed
- We’ve added the specification that service body boundaries are determined using a

collaborative process

- Material on zones and literature distribution/fund flow was added
- We added diagrams to Appendix 3 (Philadelphia, Wisconsin, Brazil)

A Brief Introduction

In the decades since the first NA meeting in October 1953, our fellowship has grown from a few groups in the suburbs of Los Angeles to a global fellowship of over 58,000 meetings every week. As we have grown, the services we provide to help the groups focus on their primary purpose have grown with us.

Today there are over 1,000 area service committees in well over 100 regions. In many ways, we are a picture of success. We are able to carry the message to so many addicts in so many places around the world. But it's past time to take a holistic look at our service structure. We have been applying the same [Service System](#) to an increasingly diverse set of circumstances, and in many cases, it's not working as well as it could.

For years we have heard about the same challenges in local NA communities: ineffective communication, insufficient resources, frustrated trusted servants, and a poor atmosphere of recovery in our service meetings.

Results from two recent Issue Discussion Topics, *Infrastructure* and *Our [Service System](#)*, expressed these same struggles and the same goal—to better align our practices with our principles. Of course, for some of us the system we have is working, but for others it is not. The proposals described in this report are offered in the hopes that they will improve service delivery throughout the system regardless of how well any particular body is or isn't working. The [Service System](#) Project, adopted at the 2008 World Service Conference as a four-year project and renewed at WSC 2010, was proposed as a way to begin to solve some of our problems. This report suggests some specific ideas for changes that could improve our ability to work together to carry the message and achieve our vision. Our system was designed in the 1970s for a fellowship very different from the Narcotics Anonymous of today. Among other differences, we are:

- Larger, with over 58,000 meetings every week
- Present in more countries than ever before
- Living in societies that have a very different view of addiction and recovery than in the seventies

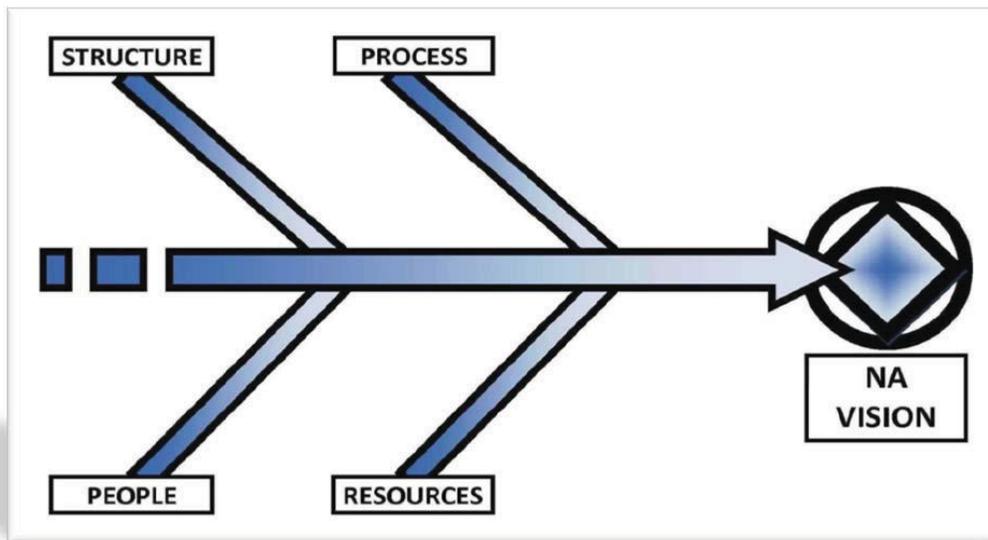
The inventory and subsequent restructuring of world services in the late 1990s helped NAWS become more effective on a global level, but until now we haven't taken a holistic look at how to improve the system on a local level. The structural part of the [Service System](#) was created long before the introduction of the *Twelve Concepts for NA Service* in 1992. Our hope is that the proposed revisions to the [Service System](#) will bring us closer to some of the principles expressed in the steps, traditions, and concepts.

The 2008 project plan explains that the first task is “to provide framed options and recommendations for discussion by the conference and the fellowship.” It's been more than a year since the first draft of these proposals was released in August 2010. We're now on the third draft of this report, and it's time to get a sense of whether the fellowship wants to transition into a new system, and to take a more formal pulse of the fellowship about some of the specific ideas in the proposals.

This degree of systemic change needs to be organized and coordinated on a global level. Practically speaking, there's no other way to create a system flexible enough to work in any NA community or to implement something that may affect regions throughout the world. The Service System belongs to all of us, and cooperation and communication throughout the fellowship are essential for change to the system to take place. Nothing will change if we don't work together.

The Basic Elements of a System

As we've reported repeatedly throughout the past several years, we have been thinking of the system in terms of four main components: structure, process, resources, and people. *All of these should work in harmony to achieve our primary purpose and realize our vision.*



In fact, it's impossible to completely separate "structural" from "process" ideas in these proposals. For instance, the creation of the group support unit (GSU), a body devoted solely to group needs, is both a structural and process idea. All of the structural ideas contained in these proposals are grounded in ideas about these sorts of processes; this is a process-driven structure. Form follows function.

We know that changes to our processes, the way that we do things in NA service, may have the most profound effect on our success in delivering NA services. This draft of the proposals contains more ideas about processes than the first two drafts contained. Within the description of the local service unit (LSU), we outline some ideas about improving planning, leadership, and communication in local services. We also have included a set of principles that should guide the major processes:

- Leadership
- Communication
- Planning
- Decision-making
- Information management

Over the course of the next cycle, we look forward to developing more ideas together about how to put these principles into concrete practice.

Foundational Principles for a Revitalized Service System

Because NA service must always be guided by spiritual principles, we spent many meetings talking about the fundamental principles that underpin a successful Service System before we discussed structural change.

There are five principles that are foundational to our thinking and common to each of the structural changes proposed:

Purpose-driven: Each of the proposed Service System units is designed to answer a specific need or group of needs, and the responsibilities of each unit should be clearly defined and understood.

Group-focused: The group support unit (GSU) focuses on aiding the groups in their efforts to carry our message.

Defined by geographic boundaries: Following established geographic boundaries for our service bodies where practical will make it easier for professionals and the general public to find and communicate with us. It will also allow us to interface better with professional and legislative bodies.

Collaborative: Successful service provision depends on all the elements of a service system working together toward a common goal. Consensus-based decision making encourages collaborative efforts within service bodies. Communication and planning help service bodies cooperate and synchronize efforts both “vertically” and “horizontally” throughout the structure.

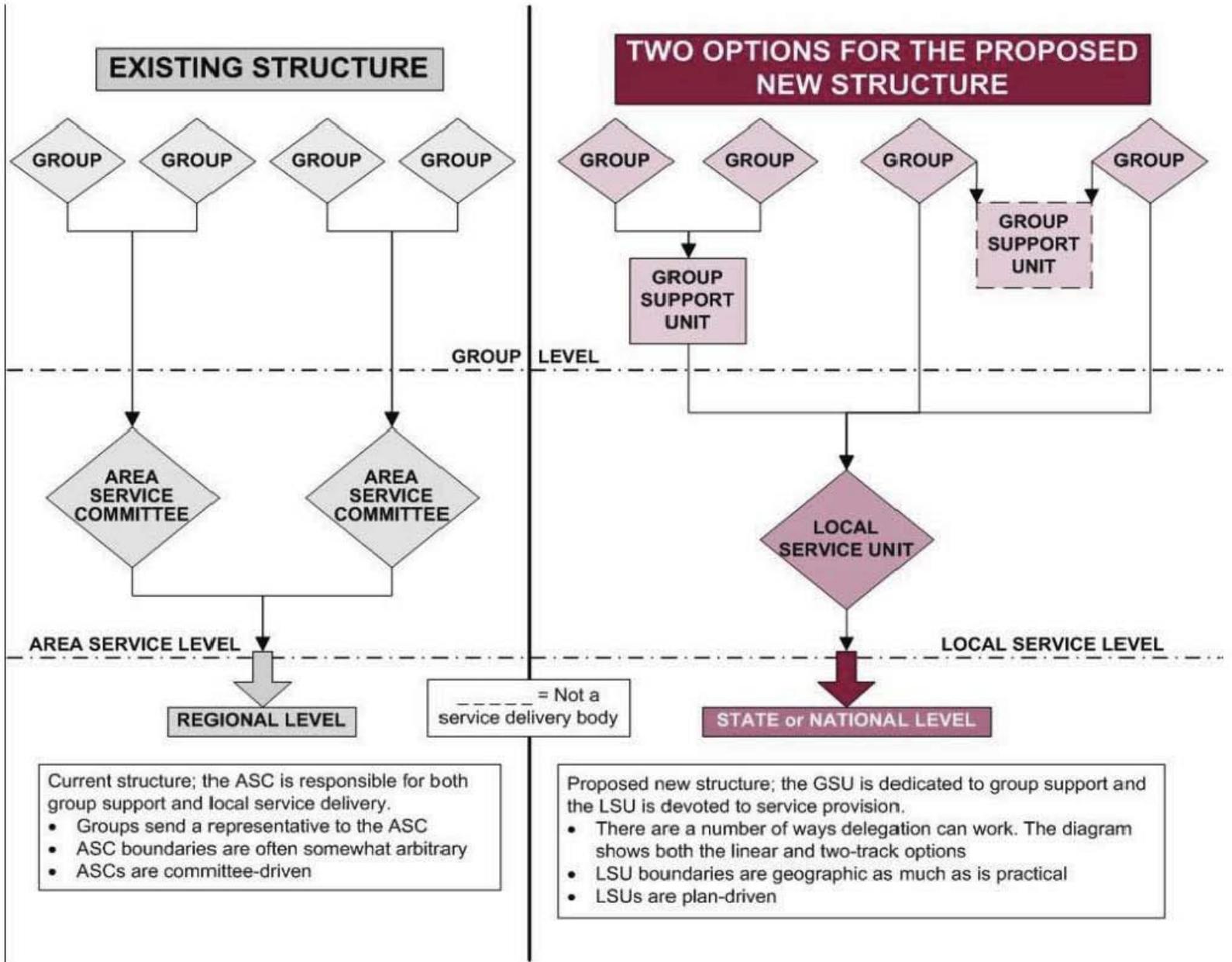
Flexible: We feel strongly that form should follow function and that communities need to have the flexibility to adapt the system in ways that work best for them.

Structurally, that may be accomplished through optional service bodies, or “intermediate bodies,” which can answer specific needs if the general model of GSULSU-state/nation/province cannot accommodate distance, density, or language needs in a given community.

The Groups and Local Levels

“Locally, most area service committees serve dual functions, offering both group support and direct service administration. A small area committee, while providing a forum in which groups can share their experience with one another, often has difficulty administering direct

NA services. An especially large committee, on the other hand, may have plenty of money and manpower for direct service administration but be too large to accommodate the kind of sharing that its groups need to support one another.”



Since the early days of NA, our service manuals have described the ASC as responsible to both support groups and provide services. That dual purpose does not always work well in practice, however; often both focuses get slighted. The complexity of some of the services provided by the ASC prevent groups from receiving the time they need during an area meeting to raise issues that are affecting their ability to carry the message. This can lead to groups feeling that their needs are underserved.

To fulfill our fellowship's primary purpose, the NA groups have joined together to create a structure which develops, coordinates, and maintains services on behalf of NA as a whole. *Twelve Concepts for NA Service* First Concept

At times some ASCs also encounter difficulties when discussing the practicalities of providing complex services—such as negotiating hotel contracts for conventions and providing PR services to professional bodies—within a service meeting consisting of many members new to service. This can make decision making difficult, causing the area's trusted servants to feel frustrated and unrewarded, and new GSRs to feel confused and therefore disconnected from the process.

We all want the same thing—to carry the message to the addict who still suffers—but our current structure seems to make this difficult at times. The aim of the [Service System](#) Project is to bring us closer to the ideals expressed in A Vision for NA Service. Revitalized and evolving local services are key parts of achieving this goal. We hope to:

- Increase the volume and effectiveness of services we can provide
- Make service a more rewarding process
- Increase unity throughout NA
- Improve NA's reputation as a viable program of recovery

The proposed group support unit (GSU) and local service unit (LSU) divide the responsibilities of our current ASCs. *Each unit has one main focus: The GSU is devoted to group support and the LSU to providing local services.* In the language of our foundational principles, these are purpose-driven bodies, and having a better defined purpose increases the chance of each successfully fulfilling its responsibilities.

“NA, as such, ought never be organized, but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.”

Ninth Tradition

The Group Support Unit – Carrying the Message

Group-focused: The group support unit (GSU) focuses on aiding the groups in their efforts to carry our message.

“The primary purpose of an NA group is to carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers. . . . The group is the primary vehicle by which our message is carried. It provides a setting in which a newcomer can identify with recovering addicts and find an atmosphere of recovery.” The Group Booklet, page 2

The NA group will always be the single most effective way we as a fellowship carry the message. Many of our fellowship discussion topics over the last few conference cycles have centered on strengthening groups. All too often in our current service structure, however, groups feel unsupported, like they have nowhere to go to talk about the issues most immediately affecting them.

“Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.”

Fifth Tradition

The GSU is intended to help groups better carry the message within their meetings by separating out the group support function from the “business” of NA. The GSU gives groups

the opportunity to share problems they may be encountering and to seek solutions from each other, while avoiding the distraction of discussions about complex services provided outside the group. By functioning as a discussion-based gathering of the local NA community, the GSU will offer an attractive alternative that complements the other more business-oriented service meetings.

The GSU is intended to be like a community or neighborhood gathering, not another level of service. Some of the kinds of things that happen at GSU meetings include:

- o Informal training and mentoring
- o Discussion of group issues, group sharing— no business
- o Welcoming and outreach to new groups and members
- o Orientation and introduction to service (recovery literature & service literature, traditions, concepts, etc.)
- o Informal information sharing (e.g., upcoming events, LSU activities, new literature items, NAWs issues topics)
- o Sending a delegate to the annual planning assembly
- o In some instances or circumstances, GSUs may be asked to be involved in some service delivery (e.g., putting up PI flyers in the community)

Size and Attendance

GSU attendance is open. Groups send a delegate and any interested member can come as well. In some cases, a community may decide to send a liaison from the LSU or to make a special effort to invite “veteran” service members or members with expertise in a particular area. Invitations are at the discretion of a local community; what is consistent is that groups send a trusted servant and that anyone who wants to attend is welcome. The GSU is intended to be a “neighborhood” sized body firmly rooted in its local recovery community. Typically a number of GSUs will be found within the geographic area of the LSU.

The LSU on the other hand has the focus of delivering services, and therefore is, where possible and practical, sized to conform with recognized boundaries such as counties, townships, and so on.

The GSU has a less formal atmosphere than found in many current service meetings. Structure and procedures should also be as informal as possible. The GSU meeting will not only assist groups, but will also serve to introduce new members to the basic principles of service. Our hope is that an improved atmosphere will encourage more members, both experienced and new, to attend and prepare them to serve at other service bodies.

Administration of the GSU

There are a number of different options for administering a GSU. Recovery groups could take turns hosting the group support unit, or the LSU could play some part in administering or hosting the GSU, or there could be some sort of administrative component within the GSU itself. The key is to keep it simple, informal, and focused on group support rather than its own administration. There should be a format for the meeting but not much structure. In essence, it doesn't have to be much more or less formal than a recovery meeting. There should be a facilitator that can rotate or be a consistent person, whatever makes the most sense for the GSU and provides the least amount of administrative distraction.

Key challenges in our current structure	Key solutions provided by a GSU
Groups do not always receive help to deal with specific issues like drug court attendees in meetings.	Group support is its main focus.
Members are often unwilling or apathetic about service.	The GSU is an informal, discussion-based body, open to everyone interested in attending.
There is often a lack of NA unity and a common purpose.	The GSU increases unity within local NA communities by bringing groups together and strengthening their ability to carry the NA message.
Members are not always trained in the basics of service.	It offers an opportunity to introduce new members to service and help them learn about the basic principles of service. The GSU's open atmosphere ideally will help to empower, involve, and value each participant and assist them in their personal growth.

Options for the GSU: Linear, Two-track, and Variations

There are a number of different options for administering a GSU. Recovery groups could take turns hosting the group support unit, or the LSU could play some part in administering or hosting the GSU, or there could be some sort of administrative component within the GSU itself. The key is to keep it simple, informal, and focused on group support rather than its own administration. There should be a format for the meeting but not much structure. In essence, it doesn't have to be much more or less formal than a recovery meeting. There should be a facilitator that can rotate or be a consistent person, whatever makes the most sense for the GSU and provides the least amount of administrative distraction.

Linear Option: Nonetheless, the linear option may still make the most sense in some communities. This option makes the GSU a part of the "delegation stream" between the group and the rest of the NA service structure. The GSU would have the responsibility of selecting a delegate to attend the LSU. We call it the "delegation stream" because delegation (selecting a trusted servant to attend on behalf of the group or GSU) is what connects the group to the LSU, the LSU to the state/nation/province service body, and the state/nation/province body to the global level of NA. This is how the group's voice is heard and how it impacts the decision-making process. Resources and information flow back and forth across the delegation stream, and careful delegation allows for services to be accountable to groups.

The advantages to the linear model are that a group need only send a trusted servant to one body, the GSU. It's also possible that the GSU might function better as a kind of training ground or orientation to the sort of service provided at the LSU if it's within the delegation stream. This close connection to the LSU, however, is one of the disadvantages as well. It's more likely that the focus of the GSU would shift if the GSU were responsible to select a delegate and carry information back and forth from the LSU. Depending on how the LSU is set up and how communication functions in the community, it's also possible that the linear option may make the groups feel more distant from the LSU, the body that provides services on their behalf.

Two-track Option: In the two-track option, the group sends a delegate to both the GSU and

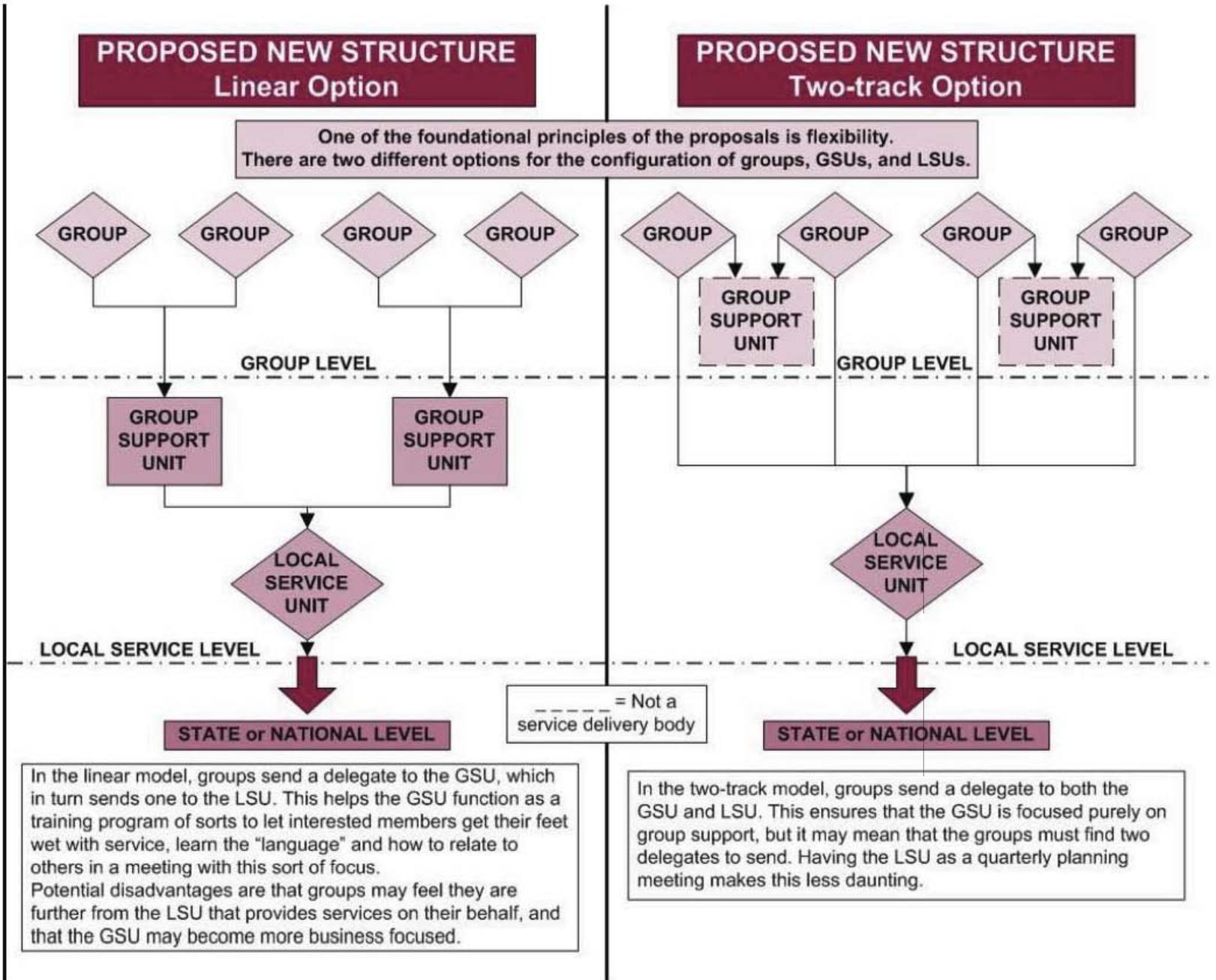
the LSU. Perhaps the biggest advantage to this option is that the GSU would be able to focus solely on discussing group issues and would not need to send a delegate to the LSU. This would preserve the simplicity of the GSU meeting. The disadvantage, however, is that groups would also have to find a delegate to attend the LSU meeting, or ask the same person to attend both the GSU and the LSU. As we've already mentioned, if the LSU meeting is a planning conference that happens three or four times a year as outlined below, rather than a monthly or bimonthly meeting, it may be less daunting for groups to send a trusted servant to both the LSU and GSU. Certainly the decision whether to opt for a two-track or linear option should be made in relation to the whole system of service.

Variations: Some communities may decide to have GSU meetings less often (every other month instead of every month) to ease the strain on human resources. In most places, there will be several GSUs for each LSU, but in the case of small or rural communities, the populations may be roughly the same. In a rural part of a state where there are, for instance, eight meetings in a given county, those same eight meetings may gather to coordinate county-wide services and to discuss group needs. In these cases, communities may even decide to alternate GSU meetings and LSU meetings, or to devote the first half of a service meeting to the GSU and the second half to the LSU. It's important to note that this would be exceptional.

The final responsibility and authority for NA services rests with the NA groups. *Twelve Concepts for NA Service* Second Concept

The Local Service Unit – Effective Service Delivery

Purpose-driven: Each of the proposed **Service System** units is designed to answer a specific need or group of needs, and the responsibilities of each unit should be clearly defined and understood.



The LSU is the “workhorse” of the [Service System](#) with the responsibility of carrying the message outside of NA meetings. The greatest number of NA members is involved in services at this level. The LSU will have the responsibility to deliver the bulk of local services, and groups will remain responsible for funding services through contributions to the LSU. The LSU would utilize a strategic planning process, and services would be delivered through a mix of project based workgroups and ongoing or routine services (see below for some examples); as throughout the system, form should follow function. Wherever possible, decisions at the LSU will be made using a consensus based process instead of motions, ideally making it a more inclusive and attractive service body. (For a list of LSU functions, see Appendix 1.)

Group conscience is the spiritual means by which we invite a loving God to influence our decisions.
Twelve Concepts for NA Service Sixth Concept

A planning process allows for more effective use of our most precious resource—people. For one thing, utilizing a planning process and organizing service bodies according to geographic boundaries should reduce the amount of service duplication. Better planning would allow us to provide the same amount of services with less labor (fewer human-hours). Also, resource pools of experienced, qualified, and available members can be organized to provide the necessary human resources for projects and ongoing services. In this way, we can retain skilled and experienced members to be available for NA service. A service project with a short life span may be more attractive to members unable or unwilling to attend a subcommittee meeting every month for a year or more, but who may still have vital and useful experience to offer.

Defined by geographic boundaries: Following established geographic boundaries for our service bodies where practical will make it easier for professionals and the general public to find and communicate with us. It will also allow us to interface better with professional and legislative bodies.

Size and Attendance

Wherever possible and practical, the LSU will conform to a recognized geographic boundary such as a county, town, or borough. In this way, the LSU will be best equipped to provide services within its community by connecting easily with professional and government bodies that interact most frequently with addicts. These sorts of established boundaries will make it easier for addicts to find our meetings, a crucial element of carrying our message. The borders of each LSU will be discussed and decided on through a collaborative process involving neighboring service bodies and the state/nation/province level. This will ensure the most rational boundaries within the state/nation/province as a whole and that all parts of the state/nation/province are served by the LSUs.

Ideally, the LSU will consist of members whose experience in service might better prepare them to deal with the sometimes complex issues encountered at this level. Attendance will be open to all, but the LSU is intended to be an efficient service body with a focus on planning

The NA groups delegate to the service structure the authority necessary to fulfill the responsibilities assigned to it.

Twelve Concepts for NA Service Third Concept

and service provision. The LSU will also serve as a communication and delegation link between the groups and the rest of the fellowship by sending a delegate to the state/national/province service body. Services will be

delivered by a mixture of ongoing work and projects, each of which will have a coordinator who is a member of the LSU and reports to it. The LSU will also consist of quarterly or triannual planning conferences attended by delegates from the group and/or GSU, and of an administrative board with the responsibility to organize and facilitate the LSU meeting. The planning conferences may be attended by any interested members, with the level of participation being determined by the LSU itself using the principles in the traditions and concepts as guidance. The annual assembly should try to draw from as wide a range of experience as possible.

LSU Composition

The local service unit is comprised of a local service board and a regular (three to four times a year) planning conference, including an annual planning assembly event.

“For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority – a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.”

Second Tradition

Local Service Board (LSB):

- o Includes chair, vice chair, treasurer, secretary, delegate(s), and service coordinators for essential services

- o Meets monthly or as needed

- o Oversees workgroups and routine services; coordinates the planning assemblies; develops budget and strategic plan for review, input, and approval by the planning conference; helps ensure established priorities are carried out; maintains external relationships; sends a delegate to the next level of service. (For a more complete list of LSU functions, see Appendix 1.)

Examples of routine services overseen by the board and/or coordinated by a committee:

- H&I panels
- Phonelines
- Literature supply
- Meeting lists

Examples of project-based services that would be formed as part of the strategic planning process:

- PR work such as having a booth at a professional event
- Fellowship activities like picnics and unity days
- Conventions
- Communications improvements like creating report templates or improving use of technology

Planning Conference:

- o The conference consists of group and/or GSU delegates, LSB members, project coordinators, and interested members.

- o It meets three to four times a year.

- o The conference starts with an annual assembly (see below) to gather input and set planning goals. Planning conferences follow the stages of the planning cycle. They are used to prioritize, approve workgroups and a budget created by the LSB, monitor and report, change direction as necessary, evaluate service delivery, and elect the board.

- o There may also be training sessions and a session for interfacing with the intermediate, or state/national, and world services levels (like a *CAR* workshop).

- o As throughout the system, decisions will be made by consensus where possible.

Annual Assembly:

- o The annual assembly is a planning event that gathers input from everyone to set service priorities (like our environmental scan on a world service level).
- o It consists of everyone who attends the quarterly/triannual planning conference. All interested members are encouraged to attend.

Key challenges in our current structure	Key solutions provided by an LSU
Many members are unwilling to serve on subcommittees, meaning we have too few trusted servants.	Project-based service provision is more attractive to some members.
The atmosphere in some service meetings is off-putting.	Where possible, consensus-based decision making is used rather than motions.
Complex service decisions are often made by inexperienced trusted servants.	Separates “NA business” from group concerns, allowing the business to be carried out by members who may have already been exposed to the basics of service and received some service mentorship at the GSU.
Services are often duplicated or poorly prioritized.	A planning process together with collaboratively determined service body boundaries help eliminate duplication of services and clarifies priorities.

All members of a service body bear substantial responsibility for that body’s decisions and should be allowed to fully participate in its decision-making processes.
Twelve Concepts for NA Service Seventh Concept

Intermediate Bodies

Flexible: We feel strongly that form should follow function and that communities need to have the flexibility to adapt the system in ways that work best for them. Structurally, that may be accomplished through optional service bodies, or “intermediate bodies,” which can answer specific needs if the general model of GSULSU-state/nation/province cannot accommodate distance, density, or language needs in a given community.

Meeting the Needs of a Diverse Fellowship

One of the pieces of feedback we heard most consistently about the first draft proposals was that it was difficult to understand what was intended by the “intermediate bodies”—why were they proposed and what function do they fulfill?

Perhaps the simplest way to think of intermediate bodies is that they are created to meet needs of density or distance or language. In essence, they would span a gap between one level of service and the next in places where the NA community is densely populated, such as New York, or where the distances are great, such as Texas, or in places where the population is bilingual, such as Montreal.

In our existing system, some NA communities are rural and the population is spread out. Travel to service meetings can be prohibitive because of time and money. Other NA

communities are very densely populated, and service bodies are large and difficult to manage. Our current structure presents a limited number of options for forming new service bodies to answer these issues. Intermediate bodies are intended to help offer new ways to structure our services that best suit a community's individual needs. They occupy the space in between existing service bodies, like extra "pieces of the accordion" making it possible to maintain geographic boundaries within service bodies where practical but still accommodate variables of distance, density, and shared language.

Our service structure depends on the integrity and effectiveness of our communications.

Twelve Concepts for NA Service Eight Concept

Intermediate bodies are within the delegation stream. Primarily they serve to facilitate communications and share experience, although they may also deliver some services when appropriate. While it may be tempting to rename an existing service body an "intermediate body" to minimize the impact of restructuring, that's not the intention of the proposals. A clear need must be established to create an intermediate body, and most communities will not have such a need. Intermediate bodies would most commonly be created when a group of neighboring LSUs wants to come together to send a delegate to the state/national/province body. This may be a practical option for densely populated communities where attendance by a delegate from every LSU would make the state or national meeting too large and consume excessive resources. This may also help in large states, countries, or places where the community is largely rural with long distances between LSUs and the state or national service body meeting.

Intermediate bodies might also be formed when groups that speak a minority language wish to come together and connect with the larger NA community by sending a bilingual delegate to the LSU.

For each responsibility assigned to the service structure, a single point of decision and accountability should be clearly defined.

Twelve Concepts for NA Service Fifth Concept

Key challenges in our current structure	Key solutions provided by a GSU
Travel to service meetings is often challenging in large countries or states where the distances are large.	An intermediate body can function as a "way station" allowing several LSUs to meet and send a single delegate to the state, nation, or province.
Service meetings in densely populated areas are often too large.	Urban LSUs can form an intermediate body to send a single delegate to the state/nation/province service body, saving resources and preventing the service body from being too large.

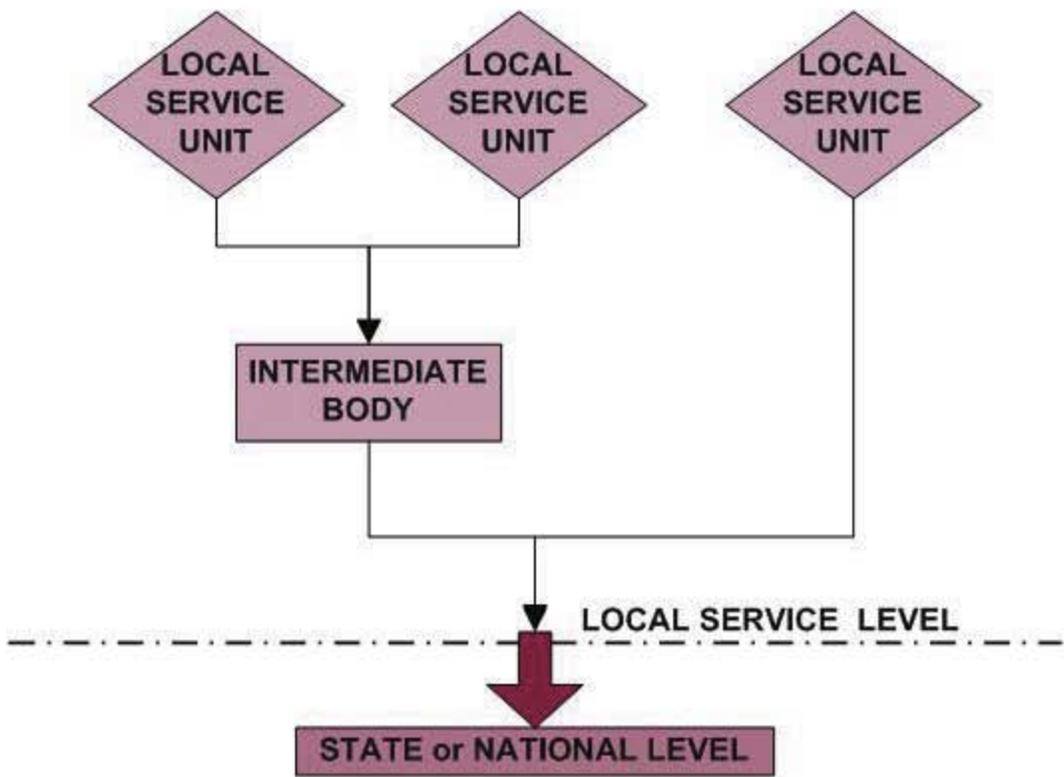
Shared Service Body

In our current system, some ASCs group together to share resources and deliver services with each other. A meeting list that covers more than one area is an example. A body of this type does not send a delegate on to the next level of service. Some communities have experienced accountability difficulties with service bodies of this type as they are essentially responsible to two different ASCs. We have not yet addressed this type of service as part of the project.

Intermediate bodies are not created to provide shared services outside of the delegation stream. They are not the same as zones, metros, or shared service bodies. We acknowledge the need to explain better how shared services will function in the new system. It may be that more deliberate service body boundaries will eliminate some need for shared service bodies. We hope that those of you who have experience with shared services will continue to share your ideas with us.

PROPOSED NEW STRUCTURE Intermediate Body

The intermediate body is a flexible “accordion” piece to be inserted in the system where needed (because of density, distance, or other factors)



Where practical, several LSUs could send a delegate to the state or national body. Typically this would be to save travel resources, to keep the state or national body manageably sized, or to help minority language speakers participate with the wider NA community.

State/National/Province Service Level & Zones

Defined by geographic boundaries: Following established geographic boundaries for our service bodies where practical will make it easier for professionals and the general public to find and communicate with us. It will also allow us to interface better with

professional and legislative bodies.

Making Better Boundaries

A service body at this level could consist of a recognized state, province, or country (or a number of these grouped together) following geographic boundaries that are already established in society. For many communities this will not alter anything, while for others this will represent a fundamental change.

The move from our current piecemeal structure of service body boundaries represents one of the major structural changes in the proposed revisions to the [Service System](#). If we, as a fellowship, decide to move forward with these changes, we will need to discuss how to most easily reunite some of our existing regions. We currently often structure ourselves according to personal desires, rather than the need to deliver services more effectively and better carry a message. Convenience, resentment, and inertia are frequently our guiding principles when deciding where to draw a boundary, or whether to maintain one. Services are, at times, directly impeded by some of the boundaries we are currently working with as a fellowship. For example, a service body that consists of only part of a state will not be able to interact as effectively with a statewide professional body as would a service body that consists of the whole state.

Fortunately, this is not the case for the majority of existing regions. More than half of the US states are comprised of a single region, and the vast majority of countries outside the US are similarly composed. While restructuring would be a significant challenge for some regions, most regions are already shaped by geographic boundaries.

“Our common welfare should come first;
personal recovery depends on NA unity.”

First Tradition

One of the main aims of re-forming our boundaries is more effective public relations services, made possible when our service bodies match up with the professional and governmental bodies that interact with addicts. It will be much easier for the public and for potential members to find us and for us to communicate with them if we have more recognizable boundaries and names for our service bodies.

A body that follows an externally established boundary will also have the clear responsibility to try to provide services to all parts of the area it covers. Our current structure tends to focus service provision in the areas where NA already exists, rather than encouraging outreach and fellowship development.

While the LSU does provide the majority of local services, some service provision makes sense to coordinate on a statewide or national level—in particular, some public relations functions as well as coordination of some service provision at the LSU level. (See Appendix 2 for a more complete list of the functions of a service body at the state/national/province level.) Examples of these are:

- Interacting with statewide government and professional bodies
- Organizing assemblies and conventions
- Coordinating centralized resources like phonelines, websites, service offices, and liability and event insurance

- Providing a communication link between the WSC and local NA communities

As with the local service level, much of the actual service work will be carried out by a combination of project workgroups and coordinators for specific areas of service. Many of the services provided by a state, province, or national body would require specific skills, training, and experience outside what we all gain as recovering addicts. These are acquired through service and our professional lives, and are enhanced by qualities that we may naturally possess. Not all of us are suitable for every commitment within NA, but there is a commitment for every NA member.

Size and Attendance

Collaborative: Successful service provision depends on all the elements of a service system working together toward a common goal. Consensus-based decision making encourages collaborative efforts within service bodies. Communication and planning help service bodies cooperate and synchronize efforts both “vertically” and “horizontally” throughout the structure.

The state/national/province service body will consist of delegates from the LSUs, an administrative body to organize and facilitate the meeting, any necessary service and project coordinators, and any interested members. As with the LSU, participation will be determined by the service body itself and decisions will be made by consensus whenever possible. Typically this type of service body will consist of an entire state, province, or country. It’s important to note that the terms “state” and “province” may be applied to more than just US states and Canadian provinces. Some type of “state” approach to service bodies may be applicable to countries such as Brazil, Russia, Mexico, and India that currently have many meetings and multiple regions within their national borders. At the same time it may be practical to combine small states in places such as New England, for example. The principle of flexibility allows states, provinces, or nations to join together to form a single service unit if it makes sense in terms of service provision and use of resources. Also some border communities may be better served by joining a neighboring state, province, or country if doing so makes service provision more practical and is a more efficient use of resources. We know that the terms “state,” “nation,” and “province” could benefit from clarification: When is a state a state and a nation a nation? This is a level of definition that we have not yet discussed in detail.

Key challenges in our current structure	Key solutions provided by a state/ nation/province body
Unclear service body boundaries make public relations with state-, province-, or countrywide professional and government bodies difficult to coordinate.	Using existing geographic boundaries to establish service body boundaries makes communication with the public much easier and makes it easier for addicts to find NA.

There are often underserved areas in our current regions.

State/nation/province service bodies will be responsible for services that affect the whole of the state, ensuring that all areas are served.

Services such as websites are frequently duplicated, creating confusion in service provision and inefficient use of resources.

Having one service body to cover the state, nation, or province will help eliminate some of the duplication of efforts.

Zones in a System of Service

The board has only had preliminary discussions about the possible roles of zones in a new [Service System](#). We are sharing the ideas here in part to get a sense of whether interested members of the fellowship agree.

Perhaps the most significant change the board discussed was the sense that, if zones are to be part of a *system* of service, they need some uniform standards both in terms of their composition and their roles. Are zones decision-making bodies, for instance? Should they decide things by consensus? Is there an administrative body at a zonal level? The answers to these questions vary greatly from zone to zone.

Currently, zones are self-determined bodies, but looking at them as part of a larger system, it makes sense to reexamine zones—to look at zonal boundaries and composition to see if it makes sense to consider changes in any or all of them. Rather than having self-determined boundaries, perhaps it makes sense for zonal boundaries and composition to be decided at the World Service Conference, since the conference can take a more holistic view of how NA communities around the world might best be served.

Similarly, zones perform a wide variety of different roles and accomplish a diverse span of tasks. Again, if zones are part of a purpose-driven system, we ought to be able to agree upon a purpose or set of purposes for the zones and perhaps some uniform practices. Because of their position in the structure, between world services and nations/states/provinces, zones present a great opportunity to share laterally across nations/states/provinces, and to receive information from and give information to NAWS. Formalizing the roles of zones may benefit all parts of a revised [Service System](#).

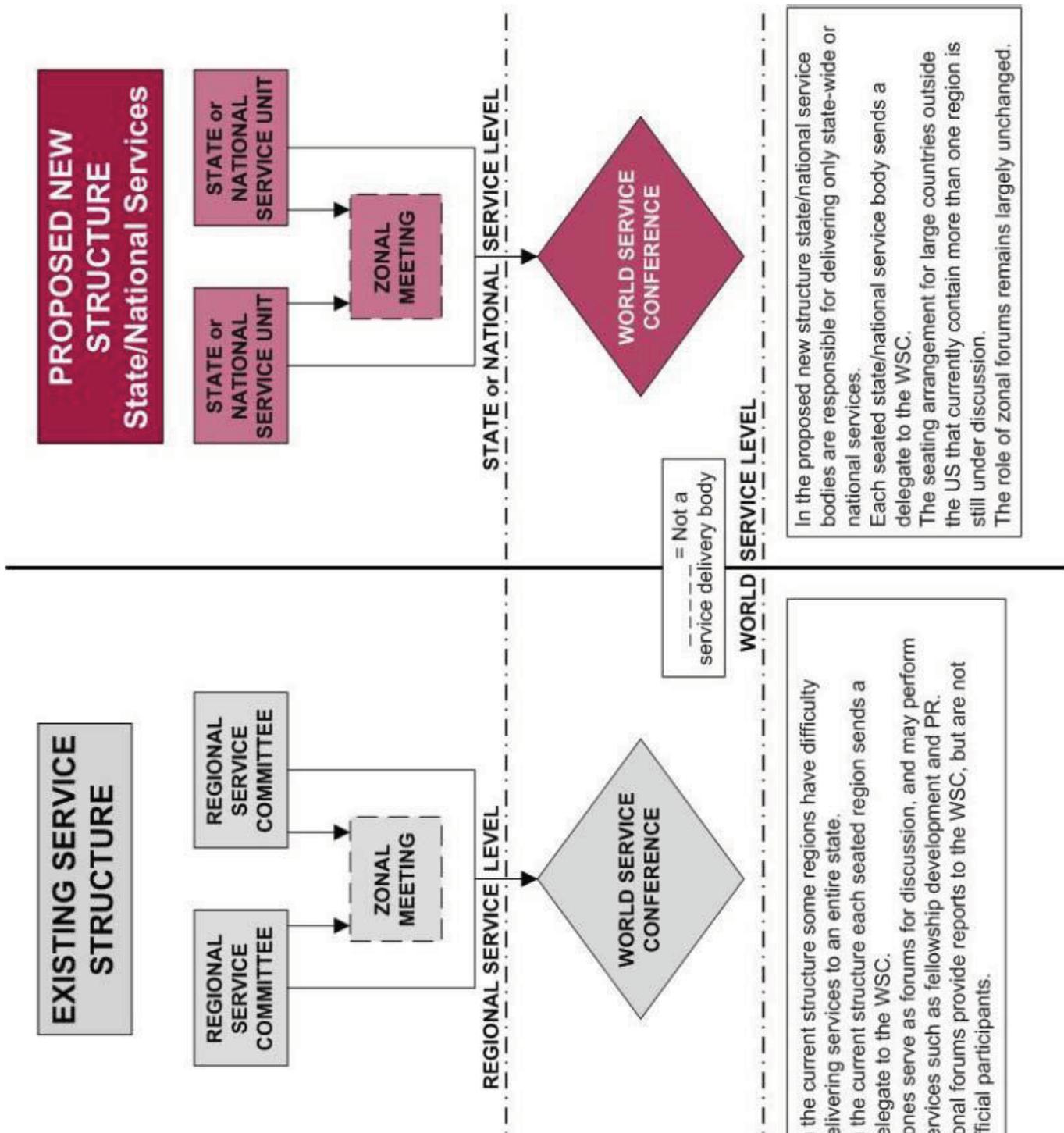
Among the possible roles that the board discussed are the following:

1. Fellowship development: Zones are well positioned to do fellowship development like PR support, outreach, and local community development. In some cases, zones may be well positioned to help meet PR needs on a federal level. Ideally, zones are well placed to have a broad and long vision. They also can facilitate pooling resources and meeting common needs such as the language needs that are currently met at the Latin American Zonal Forum (LAZF).
2. Leadership development: Because world services travels to zones that request a visit, it's an ideal place for NAWS to identify local leaders. Since there are “train the trainer” sessions and workshops at a zonal level, motivated members can get workshop materials and utilize those leadership qualities back home when they put on workshops. This is a place where leaders could be recognized and cultivated; training for delegates or those with positions at a state/national/province body could naturally take place at a zonal level.

3. Planning: Zones can function well to help spot trends and participate in scanning. Information could be collected at a zonal level to feed into an environmental scan at the world level and/or the state/national level. And of course, zones themselves would be plan-driven, as are all parts of an ideal [Service System](#).
4. Part of a fund-flow system: Currently zones are not part of the formal fund flow system in a regular sort of way. Ideally, there would be more definition and guidance about the way zones could fit into the fund flow.
5. Exchange of best practices: Many zones currently function well as a place where states or nations can gather to discuss what is working well for them. This role seems natural for zones where open forums or sharing sessions among state/nation/provinces already exist.
6. Point of connection—unity link: Zones form a unity link between geographically related communities, between larger and smaller communities, and between emerging and more developed communities, for instance. Their meetings are a place where unseated communities can feel part of a larger NA community, and more experienced members can stay involved in service. Because of zones' informal nature, it's relatively easy for interested members to attend and feel engaged.
7. Communication link: Zones' potential contribution to environmental scanning and their ability to function as a point of connection or a unity link both fit into their role as a communication forum. Zones are ideally positioned to facilitate the information flow to and from world services and from member state/country/provinces to other state/country/provinces. In addition, border communities may find it helpful to use zones as a way to communicate with their home state if they attend service meetings in the neighboring state. PR forums, Issue Discussion Topics, and other types of workshops at a zonal level could help the flow of communication. Communication from zone to zone may also be productive.

As we mention in the introduction to these proposals, we have talked about the possibility of a zonal seating option for the World Service Conference, but are not recommending that option at this time. Zonal representation would be difficult for zones with a less formal structure. Ideally zones in a new system might function more like an event such as the Florida Symposium or a worldwide workshop—holding workshops, acting in a training capacity, dealing with local service issues and partnering with NAWS. They can be a kind of information clearing house. The zones are good central points for coordination of NA services among NA service bodies. They can function to facilitate communication, coordination, information, and guidance.

Again, these ideas are all part of an ongoing discussion and don't represent final thoughts. The role of zones in the new system needs further discussion by the board and the fellowship as a whole. Should zones be more standardized in their roles? Should their composition be standardized or defined in some way? These are questions we will need to answer collectively. As with any part of the [Service System](#) proposals, if you have ideas, please send them to the World Board: worldboard@na.org.



WSC Seating

The question of how to determine who is seated at the WSC can arouse strong feelings. The belief that “you’re a region when you say you are” and are therefore entitled to a seat at the WSC is a part of our history and has underpinned the formation and seating of many current regions. As we have grown internationally and seated increasing numbers of regions, the shortcomings to our approach have become obvious. The unrestrained growth of the WSC creates a financial hardship and makes it difficult to facilitate such a large event. Despite discussing these challenges for several cycles, we have so far been unable to create seating criteria that are applied uniformly and are fair and thorough. In an effort to move forward, and as part of the wider [Service System](#) Project, we offered two basic options for

seating in the first draft proposals we released in 2010: a zonal seating option and a state/national/province seating option. After further discussions as a board and throughout the fellowship, we have determined to limit our recommendation to a state/national/province seating model at this time. We recognize that this model may have a shelf life due to the size of the WSC, and we will continue to be interested in exploring something like a “zonal” seating model (with the understanding that the “zones” as we now know them might need to be revamped to make such a model workable). At this time, however, state/nation/province seating seems most practical.

State/National/Province Seating

Put simply, this model means that state/national/province service bodies would be seated at the WSC. Each body will elect a delegate to participate in the conference. This model allows us to continue to seat new NA communities while restricting the seating of new service bodies formed from division of already represented communities. The foundational principle of a flexible system allows for several smaller states or countries to continue to join together for the purpose of sending a delegate to the WSC, as well as provide services if it is more effective and efficient to do it this way.

Seating according to this criterion will not represent a difference for the majority of conference participants, but for those it does affect it will represent a significant change. Many of our current regions will have to re-form as single states. Hopefully meeting as an entire state, province, or country would also be seen as an opportunity to provide state-, province-, or countrywide services.

Using recognized, established geographic boundaries will give us a clear requirement upon which to base seating eligibility, and relieve us of at least part of the often emotionally based process of deciding who should, and should not, be seated.

We will still need to create some additional criteria for seating, including but not limited to better defining “state” and “nation” (see the previous section of this report). We expect we will need some way to deal with very large countries and groups of small countries that are closely associated with each other, for instance. In addition, we would expect to retain some kind of criteria requiring seated bodies to have a minimum amount of service provision experience.

Seating according to state/nation/province would slow the growth of the WSC. If there is a need to further reduce the size of the conference, no longer including alternates at the conference is one option that is not elaborated on here.

Key challenges in our current structure	Key solutions provided by seating proposal
Growth of the WSC is not limited, creating resource and manageability problems.	An upper limit of seated communities is set by the number of existing state, national, and provincial bodies.
There are no consistently applied seating criteria.	Objective criteria are used to establish eligibility before any other criteria are examined, removing the personal element of seating decisions.
The lack of clear seating criteria is one factor that can encourage regional splits, which impacts our ability to deliver services and reach addicts.	State/nation/province seating will encourage regional reunification.
There is a perceived inequality between US and other countries.	The number of US delegates will be reduced.

Service System Processes

We have promised more information about processes in this revision of the Service System Proposals. Among the processes we have talked about are:

- Communication
- Leadership
- Planning
- Decision-making
- Information management

We have, over the course of the last few cycles, made significant progress in outlining some concrete changes for processes such as planning and decision-making. For instance, we have added material to the *Guide to World Services in Narcotics Anonymous* on consensus-based decision-making and we have continued to improve the World Service Conference in this regard. In terms of planning, we produced the Area Planning Tool and the Planning Basics guide. But in the case of other processes, perhaps most notably leadership and communication, the systemic changes needed are so fundamental and wide reaching, it seems wise to take a step back from concrete, detailed suggestions and come to a shared agreement on the principles of a healthy system.

The following sections outline some of those principles. If we can agree upon these as our fundamentals, we can begin to detail more of the specifics of how these processes will work in the system in the future.

Internal Communication

Communication continues to be vexing throughout the NA Service System. Our current system is antiquated in many ways and functions more as a delegation stream than a communication stream. The change from a passive to an active communication system will involve all aspects of the Service System. Because so much work has been done recently on external communications (i.e., the *Public Relations Handbook*) we are focusing here on communication within NA.

Some principles that should guide communication in an effective Service System (with some examples of possible ways to realize the principles):

Collaborative: Members need to have a sense of ownership.

- o Rotate location of service meetings, a well-established successful practice used by some existing regions and areas.

Reinforce the big picture: Communications need to be better tied to vision and a cyclical planning cycle. Currently they are tied to representation and administrative detail.

- o Make sure everyone has a sense of how the strategic plan relates to them.
- o Emphasize the interconnectivity of our service delivery in the local community. Think global but act local.

Responsive: Groups have to be able to express their needs and be aware of what service bodies are doing on their behalf to answer these needs. Communication is a two-way street. We must learn to “communicate out” better at all levels of service, to listen better and hear groups and members, and to improve tools for collecting information.

- o Involve groups in the environmental scanning, prioritization, and evaluation phases of the planning process.

Relevant: Make communication more relevant to members.

- o Give people tools to better process and distill information.
- o “Push” information when possible, making it easier for people to receive rather than having to go find it.
- o Make standardized, up-to-date, and easily updatable information (e.g., meeting lists and maps) available online through a central (state or country-level) website.

Accessible: Broaden the channels of communication. There should be additional ways to communicate aside from within the delegation stream.

- o The LSU could have a “communications coordinator” that talks to all nodes in the system.
- o Could better utilize technology: econferences, a social network of some kind, newsletters, cell technology including phone “apps,” podcasting for training modules and other communication needs, and so on.
- o Could utilize local service conferences or assemblies as a way to better communicate. Instead of monthly meetings dominated by reports, planning conferences could be less frequent daylong events that include workshops and maybe even a speaker and dance, in addition to the planning activities for local service delivery.

Clear: Processes and roles should be clear and well-defined.

- o Create a calendar for the planning cycle so trusted servants know better what is expected of them when it comes to delivering and receiving information. Such a calendar could include key dates for projects and events, such as projected review and input periods for literature projects and WCNA pre-registration dates. Individual communities could incorporate dates relevant to the services they provide on a local level.
- o Synch planning cycles across the system.

Targeted: Communication should be better tailored to different “audiences”—we should better consider what we communicate, how, and to whom. Everyone doesn’t need (or want) to know everything. People should understand what the priorities are and how they pertain to their part.

- o “Push” communication; don’t just have a passive communication stream.
- o Build repositories of information and drive people to them.

Consistent: Yet, there should be some uniformity in how we communicate across the system.

- o Utilize templates throughout the Service System (e.g., for reports and newsletters).
- o Archive communications.

Coordinated: The functions of training, oversight, and standards for communication need to be coordinated at each level of service. Currently those functions are not covered in any way.

- o Oversee communication within a service body and train people in communication skills. (Could be a good way for experienced members to contribute.)

Leadership

Four components of any leadership development system:

1. Identification
2. Development
3. Training
4. Coordination of talent

Principles that any effective leadership development system should embody (with some examples):

Proactive: More active leadership identification and development on a local level, including diligence in selecting members that have leadership qualities as outlined in the Fourth Concept.

- o Methods of leadership identification (e.g., nominations) should not be exclusively self-selecting.

Confidential: Should use confidential, but not necessarily anonymous selection processes.

- o Could use a database or pool.
- o Could use a team of people on the state or local level to help identify leaders.

Matches talent to task: Use the different talents our members possess and find a place where they can best serve NA. Nurture people’s best qualities rather than challenge them to prove themselves again and again.

- o Utilize online service resumes in advance of elections. Could utilize a template like the World Pool Information Form that is adaptable to different levels of service or different communities.

o Utilize non-technological methods as well. Members can share about matching talent to task. Tailor strategies to the needs of different service bodies or levels.

Online resumes may work better at the level of the state/nation/province where you would expect people with more service experience and who are used to complicated systems.

- o Clearly explain the duties and qualifications for trusted servant positions.

Egalitarian: Values all service contributions not just those that have titles attached, and values people at all experience levels. Works to retain prior leaders.

- o Award certificates of participation.
- o Provide opportunities to learn and serve outside of formal positions.
- o Formal positions are where people who can coordinate services should be in

place. Ideally, many more people will be working at service than coordinating services.

- o Prior leaders can serve in primary role in training or mentoring systems or in nominating committees.

Scalable: The training and mentoring aspects of the system can be adapted for different sized communities.

- o Options with a range of sophistication could meet the needs of different communities and levels of service.

Coordinated: Different levels of the system work together to achieve a common goal. Communication should flow throughout the system.

- o Training and recruitment can be performed on a local level but coordinated at the state level. State could roll out training modules or courses and LSUs could implement the training (train the trainer).

- o Could have a state-level trusted servant or team who identifies local leaders if it's practical to do so.

Accountable: Effective delegation depends upon accountable leadership and decision-making. As articulated in our concepts, a single point of accountability and decision-making should be identified for each service responsibility.

Cultivate members: Improved training and mentoring results in needing fewer resources.

- o Could use somewhat formal training modules or courses (possibly online) with standardized outlines and certificates given at the end.

- o GSU could function to some degree as a training ground.

- o Conduct orientation session for new trusted servants that includes the prior trusted servants rotating off to provide a warm transition of responsibilities instead of a cold handoff.

- o Could make overlapping (e.g., 14-month) service terms the standard—need to improve “on the job” mentoring.”

- o Could also create an additional informal mentoring opportunity by matching former trusted servants with newer or potential trusted servants.

- o Establish clear expectations for performance and use self-evaluation tools and mid-term evaluation tools to determine how well we're fulfilling our commitments and where we can improve.

Welcoming: Should inspire people to serve and provide opportunity. It should be easy for members to serve by offering broad pathways into service with basic requirements that will not seem overwhelming. The homegroup level serves as the entry point to service. Service is valued as part of recovery and not something you “retire” from when your term ends.

Planning

These third draft [Service System](#) proposals offer some concrete ideas about how planning would take place in the system, particularly at the LSU level. Here we mention some of the principles that guide those processes. We have already made great progress in NA in improving our planning. This document is meant to compliment the material in both *Planning Basics* and the *Public Relations Handbook*.

Planning before Personalities – Basic Principles of Planning

Group-focused: By gathering information on group issues from group trusted servants, group support meetings, and any other available sources, planning ensures the Service System considers group needs.

Fosters unity: We increase our unity by cooperating to fulfill our common primary purpose. Tradition One, in *It Works: How and Why* explains, “Working together for our mutual wellbeing is a significant source of unity in Narcotics Anonymous.”

Anonymous: Anonymity means that each NA member is equal in their membership and opportunity to recover. Everyone’s input is valued, and no one person knows as much as all of us do together. We can put this principle into action by using an objective planning process to provide direction to our service bodies. This direction comes from our combined experience rather than individual opinion.

Collaborative: Planning services is a task we work on together, embracing the ideals of anonymity and unity. Not only do we personally benefit from collaborating in NA service, but the services we provide benefit from our efforts when we work together.

Proactive: Ideally, planning is a proactive process intended to help us deal with issues before they become problems. Dealing with issues early on is often more effective both in terms of outcome and use of resources.

Purpose-driven: A clear understanding of purpose lends structure and direction to our service system. By clearly defining and prioritizing the needs to be addressed, and by clarifying the functions of each service body and the roles and responsibilities of the trusted servants involved, planning can help us to maintain a system that is responsive to our needs.

Effective: Planning helps to increase both the effectiveness and the efficiency of the services we can provide. It also helps us to better manage our fellowship’s resources.

Sustainable: Action plans formed as a result of a regular strategic planning process need to take into account our available resources, both human and financial. Services should rely on a stable source of income, such as member contributions, rather than fundraising activities that are vulnerable to unforeseen circumstances.

Consistent: The depth and complexity of planning processes will vary according to the service body performing them. Whether planning takes place as part of our home group’s inventory or the NAWS strategic plan, the same basic processes and principles apply.

Inclusive: An accessible planning process uses methods such as scanning and brainstorming, encouraging a broad base of participation and enabling all viewpoints and ideas to be heard. The principles of open-mindedness and tolerance also help us to consider all information and viewpoints carefully.

Honest: A key element of planning is regularly evaluating and measuring the services we deliver to help us determine where changes are required. These may be based on changes in requirements, available resources, or the external environment. Honesty also encourages flexibility and scalability when the need arises to modify our services.

Decision-making

What Do We Really Mean By Decision-Making?

Decision-making in NA can be as simple as an informal discussion among group members over changes to a meeting's format, or as complex as approving the NAWS budget and project plans for a service cycle. Whatever the scale of the decision, the same recovery principles guide the process. Decision-making is a collaborative effort. We work together to decide what is best for NA, both on the local level and for NA as a whole.

Decision-making usually involves more than a simple show of hands. Often the actual decision is just one stage of the process. We begin by gathering information and experience to help us make informed decisions. We then take the time to discuss ideas and share perspectives. By preparing in this way we can ensure that our decisions support our Vision Statement and are in harmony with our principles.

The process does not end once a decision is made. There is a responsibility to clearly communicate and explain the details of the decision to those who are affected by it. In this way we can honor the principle of accountability and help to ensure both trust and support for the decisions we make.

Basic Principles of Decision-Making (with some examples of how these can be realized)
Consensus-based: "Consensus refers to the consent of the group, or, in other words, the willingness to move forward with a decision on the part of all members of a group, rather than a majority or a select group of representatives. . . . Consensus is based on the belief that each person has some part of the truth and no one person has all of it . . . The consensus process is what a group goes through to reach an agreement. It is how we manifest the idea "together we can do what we cannot do alone" in a service setting." *A Guide to World Services in NA*, pages 8–9

Trustworthy: Without trust there is little chance that a decision-making process will be effective. How we achieve and nurture trust is dependent on certain key practices.

- o Carefully select our trusted servants, paying attention to both personal qualities and relevant skills.
- o Communicate the nature and implications of decisions clearly and fully, using a variety of methods.
- o Provide opportunities for all members to participate in some way in the decision-making process.

Accountable: Service bodies are accountable to the groups that create and support them. This does not necessarily mean the groups must oversee every decision, but it does give groups the ability to exercise authority when necessary.

- o Ensure a clear point of accountability is defined when making a decision to do something.
- o Report clear explanations of decisions service bodies make to anyone affected.

Practices delegation: Although groups have the final authority over NA services, they must delegate to others the authority to serve in order for these services to be effectively carried out. This allows the groups to focus their attention on carrying the message in their meetings.

- o Take care in selecting trusted servants, using the Fourth Concept essay as guidance.
- o Allow time during any business meeting for delegates to report.

Inclusive: Ideally any decision-making process has a broad base of participation, ensuring that we consider all relevant experience, and that dominant members do not unduly influence decisions or monopolize the time available for participation.

- o Conduct planning assemblies that allow widespread input on issues affecting NA.
- o Utilize brainstorming to encourage input to be freely shared.
- o Utilize small group discussions to allow quieter members' voices to be heard.
- o Use a consensus based process when practical in making decisions.
- o Use secret/closed ballots when needed to encourage voting participants to participate freely without feeling influenced by others.

Plan-driven: Decisions should address our most pressing needs first. Planning helps connect our decisions with the bigger picture of NA services and helps us to work in harmony as a fellowship.

- o Use an agreed-upon planning process.
 - o Prioritize service activities and consider decisions holistically.
 - o Take the time to ask, "Does this help us move towards the ideal expressed in our Vision Statement?"
- o Create a strategic plan to help keep the main goals of a service body in focus.

Sustainable: When making decisions, we need to consider whether we have the resources to implement them on an ongoing basis.

- o Create budgets so that financial implications are clear and ongoing commitments can be met.
- o Determine what human resources are needed to fulfill decisions.

Information Management

Information management is a general term for the process of dealing with the many types of information related to NA service. Improving the quality and availability of relevant information has the potential to positively affect almost every aspect of service.

The principles and practices of information management overlap with many of our other key processes, most notably communication and decision-making. The Ninth Concept essay offers this thought:

An effective group conscience is a fully informed group conscience.

Basic Functions of an Information Management System

Most information management processes can generally be broken down into five key steps:

1. Capture the information.

- Take minutes.
- Keep records of decisions.
- Make summaries of experiences in service.
- Gather service resources such as guidelines, trusted servant position descriptions, bulletins on specific topics, etc.
- Perform an environmental scan to gather information for planning meetings—i.e., collect information such as group issues, financial information, and external and internal trends that may affect NA service.

2. Manage the information.

- Catalog or index individual pieces of information.
- Update ongoing resources like meeting lists, trusted servants' contact information, PR contacts and events, and calendars of fellowship events.

3. Store the information.

- Keep files in service offices or members' homes, etc.
- Maintain electronic archives on computers and websites.
- Update databases regularly.

4. Preserve the information.

- Scan hard copies of documents or flyers.
- Preserve delicate or degradable materials.
- Utilize back-up storage options, etc.

5. Deliver the information.

- Maintain connections with other databases—e.g., a regional meeting directory.
- Make information available when needed—e.g., online meeting lists.
- Supply information to outside enterprises—e.g., facts about NA to media or treatment facilities, etc.

These procedures should be ongoing but will vary according to what is appropriate for different communities and service bodies. In general, information management will be most effective if it is a team process in which all trusted servants play some part, rather than the responsibility of a single member.

Basic Principles of an Information Management System (with some examples of how these can be realized)

Accessible: Information should be easily available when needed and capable of being shared.

- o Create password-protected online archives for minutes and service material on centrally maintained websites.
- o Provide orientation packs for new trusted servants.
- o Use resource sharing facilities on centrally maintained websites (e.g., www.na.org) enabling different service bodies to share service material.
- o Integrate information management and planning so that needs can be known in advance and the appropriate information made available. One such need would be the data collected during the environmental scanning stage of the planning cycle.

Selective: We tend to either save every sheet of paper created or throw it all away when a service commitment ends. A practical system decides what to preserve, considering long and short-term needs, historical importance, and available storage requirements.

- o Understand the legal requirements for how long financial information needs to be stored.
- o Offer clear criteria to help determine historical importance.
- o Evaluate the physical space and virtual space available.

Current: Wherever possible, information needs to be kept up to date.

- o Date information in order to establish how old it is.
- o Regularly inventory information stores.

Consistent: Consistent processes and formats should be used throughout the system in order to allow for widespread sharing of information from a broad range of sources.

- o Develop reporting templates.
- o Create consistent archiving procedures and criteria.

Appendix 1

Functions of the LSU

The LSU may do some or all of the following:

- Provide training, including orientation, mentoring, and leadership development
- Serve as a communication and accountability link
- Plan, including developing strategic plans and action plans
- Provide GSU support, possibly including
 - o Facilitation
 - o Support, both personal and/or financial
- Administer its own affairs, such as facilitating meetings, renting space, setting agendas, etc.
- Put on fellowship events such as conventions, learning days, and *CAR* workshops
- Coordinate translation work—local dialects in multilingual countries, or service resource translation for sharing with other LSUs
- Conduct PR, including
 - o Institutional liaison
 - o PI events
- Coordinate human resources, such as a human resource pool
- Oversee financial resources
- Participate in fellowship development and support, including outreach to isolated NA communities
- Maintain a meeting list
- Distribute literature to groups
- Elect a delegate to the state/national/province body

Appendix 2

Functions of the State/National/Province Service Body

The roles of this body are again flexible according to local need. Some of the tasks the state/national/province body could undertake include:

- Performing large-scale PR on the state or national level
- Assisting local services, e.g., helping local H&I by working with the state or national corrections department
- Planning, including
 - o Environmental scanning
 - o Creating action plans
 - o Assisting local planning efforts
- Training
- Serving as a communication link to disseminate information, especially to and from the global level
- Upholding legal responsibilities, e.g., maintaining some form of legal identity such as a legal association
- Maintaining a service office with multiple functions such as literature supply
- Holding conventions/events, with a project-based structure rather than a standing committee
- Performing outreach/fellowship development and nurturing emerging communities
- Maintaining information technology, including a website, discussion groups, and a meeting database

- Handling archiving and information management
- Coordinating human resources, such as a human resource pool
- Overseeing financial resources
- Coordinating translations
- Electing a delegate to the global body

Appendix 3

Literature Distribution and Fund Flow in a New [Service System](#)

Our ideas about literature distribution and fund flow in a new [Service System](#) are still preliminary, but we want to share our thinking thus far so that members have an idea of how a literature distribution system and fund flow might work in a restructured [Service System](#). We plan to continue discussing these issues and we may have more information or ideas before the next conference.

In this report we will outline a range of ideas about how groups could obtain literature and contribute funds in a new system using methods that are similar to the methods we use now. The “best” solutions for fund flow and literature distribution are those that will most easily put literature in the hands of addicts who need it and ensure that funds reach the bodies that deliver services. Currently groups use a variety of methods to purchase literature and that variance may not change in a new system. We need to ensure the availability and reliability of literature and funds in a new system. We’ve tried to offer information here to help communities think through what method or combination of methods might work best for them, and in that spirit, have included some questions to consider.

The Challenge with the Proposed System

The proposals currently describe two different bodies on a local level. One body is smaller and informal and is devoted exclusively to directly addressing group needs. The group support unit would function as a forum where members of groups come together to discuss their struggles and successes and mutually support one another. The second local body, the local service unit, is larger than the group support unit; several GSUs would make up an LSU. The LSU would provide most local services. It would be comprised of a board that meets monthly and oversees the day-to-day administration of ongoing services and projects, and a quarterly planning assembly where group and GSU delegates gather to create a plan, elect trusted servants, and monitor progress on goals, among other tasks.

The challenge in the proposed system is that neither of these two bodies is, perhaps, ideal as a literature distribution point or a place to collect financial contributions. To distribute literature and accept contributions at the GSU would involve some level of money handling and administration, both of which may undermine the informal character of the meeting. On the other hand, while the LSU may be better suited to literature distribution and accepting contributions, it only meets quarterly, and most groups are used to buying literature and making a financial contribution to their area service committee monthly.

Present Practices

When we began thinking about how groups would get their literature, the dilemma outlined above seemed, while not insurmountable, certainly very grave. After we started researching current practices, we realized that monthly literature distribution at a local service body may

be the norm, but it's far from the rule. We *already* employ a wide range of strategies to distribute literature and contribute funds to service bodies. According to the regional reports submitted for WSC 2010, many areas and regions buy their literature from NAWS, while others purchase from regional service offices, and a few buy from an area service office or area "store."

The variety of places groups get their literature varies even more widely. While many of us may be used to the ASC as the distribution point for literature, anyone who has been to an ASC recently knows that many groups do not attend an area meeting regularly. Those groups are already purchasing their literature elsewhere. What's more, many ASCs don't make a practice of distributing literature at all. Currently, a very large number of groups order directly from a regional office or from world services. Most groups contribute money to an ASC when they purchase literature, but many make a financial contribution less often or not at all. Some groups contribute money through electronic means, and an increasing number of groups financially contribute to region and world services as well as their ASC.

It seems that whatever changes are made in the [Service System](#) in the years ahead, we want to make sure that groups continue to have flexibility in how they can obtain literature and contribute financially to service bodies.

Possible Ways for Groups to Get Literature and Contribute Funds in a New System

Attend the LSU quarterly planning assembly

This method is convenient in that groups would already be sending a delegate to the quarterly assembly. In this option, that delegate would also be responsible to carry the literature order and make the group's financial contribution to the LSU. The disadvantage to this method is, as mentioned above, that it would mean literature gets ordered and money is contributed quarterly rather than monthly. It necessitates good planning—in many cases, better than we have now. It also means that groups would have to hold more funds than they may be accustomed to holding. If, however, a group can anticipate its literature needs well enough, a monthly financial contribution could still be made via post or electronically even if literature is only ordered quarterly.

Stop by the LSU board meetings

While the planning assemblies would happen three or four times a year, the LSU board would meet monthly. In some cases, those meetings might take place electronically, but probably in most cases they would be face to face. The board could take time during the monthly meeting to fill literature orders and take financial contributions from groups. If desired, the board could even have a designated literature coordinator or workgroup so that the board as a whole wouldn't need to stop business to distribute literature and collect contributions. Ordering from the local service board would mean that groups would need to send a delegate or other trusted servant just for that purpose during months that the LSU planning assembly didn't take place. Nonetheless, for many groups this may be a convenient option.

Utilize the GSUs to consolidate orders

Groups could consolidate orders through the GSU and then either order directly from NAWS or from an RSO. If orders were placed in advance, the literature could be distributed at the GSU. The disadvantage to this method is that it necessitates money handling and some degree of business at the GSU which ideally would be an informal body free of business and finance. Were that to be the case, however, it could function as a sort of trusted servant training

opportunity for members of the GSU. Another drawback of this method is it doesn't address

how groups contribute financially to the LSU. If groups are bringing a contribution to the LSU, it could still happen quarterly. Nonetheless, for some GSUs, particularly those comprised of rural groups for whom travel to the local service body is challenging, this might be the most practical option.

Have the LSU distribute literature and collect financial contributions at the GSU

Groups could invite the LSU to come to the GSU to take group contributions and fill literature orders. This would mean that transactions would occur at the GSU, but the responsibility for the business and finances would remain at the LSU. The trusted servant handling the money and literature would be elected at the LSU level. This might be a practical option in places with relatively short distances between the LSU and GSU and a relatively small number of GSUs. In places with many GSUs it could, however, place a burden upon the LSU.

Order electronically from a local service office or NAWS

Many groups already order online from a service office or equivalent, or from NAWS. In a new system, those groups may want to continue ordering electronically and others may want to consider doing so as well. The disadvantage to this method is that it would mean more small orders getting filled by service offices or world services and that's not always the most efficient way to distribute literature. Also, it would mean that groups need access to a means of electronic payment and as in the first option above, would either need to make contributions to the LSU quarterly or could make them electronically more frequently. It's worth mentioning that some of our service materials, such as the Treasurer's Handbook, are badly in need of revision. The practicalities they recommend, such as ensuring that each group has a dual signature bank account, may not necessarily be up to date—in fact, electronic fund transfers can actually be considered more secure—but the principle of oversight is timeless. Regardless of the method a group uses to purchase literature and contribute financially, accurate records should be kept and receipts filed for reference.

Questions Groups May Want to Ask Themselves

As groups try to figure out what method of ordering literature and making financial contributions makes the most sense for them, they may want to ask these questions:

- How often do you want to buy literature and make financial contributions (e.g. monthly, quarterly)?
- Would distributing literature and collecting contributions impact the informal nature of your GSU significantly?
- What proximity do you have to existing literature outlets and/or service bodies where you can make a contribution?
- Do you have an electronic means of ordering literature and making contributions?

The above ideas tackle the issue of group financial contributions to the local service bodies to varying degrees. Groups will still need to determine how to best contribute to state or national services as well as world services (and possibly for the administration of an intermediate body in the cases where one exists). This suggests that groups may need to look into electronic means of making contributions, and of course, this same method could be used to order literature electronically if a group determined to do so. In some cases, service bodies may want to encourage use of a contributions portal, either through their bank's e-commerce services or through a separate service. As technology becomes more available and easier to implement, this option may become more practical in many places.

Conclusion

As we've said, the board will continue to discuss this issue and may have further recommendations as it gets closer to the conference, or perhaps during the next cycle as part of a transition project, if one is approved. What is clear is that there are a number of possible means for groups to get literature in the proposed [Service System](#). For many groups, particularly those outside the US, this may not represent a change from their current practices. It may be that the best option is simply to outline the range of options groups have to order literature and make financial contributions to their local service body and help them figure out the method that makes the most sense. We will report any new thoughts about these issues if our ideas develop further, as we have with all aspects of the [Service System](#) project. Watch www.na.org/servicesystem for the latest updates.

Appendix 4

Structural Examples

This appendix is intended to offer examples of how these proposals could possibly work in different types of NA communities. The examples are offered to give a sense of what these abstract ideas would look like if concretely applied. They do not represent a mandate for these communities or any others, and are not proposals to be voted on. The actual reality of how any given community may look if it restructured could be very different from these examples. They should be used to aid a creative discussion on ideas for improving local service delivery.

We have chosen to use specific examples of NA communities – Philadelphia, Wisconsin, and Brazil – as examples. They have been chosen because they represent very different NA environments: Philadelphia is an urban community in a densely populated state, Wisconsin is a state with a great deal of rural space (and the unusual consideration that part of another state, Michigan's Upper Peninsula, is more convenient to Wisconsin), and Brazil is a large country that currently contains many meetings and more than one region. Another part of the reason for choosing these examples is that each of these locations has members of the workgroup and/or the board living there, so we hoped the examples might benefit from their experience as residents in these communities.

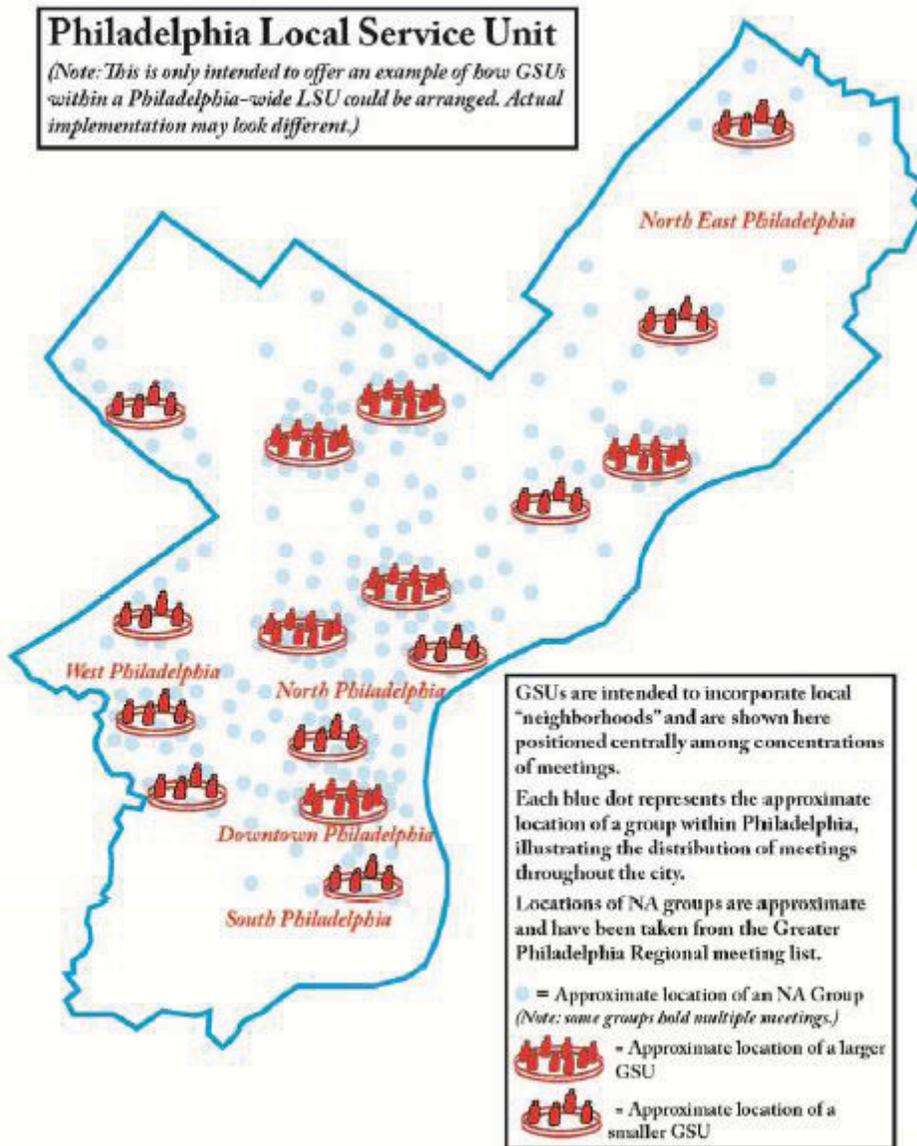
We have not repeated all the information from the main body of the report in this appendix—that is, to avoid repetition we have not defined “local service unit” or “planning assembly.” We are assuming that anyone reading these appendices will have already read the main body of the report and will have a basic understanding of the various components of the proposals. Services in an Urban Environment: Philadelphia

We chose Philadelphia as an example for this type of NA environment. Again, this is just an example – similar environments can be found in many major cities around the world. How Philadelphia would actually look if restructured may differ from the ideas outlined here. The City of Philadelphia and its surrounding counties are currently served by the Greater Philadelphia Region, which contains an estimated 315 groups holding over 445 meetings per week, and the Eastern Pennsylvania Region, which contains an estimated 100 groups holding around 100 meetings per week. Currently these regions consist of 15 ASCs. (These figures are taken from the NAWS database.) It is estimated that there are about 175 meetings in the City of Philadelphia. There are currently six ASCs within the city boundaries.

The Urban GSU

Ideally GSUs will consist of a manageable and productive number of groups. This should be small enough to avoid the excessive expense of renting a large facility, but large enough to draw in the experience needed to make the GSU effective. For instance a GSU may consist of members from around 10-15 groups, as well as any other interested members. In the more densely populated parts of Philadelphia (for example the Inner City ASC in North Philadelphia) this number may be higher, and in the less dense suburban areas it may be lower.

Each GSU will consist of the groups from a Philadelphia “neighborhood.” In some cases we may see groups with a common language come together from across the entire city in a GSU that encompasses a wider geographical area than a neighborhood. For instance, currently there are a number of Spanish-speaking groups in Philadelphia that might want to form a GSU. It could be that there will be around 16 GSUs in the city of Philadelphia.



Whenever possible and practical, the borders of a service body should correspond to those recognized in society at large—cities, counties, and states—so that addicts seeking recovery and the main organizations that interact with addicts can more easily find us. It may also be helpful to remember that clearly naming a service body so that its boundaries are understood

by those outside of NA is desirable.

The most desirable outcome for Philadelphia could be to form one large LSU that encompasses the boundaries of the city and provides the majority of local services. This could reduce the costs and service duplication associated with the current structure of six ASCs, and enable the more efficient coordination and delivery of citywide services. Again, this is just one example of how these proposals might look if concretely applied.

Philadelphia has many independent treatment facilities that are not governed by any central citywide authority in the same way that correctional or medical services are. The Philadelphia LSU could provide services to these facilities by training volunteers, supplying literature for presentations, and maintaining relationships with the facility's staff. The LSU could connect with groups through the LSU delegates to inform members of the need for volunteers and to offer ways for members to get involved.

The section of these proposals devoted to the LSU explains that the LSU is comprised of a local service board and a regular planning conference. In the case of Philadelphia this would mean that the local service board would meet monthly to oversee ongoing services and projects. The entire LSU would meet for planning conferences three or four times a year, with one of these being an annual planning assembly. These three or four meetings would have group and/or GSU delegates in attendance, along with the service board, project coordinators, ongoing service coordinators, and interested members. The exact arrangement for participation would be up to the LSU itself and would most likely depend on whether the Philadelphia groups adopt the linear or two-track option, as that would greatly influence the number of trusted servants attending. Any interested members would be especially encouraged to attend the annual planning assembly.

If the size of the planning conference proves to be challenging, one additional possibility for Philadelphia could be to form an intermediate body that covers part of the city, and that would sit in between the groups and the LSU in the delegation stream. This may help to reduce the number of attendees at the Philadelphia LSU making it more manageably sized. It should be noted, however, that the LSU structure of regular planning meetings and separate board meetings is capable of dealing with larger numbers of participants than the current ASC structure.

Some of the services the Philadelphia LSU could provide are:

- Public relations with the city government
- Public relations with citywide correctional authorities, as well as facilitating services such as security clearance for volunteers
- Coordinating the planning of services in Philadelphia and sharing best practices and resources
- Running a citywide phonenumber
- Producing a citywide (or broader) meeting list
- Holding a Philadelphia convention
- Maintaining relationships and providing PR services to local treatment facilities, including supplying literature and gathering trained volunteers for presentations
- Facilitating local H&I services by publicizing vacant panels, supplying literature for panels, and gathering volunteers
- Acting as a communication link between groups and the rest of the service structure

The Philadelphia LSU may also be responsible for sending delegates to the statewide Pennsylvania service meeting.

The city of Philadelphia is surrounded by the more rural counties of Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Berks. These are currently part of the existing Greater Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania regions, but do not fall within the boundaries of the City of Philadelphia. The number of groups in these counties ranges between approximately 35 and 60. These counties would be encouraged to form their own local service bodies. These would probably consist of a single LSU and 2-3 GSUs for each county. In more rural parts of Pennsylvania it may make sense for an LSU to consist of more than one neighboring county.

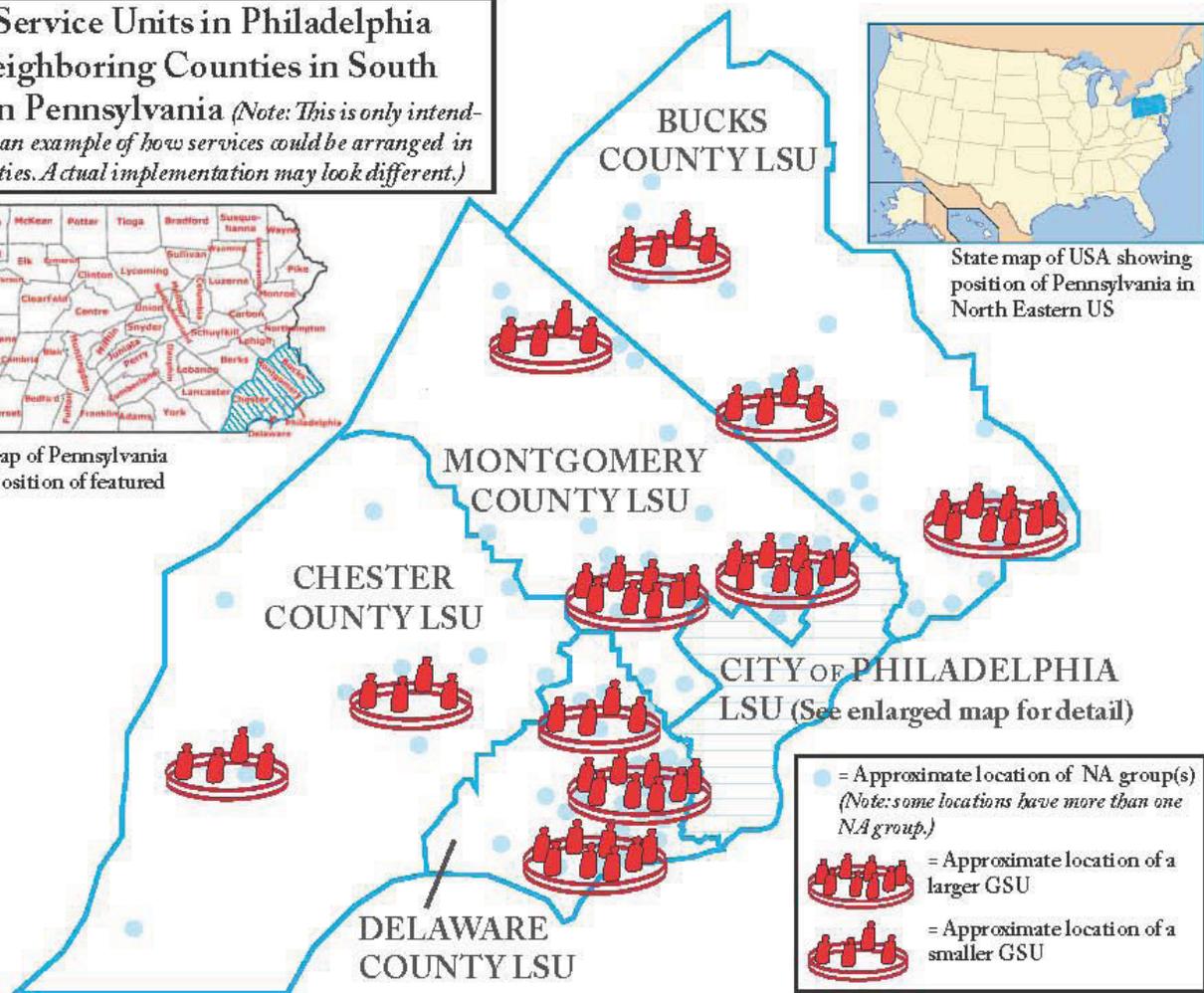
Local Service Units in Philadelphia and Neighboring Counties in South Eastern Pennsylvania *(Note: This is only intended to offer an example of how services could be arranged in these counties. A actual implementation may look different.)*



County map of Pennsylvania showing position of featured counties



State map of USA showing position of Pennsylvania in North Eastern US



Services in a Rural State: Wisconsin

Wisconsin is a state with large rural areas and scattered urban centers, with the greatest concentration of meetings found in the city of Milwaukee. Once again, this is just an example offered to stimulate discussion about how application of the ideas in the proposals *could* work in a similar environment.

There are currently around 380 groups served by 16 areas in the Wisconsin region. (These figures are taken from the NAWS database.) Much of the neighboring state of Michigan's Upper Peninsula is part of the Wisconsin region as it is contiguous to Wisconsin and not to the rest of Michigan. There are also groups situated in northern Illinois and north-eastern Minnesota within the Wisconsin region.

Groups are sparser in the south-western and northern parts of Wisconsin and more concentrated in the south-eastern part. There are 72 counties in Wisconsin, some of which have no NA meetings. Groups either form clumps around sizable towns or are individually scattered across rural areas, often along major roads. It is common for there to be considerable distance between rural groups. Wisconsin also has a regional service office in Oshkosh.

Urban Areas

NA groups in Wisconsin are most dense in the Milwaukee area, and the four neighborhoods in the north, south, east, and west sides of the City of Milwaukee, along with the city center, could form natural boundaries for GSUs. It's reasonable to expect there could be a total of between eight and ten GSUs in Milwaukee County.

Milwaukee is currently served by two ASCs containing around 80 meetings combined. These two ASCs share a meeting list, helpline, and website. It would seem to be practical for a single local service unit covering the County of Milwaukee to continue providing these services, which could be arranged along similar lines to the Philadelphia example.

The Milwaukee ASC also attracts a handful of groups from neighboring Waukesha County. Whether these groups would choose to continue to receive services along with groups in Milwaukee County would depend on what is most practical for them. Waukesha County might also choose to form an LSU if that were a productive option in terms of service provision, or they might defer this decision until later. Similar situations can be found around the other urban centers of Wisconsin and cities in other states and countries as well.

Rural Areas

The LSU will be the main provider of services in rural areas of Wisconsin just as in its urban areas. A largely rural LSU would typically be based wherever there is a concentration of NA meetings, much as our current areas are. Rural LSUs will be composed of varying numbers of counties depending on the density of NA groups within the community. Some could be composed of a few counties, while others, for instance in northern Wisconsin, could consist of a greater number as well as possibly meetings on Native lands. As throughout the system, it is intended that the LSU conforms to recognized boundaries in order to more easily interact with countywide professional and governmental bodies. The basic format would most likely be the same for rural LSUs as it is for those in urban areas, with a series of planning meetings three or more times a year and more frequent meetings of the local service board. As the system is designed to be flexible, each LSU has the option to meet less often if that is appropriate for its resources and workload or to rotate meeting venues if desired.

Rural groups may particularly benefit from the connection a GSU offers. The Waukesha County groups would appear to be a natural example of a GSU, although geographical distance and number of groups could determine if more than one GSU would be formed in the county. It may not be necessary for a GSU to conform to county lines at all as their service delivery role is directed towards its member groups rather than any external body. It could be that groups from neighboring towns that are in different counties could meet as a single GSU. Again local conditions will determine what is practical and sensible. Other groups that are further from more densely populated parts of the state would still form GSUs and meet together whenever possible and practical. GSU meetings could rotate between groups or could happen in a convenient central location, or some combination of the two.

How rural groups choose to participate in the LSU is for them to decide, but may be influenced by factors such as available resources and distance. For some groups the linear model or use of an intermediate body may provide a solution to many of the resource challenges they currently face in attending area meetings, while other groups at the LSU may choose to utilize the two-track model.

Although the LSU provides the majority of local services, it is also true that sometimes rural groups in Wisconsin facilitate services, such as local PI, because the nearest service body is too distant to do it effectively. The reality is that isolated rural communities may continue to satisfy these immediate service needs themselves. Participation in a GSU may make that service delivery easier. The LSU will also be available to help coordinate, give advice, and supply resources. Providing services should not distract a rural GSU from its primary role of group support. Service provision by a GSU should be the exception rather than the norm. GSUs are not intended to become mini-ASCs or LSUs.

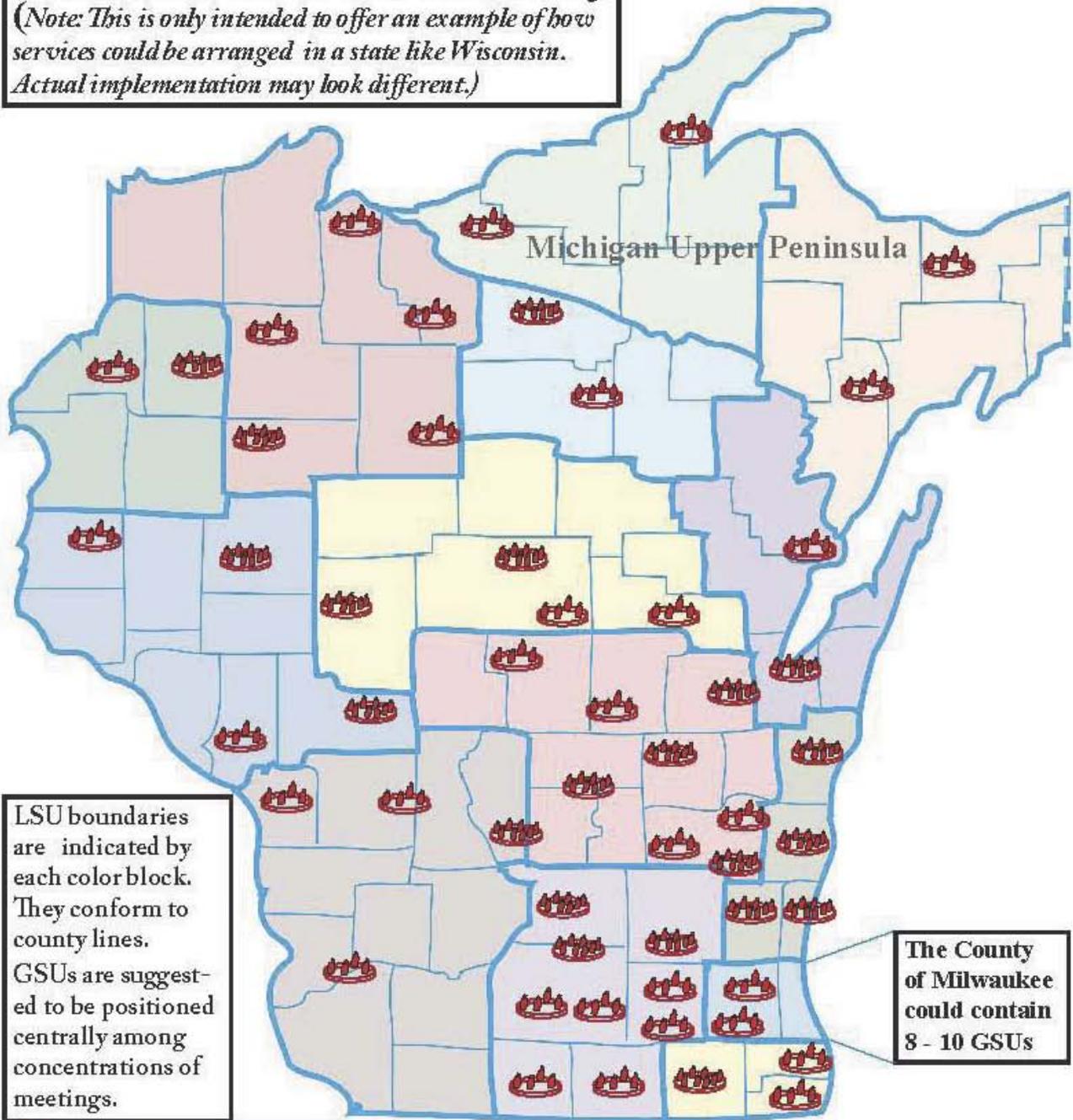
Statewide Services

The [Service System](#) proposals suggest that the state of Wisconsin would be served by a state/national/province service body. This does not represent any significant change from the boundaries of the current Wisconsin Region, except for the Upper Peninsula area of Michigan and some groups and service bodies close to Wisconsin's borders. It may be that these groups could continue to receive support for the local services they deliver from Wisconsin, while also receiving the benefits that their home state service bodies provide, such as improved statewide PR and access to regional websites and helplines. Practical and productive arrangements for border communities are one of the aspects of these proposals that need further discussion.

Wisconsin currently has a statewide helpline that directs calls to individual areas, a regional website with links to area sites, and a statewide meeting search facility. Wisconsin has also been able to deliver an effective program of PR work consisting of, in part, regular attendance at a number of professional events. The regional PR committee in Wisconsin assists local areas with resources for professional conferences as well, and helps with local meeting lists. These successful services can continue to be provided by the Wisconsin State service body. The Wisconsin service body would be formed of LSU delegates and a "state service board" to plan and administer ongoing services and projects. The frequency of this body's meetings could be determined locally. Statewide services may follow the same general pattern as the LSU, with a series of planning meetings with LSU delegates and the state service board in attendance, along with separate meetings of the service board. However, fewer services are administered at the statewide level so the majority of projects would most likely involve statewide public relations and service to LSUs such as training.

Wisconsin State Service Body

(Note: This is only intended to offer an example of how services could be arranged in a state like Wisconsin. Actual implementation may look different.)



LSU boundaries are indicated by each color block. They conform to county lines. GSUs are suggested to be positioned centrally among concentrations of meetings.

The County of Milwaukee could contain 8 - 10 GSUs



State map of USA showing position of Wisconsin and Michigan's Upper Peninsula in the upper midwest of the US

 = Approximate location of a larger GSU
 = Approximate location of a smaller GSU

Services in a Large, Densely Populated Country: Brazil

Brazil has one of the largest concentrations of NA meetings outside the US and Iran. We wanted to provide an example of how a country outside the US might apply these proposals and Brazil's size and large NA population made it seem like a good place to focus. Once again, this is an example of how the proposals could work and is intended to aid discussion and the sharing of ideas. It is not a model to be voted on.

Brazil is the fifth largest country in the world and is divided into 26 states and a Federal District containing the nation's capital of Brasilia. The country's states can be grouped into five regions, which have no political or administrative role and are primarily used for statistical purposes and for allocating federal funds to development projects. Generally Brazilian states have less independence than the state governments of the US.

In addition to the state and federal government, the Brazilian Federation also consists of 5,564 Municipalities. These Municipalities are subdivisions of each of the states, but also have autonomous local governments with the power to approve local laws and collect taxes. All judicial powers, however, are organized at the state and federal level. The number of municipalities in each state varies from 15 to 853.

Brazil is a hugely diverse country, ranging from the vast and sparsely populated forests of the Amazon basin in the north, to São Paulo in the south, one of the world's largest cities. Although Brazil is racially and culturally diverse it has one common language. There is a wide range of approved NA literature available in Portuguese or Brazilian Portuguese, as well as publications such as *NAWS News* and *The NA Way*.

Brazil contains over 2,750 meetings serviced by over 60 ASCs. In some cases, concentrations of ASCs in Brazil formed bodies known as "nucleos." These had clearly defined roles and requirements and were designed as part of a project that offered options for the division of the original single Brazil Region. Nucleos were designed to represent ASCs at the region and to provide services to them. In some cases these nucleos have proven to be the seeds for the formation of regions within Brazil. They have had varying levels of effectiveness, but do seem to have provided an opportunity for groups of ASCs to transition into regions while giving them time to re-evaluate their needs and capabilities.

Currently Brazil has six regions, two of which are seated at the WSC. There is a single service office in Rio de Janeiro that is responsible for printing literature locally and distributing it to the Brazilian regions. Most of these regions have their own offices that take care of distributing literature to ASCs and groups.

Rural Areas

Services for rural groups in Brazil could be arranged along the same lines as those in rural Wisconsin, with groups forming GSUs for mutual support, and receiving services from LSUs. Again, groups would have the choice to use the linear or two-track option for the GSU, as well as the choice of which groups they form GSUs with. As with Wisconsin, the composition of LSUs would vary according to meeting density and distances between groups.

Urban Areas

Services in the urban areas of Brazil would most likely happen in much the same way as those in Philadelphia and urban Wisconsin. Some of the larger cities contain very large NA populations—São Paulo and its suburbs have a population of nearly 20 million people and almost 400 meetings per week. Given the number of meetings in São Paulo, the use of

intermediate bodies may help keep the LSU meeting at a reasonable size. Groups that experience difficulty in attending the LSU meeting also have the opportunity to use the linear option for the GSU in the same way as groups in Philadelphia and Wisconsin do.

State/National/Province Service Bodies

Service bodies that conform to recognized boundaries are encouraged by the proposals. The current six regions of Brazil could potentially be reorganized into four state/national/province service bodies along these lines:

1. São Paulo: The state of São Paulo (the capital of which is the city of São Paulo) currently has two regions, Grande São Paulo and HOW. These have 26 ASCs and 1,200 meetings per week between them. With the use of intermediate bodies if necessary, these could be reformed into around seven to eight LSUs, and a single state/national/province service body. The members are well known to each other and are currently sharing some services so redefining the existing regions in the state of São Paulo could be achievable.

2. Rio de Janeiro/Espirito Santo: The Rio region was formed in May 2009, having been a Nucleo for about six years, and covers the state of Rio de Janeiro. Originally Rio was part of the larger Brazil region. The Rio region has 15 areas and 200 groups holding more than 500 meetings a week across the state, with the greatest concentration located in urban areas. The state of Rio de Janeiro could also contain more than one LSU, and could also join with the neighboring state of Espirito Santo to form a single state/national/province service body with around seven to eight LSUs.

3. Southern Brazil: the current South Brazil Region consists of the states of Paraná and Santa Catarina. The southernmost state of Brazil, Rio Grande do Sul, has recently also become a separate region. One possible arrangement is to combine these three states into a single state/national/province service body. Each state could contain multiple LSUs.

4. The remaining states in the central, northern, and north-eastern parts of Brazil currently form the Brazil Region. Many of these states are sparsely populated or currently have small NA populations. Some of these states will be able to form single LSUs that provide services within their borders. Others could combine to form LSUs that serve multiple states in a similar way to the rural areas of Wisconsin. All of these states could be grouped into a single state/national/province service body. Intermediate bodies may help the more geographically distant LSUs connect with the state/national/province service body.

Brazilian National Services

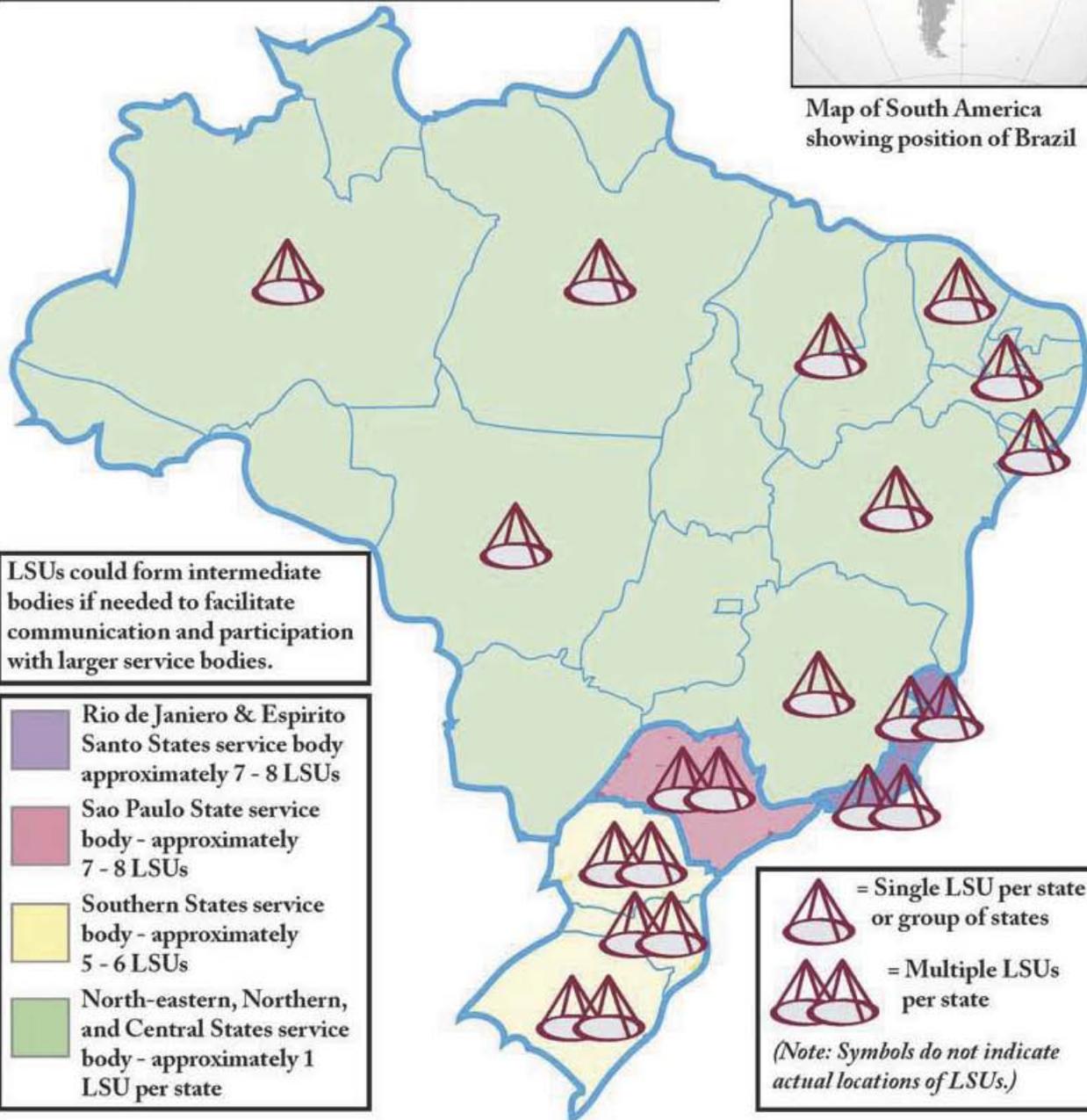
(Note: This is only intended to offer an example of how services could be arranged in a country like Brazil. Actual implementation may look different.)

Brazil could possibly be divided into four service bodies formed of groups of states (with the exception of Sao Paulo State that would form a service body by itself). The boundaries for these are indicated by each color block.

More densely populated states may contain multiple LSUs. Less densely populated states may contain only one LSU, or may combine with other states to form a single LSU.



Map of South America showing position of Brazil



National Services

Providing services on a national level in a country the size of Brazil presents some logistical challenges. The Brazilian regions have recently formed the Brazilian Zonal Forum, which meets three times a year at different regional meetings and holds workshops on different NA topics. It consists of delegates from the six Brazilian regions and an administrative body made up of a chair, vice-chair, treasurer, and secretary. Their travel is funded by donations from the regions.

The four reorganized state service bodies may connect with the Brazilian Zonal Forum body by sending delegates in the same way as the current regions do.

The Brazilian Zonal Forum is quite new and is actively discussing its future role, whether it is that of a sharing body or a service provision body. It may be that it eventually occupies a position somewhere in between these roles and could provide a platform for the provision of national services, making it the state/national/province service body suggested by the proposals. The possible tasks for a Brazil-wide body include:

- Helping the Rio service office to coordinate the supply of literature for the groups in Brazil

- PR with government agencies

- Strategic planning

- The sharing of resources between different NA communities in Brazil

- Coordinating translations in Brazil

- A Brazilian national convention

If a countrywide service delivery body formed, it could utilize a similar process of planning and meetings as the Wisconsin service body.

WSC Seating

At this time, it has not been decided which bodies from large countries like Brazil will be seated at the WSC. While most or many countries outside the US will just have one nationwide service body, some places like Brazil (or Mexico, India, and Russia) may have more than one service body consisting of multiple LSUs within their borders, using state boundaries or combinations of states to form seated bodies. It is not clear at this time whether the state/national/province service bodies in Brazil or some sort of service body covering the nation as a whole, like the current Brazilian Zonal Forum, would be responsible for sending delegates to the WSCs.

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There are, however, two other issues that may potentially generate motions in new business. We plan to discuss both of these issues at the conference before determining how to move forward. The first relates to the future of regional motions or proposals after we have all experienced the experiment with regional proposals this cycle. The second is the question of what we want to do about the future of WSC seating, given the fact that the moratorium expires at the end of this conference and we will have related discussions about the [Service System](#) proposals at the WSC.

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KRA: Internal Communication

Issue: Relevance of Communication

OBJECTIVE 1: Better frame, develop, and target key messages for consistent delivery at all levels of the Service System.

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KRA: External Communication

Issue: PR/Outreach

OBJECTIVE 3: Develop cooperative relationships throughout the Service System with addiction professionals, researchers, policymakers and others to enhance perception of NA as a credible program of recovery.

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KRA: Fellowship Support

Issue: Service System Revitalization

OBJECTIVE 4: Transition from a service structure to a Service System that is driven by unity in fulfilling our primary purpose and that is flexible in meeting the diverse service needs and goals of NA communities.

Outcomes: By 2014 . . .

- 4.1 Experience and results are captured from communities who are already implementing parts of the new system.
- 4.2 A transition/implementation plan for the new system is completed.
- 4.3 More communities are guided and inspired by A Vision for NA Service.

Existing Approaches to Be Carried Over Into 2012-2014

- A. Develop, as needed, any new tools that arise from Service System Project discussions. This could include items like a regional reunification template.
- B. Take the next steps for the Service System Project based on results of fellowship feedback at WSC 2012. This includes developing details of the system as well as a transition/implementation plan.

New Approaches for 2012-2014

- C. Develop a template to gather information from communities who are implementing parts of the Service System Proposals to help determine the effectiveness of the ideas and the challenges of implementation.

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Issue: Financial Responsibility

12.1 Beginning at the group level, the level of fellowship contributions have

increased throughout the [Service System](#), including NAWS.

12.3 There is a greater understanding of the need to fund the entire [Service System](#), all the pieces of which must be strong in order for the whole to be effective in fulfilling the NA vision.

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Proposed 2012–2014 Project Plans

A time frame of more than one cycle for a project usually only applies to major undertakings like the [Service System](#) Project or book length pieces of literature.

The project plans proposed for 2010–2012 are:

[Service System](#)

This is the third cycle of this project whose focus is to develop options for a [Service System](#) – the people, resources, processes, and structure – designed to best serve our worldwide fellowship in more effectively carrying the message. In the 2008–2010 cycle we drafted A Vision for NA Service, which was passed at WSC 2010, where participants also began discussing ideas for alternatives to our current structure/system. Fellowshipwide discussions were held throughout the 2010–2012 cycle and a series of resolutions will be voted on at WSC 2012 to come to agreement about the basic ideas that underpin any future work on the project.

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Fellowship Issue Discussions

Purpose and scope:

All of these principles contain ideas that affect us as a fellowship now and a common understanding would not only help us now, but could improve and inform our ongoing discussions about the [Service System](#).

The objectives, outcomes, and approaches which led to this project plan are:

Issue: Relevance of Communication

OBJECTIVE 1: Better frame, develop, and target key messages for consistent delivery at all levels of the service system.

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[Service System](#)

Purpose and scope:

This project came about after several cycles of discussions about the service structure and what was working and not working. For years, the same challenges have been identified: duplication of efforts, too much time spent in administrative detail, tension-filled service meetings, and lack of resources, to name just a few. The number one topic chosen at worldwide workshops for many cycles was always *how to get people involved or interested in service*. Clearly we have a systemic problem that went beyond simple attraction.

WSC 2008 unanimously adopted this project with the following focuses:

Develop a vision for all NA service efforts and begin to explore best practices and options for local service delivery. This project will be rooted in an analysis of the success factors that work across our service structure, as well as allow for flexibility in meeting unique local needs. This will ultimately result in a rewrite of *A Guide to Local Services in Narcotics Anonymous*. We expect that the first cycle of this project will be focused on gathering options and presenting them for discussion in the fellowship.

WSC 2010 unanimously reaffirmed the project with the following description in the project plan:

The focus of this project is to find alternatives that can assist us to provide effective, efficient, and planned service delivery which will help us to better carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers. We have presented a common vision for all NA services for approval in the 2010 *Conference Agenda Report*. . . . Additionally, we will be providing our initial thoughts about possible alternative [Service System](#) models, including the issue of WSC seating to WSC 2010 for discussion.

Pending decisions and discussions at WSC 2012, what we hope to present to WSC 2014 is a better description and definition of components of the proposed system as well as a transition plan that describes ways to get from where we are to this new system – one that is accomplished in stages to allow for continuity of services

This project is at the point that to move forward will require partnership and dialogue between the WB and the delegates. To move these ideas forward will require all of us to be informed resources for our members, particularly those who are just beginning to realize that we are actively working to improve our [Service System](#). The World Board will maintain overall responsibility for the work. Rather than creating another workgroup, this will be our major focus this cycle and we have allocated funds to use focus groups as needed. Our hope and desire is that our ongoing dialogue will help us all better focus on how to more effectively deliver services and carry the message.

This project will continue to develop options for the [Service System](#) – the people, resources, processes, and structure – that will best serve our worldwide fellowship. At the same time, we hope to have some service tools developed that support our [Service System](#).

The objectives, outcomes, and approaches which led to this project plan are:

Issue: [Service System](#) Revitalization

OBJECTIVE 4: Transition from a service structure to a [Service System](#) that is driven by unity in fulfilling our primary purpose and that is flexible in meeting the diverse service needs and goals of NA communities.

Outcomes: By 2014 . . .

4.1 Experience and results are captured from communities who are already implementing parts of the new system.

4.2 A transition/implementation plan for the new system is completed.

4.3 More communities are guided and inspired by A Vision for NA Service.

Existing Approaches to Be Carried Over Into 2012-2014

A. Develop, as needed, any new tools that arise from [Service System](#) Project discussions. This could

include items like a regional reunification template.

B. Take the next steps for the Service System Project based on results of fellowship feedback at WSC 2012. This includes developing details of the system as well as a transition/implementation plan.

New Approaches for 2012-2014

C. Develop a template to gather information from communities who are implementing parts of the Service System Proposals to help determine the effectiveness of the ideas and the challenges of implementation.

Direct expense items:

Possible fellowship interfaces and focus group expenses \$ 100,000

Direct project expenses: \$ 100,000

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Public Relations

Purpose and scope:

The objectives, outcomes, and approaches which led to this project plan are:

Issue: PR/Outreach

OBJECTIVE 3: Develop cooperative relationships throughout the Service System with addiction professionals, researchers, policymakers and others to enhance perception of NA as a credible program of recovery.

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Trusted Servant Support and Development

Purpose and scope:

As well as the material in the Service System Project Plan, the objectives, outcomes, and approaches which led to this project plan are:

Issue: Involvement in Service

OBJECTIVE 9: Create an environment in which members' talents, experience and ideas can be recognized, appreciated and engaged in all levels of service.

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Status of Projects Adopted for the 2010–2012 Cycle

Service System Project

This work was adopted in 2008 with the plan that it would be a two-conferencecycle project. The results of this two-cycle project are contained in the 2012

CAR. Pending conference decision, we will offer a transition focused plan for 2012–2014.

2012-2014 NAWS Proposed Budget

	06/30/11 YTD ACTUAL	7/1/10-10/31/11 annualized	Proposed Base July 2012 - June 2013	Proposed Base July 2013 - June 2014	Consolidated Base for Fiscal Years 2012-2014
LEADERSHIP ORIENTATION MATERIAL	0	0	0	0	0
FELLOWSHIP ISSUE DISCUSSIONS	2	2	25,000	0	25,000
SERVICE SYSTEM	146,348	116,040	50,000	50,000	100,000
BOOK-LENGTH PIECE - TRADITIONS	67,740	50,805	15,000	35,000	50,000
MEMBER EXPERIENCE PROJECT	0	0	2,000	2,000	4,000
FINISHED WSC PROJECTS	587	440	0	0	0
Subtotal	\$214,677	\$167,287	\$92,000	\$87,000	\$179,000

Conference Report (2012-04-20) 448 pgs

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For many, the biggest topic of discussion for this conference has been the Service System resolutions, straw polls, and proposal report. It's been a long time since we can remember anything that has generated so much passionate interest, enthusiasm, and controversy heading into a conference.

With our unity as our foundation and touchstone, we will discuss and decide on the future of the Service System project and so much more.

Even if there were no discussions or decisions about the Service System, there would still be much to do at this conference.

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The sessions for these topics were released later in the cycle than usual due to our efforts to engage the fellowship in a dialogue about the Service System Project, and the sessions are primarily aimed at helping familiarize members with the newly approved materials.

While there isn't much to be said about the input related to IDTs over this past cycle, we will certainly have no shortage of topics to discuss, including the Service System, WSC seating, and literature development, to name just a few.

The following 6 pages were extracted from a PDF. Any instance of the term, “Service System” are not in red but are highlighted.

Monday – 30 April 2012

The Lie is Dead: NA meetings are held poolside at 7:00 am, as well as in the evening when the conference adjourns, each and every day!

Service System/Delegate Survey Results	9:00 am – 10:30 pm
Old Business Discussion	11:00 – 12:30 pm
Lunch	12:30 – 2:00 pm
Old Business Discussion and Decisions	2:00 – 6:00 pm
Dinner	to be determined

Service System

The **Service System** Project has already taught us a lot, but perhaps nothing has been brought into focus more clearly than the fact that our communication methods do not work well enough. The **Service System** Project was a long time coming before it was ever formally introduced, and we've been actively working on the project and proposals for four years now. We have been using all available methods to try to keep interested members informed, yet many are just now "tuning in."

We have repeatedly been asked the question "where did this come from?" The **service system** webpage www.na.org/servicesystem contains a number of background documents giving the history of the project and of our reporting about the project. This is a great place to refer members in your regions who have questions about the project or its history. As we prepare to make decisions related to the project, it may be helpful for us to review the history again here. At this conference we will collectively decide how to move forward, and knowing where we've come from may help us make those decisions.

Where Did the Project Come From?

2004

After hearing year after year about the same struggles to provide services on a local level—at worldwide workshops and zonal forums, in emails and calls to world services, and through input on related topics—in

2004 we offered an Issue Discussion Topic on "Infrastructure." The *Conference Agenda Report* from that year describes it this way:

There is a direct connection between the strength of local services and our fellowship's overall ability to carry the message. The growth and continuation of our program of recovery depends on each level of service to provide specific, ongoing support. But, of course, local service committees sometimes struggle to meet the challenges before them. We know that the development of resource material is part of the solution, and we are dedicated to that effort, but what more can we do? How can we all move closer to the fulfillment of our vision . . . ? The work we do together will determine how accessible we are to addicts, the impression we make on society, and how well we carry our message. We look forward to discussing these issues at the conference.

2004 Conference Agenda Report, page 8

For two years, the fellowship talked about "infrastructure" and at the end of that time, it seemed clear to most of us involved in that discussion that things weren't working as well as they could. We needed to take a broad look at what we were then calling our service "structure"—what we are now calling our service "system"—rather than continuing to make piecemeal improvements. It was time to examine the system as a whole and talk together about how it could be improved.

2006

The 2006 *CAR* explains:

Our service structure was originally designed to meet the needs of a much different fellowship. At the time when our service structure was first being developed, NA was smaller, more homogenous, and less geographically far-flung, to point to just a few of the ways in which we've changed over the decades. Although the principles that motivate our service remain, and will always remain, the same, it seems time that we reexamine what we do and how we do it and see if what we have meets our needs. This is another instance where form should follow function but often does not. There is no perfect structure that will address all of our needs, but what we have heard from these discussions is that there certainly could be improvement.

2006 Conference Agenda Report, page 22

That *CAR* included several questions for discussion about infrastructure. The second question in the *CAR* asked:

"What about the current structure could be better suited to carrying the message?"

Most answers fell under one of the following broad topics.

- **Communication**—better coordination, use of technology, accurate meeting information; more effective communication across language barriers
- **Training/Education**—education about service structure and principles, better information given to new meetings, mentorship, service workshops, clearer expectations of trusted servants
- **Money**—meetings having trouble paying rent; trusted servants not consistently funded
- **Involvement**—more interested, skilled, and committed members in service; better fit of talent to task; more involvement of groups in area, areas in region; more attractive service; more PI work; more H&I work

- **ASC structure and ASC meeting itself**—better focus in area meeting perhaps incorporate workshop approach, better coordination of efforts, better communication, need to take area (or regional) inventory, some said their area has just the right amount of subcommittees, others said there are perhaps too many
- **Unity**—need more unity within and between areas; stronger home groups; several regions experienced challenges from areas that have split, dissolved, or somehow broken from the region
- **Attitude**—several responses talked about needing to be more positive or open-minded
- **Recovery meetings**—need more meetings or more diverse meetings, more varied formats, also, many wrote about improving the atmosphere of recovery in meetings

The answers to those *CAR* questions affirmed our sense that the problems we were facing in delivering services locally were systemic. That is, they were not just about the service structure or some piece of the structure; they had to do with all elements of the **service system**: structure, processes, people, and resources.

Again we realized we needed to continue talking about the issues. In the 2006 *Conference Report* we explained:

Although we had a project plan approved at WSC 2004 to define the roles of the service structure, we now believe that we need to have these more basic discussions first. The next step in having a "holistic discussion" means talking not only about the ways in which the various "levels" of service (groups, areas, regions, and zones) relate to each other, but also about the ways in which subcommittees operate within an area and the ways in which neighboring areas communicate and cooperate with each other.

2006 Conference Report, page 34

At the 2006 World Service Conference we had a session on infrastructure and talked about continuing the momentum of the discussions by introducing a related Issue Discussion Topic for the cycle ahead.

2006-2008

In the 2006–2008 cycle, then, one of the topics was “Our **Service System**.” We included an insert on the IDTs in *The NA Way Magazine* that said:

This is where the topic of Our **Service System** came from. There seemed to be a need to have a “holistic discussion” about how the various “levels” of service (groups, areas, regions, and zones) relate to each other, the ways in which subcommittees operate within an area, and how neighboring areas communicate and cooperate with each other. The Area Planning Tool, presented with the *Public Relations Handbook*, is one way world services has tried to help areas address this need for more effective planning and coordination of services. Yet, this tool cannot be useful without local discussions about how we can better work together to carry NA’s message.

Again, we spent two years discussing the **service system** as a whole and how it could be improved. At the end of that two years, we reported on the implications of that discussion in the *Conference Agenda Report*.

Repeatedly over the course of these four years, we have heard that we need better communication, less duplication of efforts, more training, and more effective delegation, among many other responses. We need to find a way to make service more attractive, more accessible, and more supportive. Interestingly enough, these are all observations that were repeatedly made about world services in the 1980s and early 1990s. Many of you will remember that we ceased all but essential services to devote our attention to an inventory, and the results of that inventory led to a restructuring of world services, including the adoption of our vision statement in 1996 and the creation of the World Board in 1998. Almost immediately, we began to see improvements, and we continued to suggest smaller improvements to the structure (e.g., reducing the size of the board). While, of course, things aren’t perfect in world services today, they are greatly improved on every front.

But while we made huge structural changes to world services, little has changed on the local level. We’re not suggesting that local service bodies should cease all but essential services for a years-long inventory process, but we are thinking that we need to reexamine our service structure in a broad sense. Perhaps some of our chronic problems mentioned above can be alleviated through restructuring local services in some way.

2008 Conference Agenda Report, page 13

At that conference we presented a plan for the **Service System** Project and the conference passed it by unanimous consent.

We offer this detailed history to provide some context for the project and the material that the fellowship is being asked to consider in the 2012 *CAR*. It may be helpful at this conference to think back to some of those discussions in 2004, 2006, and 2008, and consider where we are now. Are we struggling with the same issues? Do we feel things have improved?

Where We Are Now

Since 2008, the **Service System** Project has been a considerable focus of World Services. From the beginning we have said that we know that the project cannot be successful without the broad-based support of the fellowship and, with that in mind, we have used every method available to us to spread the word and gather input about what was going well locally and what members felt needed improvement. We even held five workshops in the US solely devoted to the subject to help explain the first draft **Service System** Proposals. We had never devoted workshops to a single subject like this before, but we wanted to use all the tools available to us to inform members about the project.

There has been a great deal of discussion and debate about the ideas in the proposals. Some communities have already made some structural or procedural changes inspired by the project. For instance, some places have formed neighborhood-sized informal meetings to discuss group needs. Some are trying to implement and develop guidelines for a local service board and a quarterly planning assembly. Other places are discussing how the boundaries of their area or region might be affected by a transition to a new **service system**.

At the same time, some other communities are upset by the ideas in the resolutions and/or proposals. They are anxious about the possibility of losing their "voice" at the conference, or about reuniting with neighboring areas or regions, or about losing the ability to be self-determining. We have talked with members at *CAR* workshops and through email or phone calls, and tried to explain the reasoning behind the proposals and resolutions. Some specific concerns we've heard at *CAR* workshops are discussed below, and of course, we will all get an opportunity to talk further at the WSC.

Unfortunately, it seems like some members have determined to reject the project as a whole rather than giving specific concerns or ideas about what they would like to see. That

position makes it difficult to have a conversation about how to move forward. This project originated because we heard so often that so many aspects of our service delivery in NA could be improved. The **Service System** Project is devoted to generating ideas for better service delivery and yet we've had a difficult time getting members to engage with specific ideas for improvement.

Sadly, perhaps the majority of our members are just hearing about the **Service System** Project for the first time in the last few months. We opened this section lamenting our dysfunctional communication system, and one of the consequences of that lack of communication can be confusion or ill will. Though we have been doing our best to keep people informed, it's easy for those who are just learning about the project to feel as though there has been secret or clandestine planning going on behind their backs and that "world services is trying to tell us what to do." Addicts are not, by nature, trusting people. When we think information has been kept from us, we have a tendency to assume the worst.

WSC 2012

Hopefully this conference will be a watershed and we can move forward together dealing with the *reality* of the ideas for change. Some of you may object to some of those ideas or be skeptical about whether they will be effective. You may be carrying a conscience from your region about the notion of quarterly planning assemblies, for instance, or how geographic boundaries may or may not function well where you live and serve. Those are the sorts of ideas that can effectively be discussed at the conference, and if we are to proceed with the project, these are details we will want to address in a transition plan. We hope to be able to use the results of the delegate survey to help frame some of these discussions.

Resolutions, Straw Polls, and Proposals

Admittedly there has been some confusion about the different types of materials related to the **Service System** Project that are in this year's *CAR*.

Resolutions are asking, "Do you support these ideas *in principle*?" Straw polls ask, "Do you support *these specific ways* that those general principles may be put into practice?" (The proposal report gives more detail about the specifics measured in the straw polls.)

Here's a metaphorical example:

Resolution = We need to raise our own chickens.

Straw Poll = We should keep the chickens in coops.

Motion = Here are the blueprints for a coop. Do you want to build a coop like this?

If there is support for all of the resolutions and the plan for the **Service System** Project passes during new business, then the board will, over the course of the next cycle, develop a "better description and definition of components of the proposed system as well as a transition plan that describes ways to get from where we are to this new system—one that is accomplished in stages to allow for continuity of services" (from the **Service System** Project Plan in the 2012 CAT). At the end of that cycle, the board will present related motions for the 2014 conference.

One line of questioning that has come up repeatedly at *CAR* workshops is "What happens if the resolutions don't pass, or if some of them pass and others don't, or if they pass and the project plan does not?" In all of these cases, we will probably need to have a discussion at the conference to determine how the fellowship wants to proceed.

As to the question, "How do we stop the project?" As with any project, the simplest way to stop it is to vote against the project plan when it's offered. Of course, we hope it will not come to that.

To be frank, we think some of the opposition to the project stems from misunderstanding. Here are some of the things we have heard at *CAR* workshops:

Resolution Two

We've heard some complain that this resolution separates group services and group voice from the rest of the service structure. We believe there may be a misunderstanding about what this resolution actually says about the group's relation to the overall **service system**. First, it says that the **service system** is group-focused. Then it says there will be a body devoted solely to group needs. Groups can still send a trusted servant to the body that conducts service locally, just as they do now to the ASC. In fact the **Service System** Proposals describe just such a structure: the "two-track" model that is the preferred option in the proposals. In short, nothing is being taken away from the groups; the resolution measures support for the idea that the **service system** is group-focused and includes a place where group concerns are specifically addressed.

Resolution Seven

Some people seem to think that this resolution "violates" the Ninth Tradition, that making decisions "at the next level of service" is in conflict with the idea that boards or committees are "directly responsible to those they serve." The resolution actually calls for "a collaborative planning process and agreement with other affected service bodies **at** [not **by**] the next level of service." What is being described here is not a mandate handed down to a local service body by a state, nation, or province, but rather a collaborative discussion about boundaries and responsibilities of service bodies, and a joint agreement among those local service bodies as to where to draw the lines. That collaboration would most logically take place at the next level of service.

Resolution Eight

We've heard concern from some about losing their regional vote or "voice" at the conference. Interestingly, other regions have told us that they look forward to reconnecting with the region they split off

from, regardless of the overall effect on their conference seat(s).

We must, as a conference, deal with the issue of seating regardless of what happens to Resolution Eight and the **Service System** Project as a whole. Making decisions about seating is going to require us all to think about the good of NA and the future of the conference as a whole, above and beyond any of our individual concerns. This affects everyone, but discussion has become focused on the US because most US regions were seated before there were any conference seating criteria.

We don't want to minimize the concern some regions have expressed that their region's voice is unique and distinct compared to its neighboring region in the same state. That's actually a logic that could extend to an infinite number of communities in states, provinces, and countries worldwide. Urban communities differ from rural ones, southern from northern, mountain from valley; but many of those vastly different places manage to share a regional seat at the conference presently. We need to find a fair way to think about seating for the future of the conference.

The WSC cannot continue to grow unchecked, and we have to continue to make room at the table for new communities. Using state, national, or provincial boundaries is a relatively objective way to begin to describe criteria for seating, but if the conference rejects that as a premise, we still need to develop a set of criteria for future seating.

Delegate Survey Results

Another thing we hope to accomplish in this session is reporting on the delegate survey results and talking about how they compare with what we said in the *Conference Report* and *Conference Agenda Report* in 2004 and 2006.

Before the conference, we surveyed delegates and alternates and asked them a series of questions about the functioning of the region and areas, how well RD and AD roles are defined, and whether there is a

mechanism for RCM training. We also asked which of the **service system** foundational principles the RSC seems to be strongest in realizing and which needs the most help. This session will summarize some of the results of that survey and use that information to begin a discussion about where we might best focus efforts in the cycles ahead.

Old Business/Discussion Session

We heard from a number of you that the 2012 *Conference Agenda Report* was a bit overwhelming. This *CAR* has a number of different kinds of items it asks members to consider.

World Board motions and resolutions, which are a form of motion, will be the only *CAR* items voted on in formal business. As such, the decisions on these items will be binding. Some regions, we know, have ideas for modifying the motions or resolutions. Normally, those ideas would be submitted as amendments, discussed and straw polled in the discussion session of old business, and then introduced again during formal business. At this conference, we are hoping we can extend the "regional proposal experiment" to apply to amendments as well—whether made by delegates or board members—and discuss and decide on ideas for modifying motions during the discussion portion of the Old Business session. If so, motions, including resolutions, will be introduced to formal business as amended—if there is support for an idea to change a motion.

The other items in the *CAR* will all be discussed and straw polled but, as straw polls and proposals, are not intended to be items for formal business. The **service system** straw polls are intended for informational purposes—to give the board a better idea of the level of support for specific parts of the **service system** proposals. If the conference decides to move forward with the project, this information will be essential.

Regional proposals, as we mention above in the description of the orientation session, are an experiment this year. For more than a

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Service System Project This project was adopted unanimously at WSC 2008 and reaffirmed through unanimous consent at WSC 2010. The 2012 Conference Agenda Report has a series of resolutions and straw polls related to the project as well as the third draft of the proposals. The Conference Approval Track material contains a project plan for the Service System for the 2012–2014 cycle. We have revamped the Service System Project webpage: www.na.org/servicesystem making it easier to navigate. We moved older, archival content off the front page and updated the material on the front page as well. The webpage contains links to everything we have published about the project, including compilations of all of the articles about the Service System Project that have been published in The NA Way Magazine and NAWS News.

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IDTs for 2010–2012

As most conference participants already know, materials for the IDTs identified in 2010 were rolled out much later in the cycle than usual. These IDTs—A Vision for NA Service, Self-Support, and In Times of Illness—all related back to materials approved at WSC 2010. Two of these topics—A Vision for NA Service and Self-Support—merit further discussion in the cycle ahead. The Vision topic is closely tied to the ongoing work of the Service System Project, and regardless of the outcomes of the Service System discussions and decisions at this conference, A Vision for NA Service remains a reference point that all NA groups and service bodies can use to guide their work. Our vision is tied to our primary purpose and helps focus us in our efforts to carry the message.

We also have talked about new Issue Discussion Topics. As part of our discussions surrounding the Service System Project, the need for clarity around some of the principles in our Traditions and Concepts has become apparent. In particular, many members seem to be confused about the principles of group conscience and delegation—even to the degree that some claim the principles are in conflict with each another.

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Depending on the conference discussions about the Service System Project, we may also develop materials to encourage local discussion about the future of NA’s local service delivery.

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Our failure to reach so many members despite such an extensive effort to inform people and gather input on the Service System Project is a good example of our current struggles

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Elections, Presentation of Budget, and Project Plans

Two of the project plans we are presenting are categorized as “essential” or carryover: Fellowship Issue Discussions and Service System.

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Communications

As we mentioned earlier in this report, an excellent example of our challenges with communication can be found in some of the responses to the [Service System](#) Project late in this conference cycle.

The First Tradition reminds us that “NA unity should come first,” but as individuals suffering from self-centeredness, we may be tempted to act as if the autonomy spoken of in the Fourth Tradition supersedes the unity in the First. Collaboration is an essential trait of a healthy [Service System](#); the autonomy we enjoy extends only so far as it affects “other groups or NA as a whole.” All elements of the system must work together if we are to get closer to achieving our vision.

Delegation/ Accountability/ Group Conscience

This session also touches on a concern that we have heard as part of our discussions around the [Service System](#) Project. That is, some members appear to be having a difficult time reconciling the principles of group conscience and delegation in NA service.

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Early in the cycle, a great deal of our workshop and fellowship interaction activity was focused on the [Service System](#) Project. Based on the response to the first draft of the proposals at WSC 2010, we knew it was necessary to hold workshops to explain the ideas to interested members so that we could gather informed input. Following the series of workshops held throughout the US in late 2010, we reduced our level of participation with US zones in the first half of the conference cycle. We remain committed to attending meetings of the non-US zones, as these provide unique chances to interact directly with members and trusted servants from many different communities in a single setting.

Since WSC 2010, we were able to participate in more than fifty fellowship events (including the five service system workshops held around the US in the early part of the cycle), and we were able to conduct almost a dozen public relations trips.

As we mentioned in the previous Conference Report, we seem to have two main challenges as an organization when it comes to self-support. First, members do not seem to see a clear connection between putting money in the basket in a meeting and paying for the services our fellowship provides. Second, the funds that do reach our [Service System](#) get caught in bottlenecks at various levels of service, failing to adequately fund the services carried out at all levels.

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Regional Reports Summary – WSC 2012

The [Service System](#) Project

The [Service System](#) Project featured in many of the responses to several of the questions and appears to have been the predominant topic of conversation throughout the fellowship over the last conference cycle. Nearly two-thirds of the regions who reported holding service workshops held some of them on the [Service System](#). In most cases there were multiple events in each region, making a total of hundreds of [Service System](#) workshops throughout NA. In addition, when we asked what subject generated the most discussion over the past cycle over two-thirds of regions responded with “the [Service System](#) Project.”

The project also featured in the challenges that some regions reported; mainly in the form of conveying the information and involving members. Regions reported challenges such as:

- Getting full fellowship participation in the [Service System](#) project before any action is

attempted with regards to changes in the current service structure

However we also heard from some regions who reported successes related to the project, both in trying out some of the structural ideas such as group support units, and using some of the process ideas such as consensus-based decision-making and planning.

- Planning facilitates things in our community, this is a common practice in our RSC and almost all areas are starting to use planning. This is a success.
- We don't have sub-committees... we have multiple projects that are plan driven, we utilize a Human Resource Panel to better involve our manpower and develop trusted servants and use a form of CBDM.

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Planning

When we asked about planning we heard mostly about area and regional inventories, and creating budgets. We also heard about several communities trying out some of the service system project ideas such as holding annual planning assemblies, forming projects, and utilizing a planning cycle as outlined in Planning Basics.

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Innovations

Reported successes offered some more encouraging news. In addition to the successes related to the [Service System](#) Project we also read about successes in public relations.

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Conference Input

When we asked if there was anything delegates particularly wanted to discuss at the WSC we heard a wide range of topics ranging from local issues to our roles as part of a global fellowship. Only one issue came up over and over: not surprisingly it was the [Service System](#) Project. The majority of reports said they just wanted to discuss it more, but some focused on how the proposals would affect areas like apathy, communication, and local service; how we transition to a new system and the timeframe for this; and WSC seating. No other issue produced more than two or three suggestions.

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Challenges continue to be the same we have heard about at previous conferences: primarily difficulty with disseminating information, particularly beyond the RCMs. The information related to the [Service System](#) Project was particularly mentioned a number of times. We also heard that the workload could be daunting for some delegates, and that their communities still struggle to attract enough members to service.

PDF Pg – 161, Report Pg - 95

WSC 2012 Regional Reports

Finnish region

Delegate Experience

What has worked well and what challenges have you experienced in your role as RD? cooperation with other delegates and with Sweden fellowship. We have a bigger picture

in our committee of service now. We don't argue of expenses of RD. Challenge is to bring [Service System](#) proposals to our fellowship.

PDF – Pg 262, Report Pg – 196

Minnesota Region

Early New [Service System](#) Trial

NA Groups in the rural southwest formed a Group Service Unit (GSU) in July of this year. As they report, "It's all about getting back to the basics." They have decided to take small steps and focus on specific goals/projects when they meet and, most of all, to build a community! Their first goal was to get members with some clean time down to Worthington as they have lots of newcomers, but minimal clean time. As a result, they started a third meeting in town. They have an email/phone list started and expect the organization to grow over the coming months as they accumulate successes and communicate them to the local groups. Representation at the ASC is officially unchanged as no decision has been made about sending one representative to area. More details will be available in our report in 2014.

PDF – 448, Report Pg - 382

Plains States Zonal Forum Report to WSC 2012

The topics we conducted workshops on at zone in the 2010-2012 conference cycle were [Service System](#) Proposal (1st draft and 2nd drafts), Meeting Etiquette, Fund Flow, Consensus Based Decision Making, Zone History, Money Matters, Leadership, Who's Missing, H&I, United States Fellowship Assembly, and the CAR/CAT (presented by a world board member).

[Summary of Decisions \(2012-06-11\) 26 pgs](#)

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ADOPTED MOTIONS

(LISTED IN THE ORDER THEY WERE INTRODUCED)

Old Business

Resolution 2: It was M/C World Board

To Approve in Principle: The [Service System](#) is group-focused and includes a local-level body dedicated exclusively to addressing group concerns.

Resolution required simple majority. Carried by voice vote

Resolution 3: It was M/C World Board

To Approve in Principle: Training and mentoring of trusted servants are essential functions of the [Service System](#).

Resolution required simple majority. Carried by voice vote

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Motion #9 It was M/C World Board

To approve the [Service System](#) project plan for inclusion in the 2012-2014 Narcotics Anonymous World Services, Inc. budget.

Carried by voice vote

PROPOSALS NOT SUPPORTED IN STRAW POLLS
(LISTED IN THE ORDER THEY WERE INTRODUCED)

Proposal AC Don M (RD Show-Me)

The Service System Proposal be dropped from the budget of WSO.

Intent: The SSP has the process backwards. If the fellowship saw a need to change the service structure we would have asked for it in the form of a motion, not instigated by the World Board.

Straw Poll Results: strong opposition

SERVICE SYSTEM STRAW POLLS

Straw Poll a *There is a small, neighborhood-sized body devoted to group needs. This group forum, which is typically not part of the delegation stream, is informal in nature and operates through conversation not formal decision making.*

Straw poll results: standing count 53/37/9 (for/ against/ present but not voting)

Straw Poll b *Groups send a delegate quarterly to a local service planning meeting. One of those quarterly meetings is a general assembly where all interested members are encouraged to attend and input is given to help plan service activities for the cycle.*

Straw poll results: standing count 65/37/6 (for/ against/ present but not voting)

Straw Poll c *Services are coordinated by a local service board and carried out by members, committees, and project workgroups who report to that board.*

Straw poll results: standing count 76/31/2 (for / against/ present but not voting)

Straw Poll d *Local service bodies follow county, city, or town boundaries, where practical. (They are much larger than the group forums mentioned above and in many cases larger than the current ASCs.)*

Straw poll results: standing count 60/43/5 (for/ against/ present but not voting)

Straw Poll e *The boundaries of those local service bodies are agreed to at the state or national level.*

Straw poll results: standing count 58/48/5 (for/ against/ present but not voting)

Straw Poll f *Planning cycles are synchronized from level to level (local to state to global) as well as across each level.*

Straw poll results: standing count 71/34/4 (for/ against/ present but not voting)

Straw Poll g *When service needs cannot be accomplished effectively by local service bodies and state/national/province bodies, an intermediate level of service can be added.*

Straw poll results: standing count 71/36 /4 (for/ against/ present but not voting)

Straw Poll h *Most states, provinces, or countries have one state-, province- or nationwide service body that is responsible for state- or national-level public relations and coordinating efforts such as training across local service bodies.*

Kenny B (RD New Jersey) Proposal T to amend straw poll H to use the “mentor” opposed to “training”

Straw poll “mentoring” or “training”

Results of straw poll: support for “mentoring”

Straw Poll h *Most states, provinces, or countries have one state-, province- or nationwide service body that is responsible for state- or national-level public relations and coordinating efforts such as mentoring across local service bodies.*

Straw poll results: standing count 67/39/3 (for/ against/ present but not voting)

Straw Poll i *Zonal boundaries are decided through a collaborative process with neighboring NA communities, other zones, and the WSC.*

Straw poll results: standing count 72/34/6 (for/ against/ present but not voting)

FIGURES FROM THE NAWS BUDGET PRESENTATION

	Living Clean		Service System	
	Actual Expenses	Project Adopted	Actual Expenses	Project Adopted
2008-2009	\$115,891	\$180,000	\$74,260	\$150,000
2009-2010	\$93,766		\$70,741	
2010-2011	\$67,740	\$120,000	\$149,474	\$150,000
2011-2012	\$0		\$5,773	
Total	\$277,397	\$300,000	\$300,248	\$300,000

[NAWS News \(2012-06-23\) 12 pgs](#)

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Service System: The Service System resolutions and proposals all garnered support at the WSC. That was very exciting as we are moving to a system of service. Over the next cycle, we will be developing a transition plan and providing details to the broad brush resolutions. We will continue with a webpage and we are looking forward to members’ input and dialog. This is a “together we can” project and we hope you will embrace our partnership. At the end of the day, we want A Vision for NA Service to be embraced and brought to life. Updates will be posted online as they are available: www.na.org/servicesystem.

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INSPIRED BY OUR PRIMARY PURPOSE A NEW CONFERENCE CYCLE BEGINS

Even though the work ahead is daunting, we are enthused that the Service System resolutions and straw polls were supported; we are moving in the direction of a coordinated and collaborative service delivery model.

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Service System

One of the major topics at this conference was the Service System Project. Leading up to the conference, the Service System Project was one of the matters we discussed the most at CAR workshops and zonal forums. We answered many questions—over the phone, via email, and face to- face. While we have been working on this project for years and done our best to communicate the ideas as broadly as possible, it seemed clear that many members had only just found out about the project when confronted with voting on the resolutions and straw polls in the *Conference Agenda Report*. Some members were critical, others excited; perhaps most were confused. This project has only served to reinforce what has become almost a mantra at world services: Communication is our number one challenge.

We knew that we needed to have an opportunity at the conference to answer questions about the project and

proposals outside of the business sessions—to talk about how we can improve our service delivery without having to debate specific resolutions.

It does seem clear that we continue to struggle with some of the same challenges that you have heard us reporting on over the years—only about half of the regions responding had RCM training, and many reported on apathy, poor communication, a lack of planning or collaboration, and rural areas feeling isolated. While many regions and areas report improvements in planning or service delivery, we clearly have a ways to go.

When we opened up the session for questions, one thing that came up repeatedly is that members are struggling to understand the ideas in the proposals. The proposals are complicated and delegates were challenged to present the material to their regions in ways that people could understand. One delegate expressed her concern that the conscience she was carrying might not be truly representative of the way her region feels. Some delegates brought up the need for more training materials, better ideas about implementation, and simpler explanations of and more time to try the ideas being proposed. We will begin discussing how to help answer some of those concerns at our July board meeting.

Of course, as most of you know, this conference wasn't just a chance to discuss the ideas in the [Service System](#) proposals. At this conference, participants made some decisions in terms of the project's future direction. The [Service System](#) resolutions and straw polls as well as the project plan for 2012-2014 were voted on at WSC 2012. All of the resolutions as well as the project plan passed, and all of the straw polls had support, but in some instances, the votes were close (see the WSC 2012 Summary of Decisions www.na.org/conference for the vote counts for each item). In particular, Resolutions 7 and 8 and most of the straw polls passed by a simple majority, rather than the two-thirds threshold which would be required to change policy. While it's true that resolutions only require a simple majority because they set a future direction for work rather than calling for specific action at this time, we are aware that at the next conference we will need to reach broader agreement since we will be voting on motions rather than resolutions. What that means is that we will continue to move forward with the project, but we need to work together—world services, delegates, and interested members—to build consensus around the ideas related to the project. The project plan passed at the conference explains:

Pending decisions and discussions at WSC 2012, what we hope to present to WSC 2014 is a better description and definition of components of the proposed system as well as a transition plan that describes ways to get from where we are to this new system – one that is accomplished in stages to allow for continuity of services. This project is at the point that to move forward will require partnership and dialogue between the WB and the delegates. To move these ideas forward will require all of us to be informed resources for our members, particularly those who are just beginning to realize that we are actively working to improve our [Service System](#).

Our hope is that we can continue to hold people's attention over the course of the cycle ahead because we'll be asking for your help. We speak of partnership and moving forward thus we will need to embrace “working together.” Clarifying and improving the ideas in the proposals will be important to all. We also recognize the need for developing a clear transition plan that will serve all of us and improve the way we deliver services and our ability to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.

FIELD TESTING

One of the things we've talked about as important at this stage of the project is “field testing” some of the ideas. We'd like to work closely with a few communities who are willing to put some of the [Service System](#) proposal ideas into practice to see how some of the components of the system actually might operate, not just how they look on the drawing board. We know some communities are already forming group forums of some kind, and others are shifting from their established practices as an ASC and adopting some of the aspects of a local service unit as described in the proposals. Still others are talking about what regional reunification might look like.

We would like to be in better communication with the communities who are already trying some of the ideas

in the proposals so that we work together on a kind of field test. We will be talking more about this at our July meeting and discussing what tools we can develop and how else we can help some of these local experiments. If you are from a region or area that is trying out some of the ideas proposed by the [Service System](#) Project or you are discussing how it might work and you desire to try some of the ideas, we encourage you to contact world services if you haven't already done so and let us know what you are trying and how it is going. We look forward to hearing from you.

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PROJECTS FOR 2012-2014

All of the projects proposed at WSC 2012 were supported by the conference. At each conference, we offer project plans with a defined scope, and yet some of those are ongoing every cycle, such as the Fellowship Issue Discussions. The [Service System](#) Project is not a direct carryover from what was done in the 2008–2010 and 2010–2012 cycles, but represents moving forward with the ideas agreed upon at WSC 2012, to begin discussing implementation of the proposed changes.

[Service System](#)

To move forward with this work will require partnership and dialogue between the World Board and delegates. Being well-informed will help to inform and involve all NA members, especially those who have only recently learned about the project. This cycle will not require a workgroup, but we may utilize focus groups as needed. At WSC 2014, we hope to present a better description and definition of components of the proposed system, as well as a transition plan that describes ways to get from where we are to this new system—one that is accomplished in stages to allow for continuity of services.

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The Role of Zones

We did our best to give participants from each zone an opportunity to respond, and we collected their worksheets for reference. Ten of the zones who reported back said they wanted more information about the future of our [Service System](#), including planning, public relations, fellowship development, and social media/IT.

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FELLOWSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- We continue to promote the idea of better planning in our service delivery through workshops, the material in the [Service System](#) Project, and publications like *Planning Basics*.

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In the United States, we attended nine zonal forum meetings, six service events, and three conventions. We also held five large-scale workshops devoted to the [Service System](#) Project across the US.

INSPIRED BY OUR PRIMARY PURPOSE

We all need to work together as a board and work efficiently in the upcoming cycle. We will recap the [Service System](#) resolutions and proposals and begin to consider our work plan for that project this cycle.

[NA Way \(2012-07-09\) 18 pgs](#)

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2012-2014 Projects

Service System

One of our primary focuses this cycle will be to begin discussing implementation of the principles outlined in the Service System resolutions agreed upon by the Fellowship at WSC 2012. Moving forward with this will require partnership and dialogue between the World Board and regional delegates and the NA Fellowship. We will not need a workgroup this cycle, but we do hope to work closely with some communities to “field test” some of the ideas. At WSC 2014, we hope to present a better description and definition of the proposed system, along with a transition plan describing ways to move into this new system in stages to allow for continuity of services. The Service System webpage includes full background information on the project and will include further reports and updates: www.na.org/servicecystem

Trusted Servant Support and Development

We know that supporting our trusted servants is a necessary part of an effective Service System, so, time permitting, we'll use information gathered from Fellowship interactions to help develop tools, such as facilitation basics or how to be an effective RCM, to support trusted servants and leaders.

NAWS News (2012-08-17) 8 pgs

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The more fellowship-focused boards will not be created until later in the year and will include the Service System Project, Issue Discussion Topics (Group Conscience, Delegation, and Accountability; Collaboration; and Supporting Our Vision), and the Traditions Book project plan.

Service System: We are actively soliciting communities who want to test any components of the proposed system – GSUs, LSUs, etc. The more help we can have translating the ideas in the proposals to actual practice on a local level, the easier it will be for us to frame a transition plan to present at WSC 2014. If you are interested in working with us to “field test” the thoughts and ideas please contact worldboard@na.org. This is a “together we can” project and we hope you will help us take these ideas off the drawing board and into real life. Updates will be posted online as they are available: www.na.org/servicesystem.

Pg – 2

INSPIRED BY OUR PRIMARY PURPOSE A NEW CONFERENCE CYCLE IS MOVING FORWARD

Our primary project focus will be the Service System Project as the board is serving as the workgroup. We talked about what we need to accomplish this cycle related to the Service System including field testing each element of the proposed system in various settings (urban/rural). We also identified discussions we still need to have about issues that are not fully fleshed out in the Service System proposals, such as literature distribution or the role of zones.

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SERVICE SYSTEM

As most of you (perhaps all of you) already know, all of the resolutions related to the Service System Project passed at WSC 2012 and all of the straw polls were supported, though some by a narrower margin than the 2/3 that a policy motion would require. The conference also approved the plan to continue work on the project for

the cycle ahead. At this board meeting, we focused on what that means for us specifically over the course of the next two years. What [Service System](#) tasks do we need to accomplish before the next conference?

First we talked about the reality that for us, a “two-year” cycle really amounts to a 15-month window to do most of the work from conference to conference. This July was the first meeting of the new board, and we will be approving material for the 2014 Conference Agenda Report during the 2013 October meeting. In essence, we have less than a year and a half to get most of the work done to be prepared for the decisions and discussions at the next conference.

With the recognition of time constraints, we earnestly began to map out the road ahead of us. The project plan passed at WSC 2012 explains:

...what we hope to present to WSC 2014 is a better description and definition of components of the proposed system as well as a transition plan that describes ways to get from where we are to this new system – one that is accomplished in stages to allow for continuity of services.

At this meeting we discussed the need to translate the “theory” of some of the ideas in the proposals to actual “practice” in order to accomplish those goals. We think one of the best ways to do that is to actually field test the ideas described in the [Service System](#) proposals. We know some communities are already experimenting with implementing parts of the [Service System](#) proposals, and we are putting out a call for any other communities that may be interested. If you think your community might like to form Group Support Units or implement a Local Service Unit-style planning assembly or try out any of the other ideas in the [Service System](#) proposals let us know. We’d like to be able to test all of the components of the proposals to whatever degree possible.

Of course, forming a group forum for all of the meetings in a neighborhood is a different undertaking than, say, reuniting regions so that they can cover the geographic area of a state. We recognize that, given our short time span and the fact that we are not in the implementation stage of the project, what we are calling “field testing” will vary from place to place and depend on the component we are testing. For instance, we hope to discuss what unifying on a state level might look like with some regions and to gather information from other regions that already span a state and are testing some of the processes like CBDM or planning. It may not be possible, however, to actually field test a regional reunification. We won’t know for sure what we can include in a field test until we talk further with the communities involved. Look for more information in *NAWS News* to come.

In the meantime, we will be having further discussions on aspects of the [Service System](#) proposals that need to be fleshed out or developed in further detail. Our list of topics includes:

- How to meet the needs of border communities as well as communities with particular ethnic, language, or cultural considerations
- Literature distribution, fund flow, and costs
- RSOs, other service offices, incorporated bodies, and conventions
- Options for very large or very small state/nation/ provinces
- The role of zones in a new system
- WSC seating criteria

Let us know if there’s something not on this list that you feel needs further explanation in the [Service System](#) proposals. We will be devoting part of each board meeting to these discussions. In addition, we know that, in general, we need to explain ideas in simpler language so that the proposals are easier to understand. We’ve heard you asking for that and we are working on it. Please continue to write or call with any questions or concerns. It feels like it has taken years for us to get a better- than-usual start at informing the fellowship about this project and we’d like to maintain the momentum this cycle.

WSC APPROVED PROJECTS

In addition to the [Service System](#) (yes, our plates are full), we reviewed the additional charges from the WSC approved projects; these charges were in the 2012 Conference Approval Track. We highlighted our discussion and direction for each project charge below.

Trusted Servant Support and Development

This project is a continuation of discussions from past cycles about leadership development. We see this third priority project as supporting our trusted servants with pieces that accompany the [Service System](#) project.

ZONAL PARTNERSHIP

We see these workshops as a great avenue to impart information about the [Service System](#), to dispel rumors, and to collect feedback from the RDs and members.

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WEBINARS

For members whose interest is the [Service System](#), you will not be left out of an opportunity to dialogue. Please watch your email updates for detailed information about the [Service System](#) and avenues of discussion.

[NA Way \(2012-11-12\) 23 pgs](#)

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Inspired by Our Primary Purpose Issue Discussion Topics

We need your local involvement in these discussions so that you can provide us with your ideas and feedback. All three of the Issue Discussion Topics relate directly or indirectly to the [Service System](#) Project, and these are also issues that will be reflected in the Traditions book, a project that will start later this year.

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Collaboration

NA is a “we program,” and the idea that “together we can” extends beyond our personal recovery into the service we do. This IDT focuses on how we best collaborate within our areas, regions, and zones, as well as from service body to service body. Collaboration is simply working together toward a common goal. This is something we easily focus on at the NA meeting level, but often have a hard time putting into practice in our service efforts. Collaboration is also one of the five foundational principles of the [Service System](#) Proposals.

[NAWS News \(2012-12-12\) 8 pgs](#)

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[Service System](#): We have initiated field testing for GSUs and LSUs. If you are trying any aspect of the proposals such as GSU, CDBM, etc. please share your experience with us at worldboard@na.org. The more help we can have translating the ideas in the proposals to actual practice on a local level, the easier it will be for us to frame a transition plan to present at WSC 2014. Updates about the project will be posted online as they are available: www.na.org/servicesystem.

In response to input at WSC 2012 a new Conference Participant Bulletin Board has been launched. We value the participation from delegates and the board will continue to moderate and participate. This board is for conference participants only (those who attended WSC 2012 and any elected participants since). This is a private board which is password protected, delivers notice of posts, and is mobile friendly. In addition to the general NA Service Discussion Boards, we will create more fellowship-focused boards later in the year including the [Service System](#) Project, Issue Discussion Topics (Group Conscience, Delegation, and Accountability; Collaboration; and Supporting Our Vision), and the Traditions Book Project Plan.

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INSPIRED BY OUR PRIMARY PURPOSE A NEW CONFERENCE CYCLE CONTINUES TO MOVE FORWARD

We experienced an industrious, motivated board meeting 24-27 October in Chatsworth CA. We started our board meeting on Wednesday with a discussion of the Conference Participation Bulletin Board and approved release of *An Introduction to NA Meetings* for fellowship review and input December – April 2013. The afternoon was spent discussing consensus-based decision making. The following day Jim Delizia facilitated a session on the [Service System](#) Project. We refined our approach to Field Testing, shared our understanding of the World Service Conference, and began to discuss possible seating criteria as well as service delivery for large and small states, nations, and provinces (SNPs). This will be a continuing discussion. We are also making time on our agenda in future meetings for issues that need further discussion such as the roles of zones and literature distribution.

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[SERVICE SYSTEM](#)

We've covered a lot of ground in the [Service System](#) Project since our last *NAWS News*. We have two main focuses for this cycle, to further flesh out the parts of the [Service System](#) Proposals that are vague or need definition, and to field test the ideas in the proposals. We've begun work on both of those fronts since our last board meeting. We'll cover some of the highlights briefly here. As always, let us know if you have questions or concerns. We've created an email address dedicated to the project: servicesystem@na.org.

Field Testing

As we mentioned in our recent eblast, we have begun field testing the ideas in the [Service System](#) Proposals. The field testing frame posted on the [Service System](#) Webpage www.na.org/servicesystem explains the field test in detail. There are a number of communities around the world who are already implementing parts of the [Service System](#) Proposals or who are talking about the possibility of doing so soon. Within that broad group, we've selected a number of ASCs to be "core community" field testers. Those communities have agreed to form LSUs and/or GSUs exactly as those bodies are described in the [Service System](#) Proposals. They are sending us all of their materials—agendas, guidelines, minutes, tools—and we have agreed to talk with them regularly—at least monthly—and support them however we can. Because of our resource limitations, these core communities are all located in North America. That will make it easier for us to travel if needed, or to bring some members of those communities together for a debriefing session at the close of the field test, if we decide to hold such a meeting.

The number of core communities is relatively small, but we are interested in any communities that are field testing or want to field test the ideas in the proposals. Let us know what's happening in your community and how we can help. If you've adapted the ideas in the proposals in some way to make them "fit" better with your local community, let us know. We can learn as much from struggles as we can from easy transitions. All of it can be helpful information when we are drafting a transition plan.

Tools

We are working on developing tools for the field testing. We have posted quite a few tools for the GSUs on the [Service System](#) Webpage, and we are working on tools for the LSU as well as a brief CBDM Basics document. Please send us any input you have on those documents or any experience working with them, if you try them out on a local level. We had a great discussion about CBDM at our board meeting and you'll see the results in the CBDM Basics draft. If you're practicing CBDM on a local level, we hope you'll send us your tools or ideas if you haven't already. All of these tools that we are developing for the field test are works in progress, and we expect them to change as we learn more. We welcome your insight and ideas.

Webpage Update

There was a long period leading up to the conference and afterward that the [Service System](#) Webpage still had exclusively pre-WSC 2012 information. We've finally updated the page and we are regularly posting new material. In addition to the tools we are drafting for the field test, we have posted a couple of new PowerPoints for local workshops— a “101” session that gives a very brief overview of the [Service System](#) Proposals and an update session that explains the project focus for this cycle. We've also posted a document titled “Ongoing Discussions Related to the [Service System](#) Proposals” that highlights some of the areas in the proposals we know we need to talk about this cycle. We have posted this document so you know what we plan to discuss in our upcoming board meetings and so that you can give input on any of the topics if you wish. We particularly encourage those involved at the zonal level to send ideas about the role of zones in a revitalized [Service System](#).

Seating and Large and Small State, Nation, and Provinces

Among those “ongoing discussions” are the need to develop seating criteria and the related topic of what to suggest for service delivery in particularly large or small states, nations, or provinces where a single service body may not make sense. We began those discussions at this past board meeting, and while we had a very good discussion, we aren't significantly closer to drafting proposed seating criteria or a set of recommendations for large or small SNPs than we were before the meeting. In the end, we determined that these may be discussions we can have more productively if we “uncouple” them from each other. What makes the most sense in terms of a structure that ensures effective service delivery in a very large or small state, nation, or province may not be what makes the most sense in terms of a conference seating policy. We are putting aside the question of conference seating for now and will resume the discussion about state-, nation-, and province-wide service delivery at our next board meeting.

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WEBINARS

We are continuing our webinars with members of Step Writing Committees as part of Sponsorship Behind the Walls. These webinars offer the opportunity for information exchange and discussing solutions for common issues. We hope more members of Step Writing Committees will sign up to participate.

We are excited about the prospect of being able to offer this service and connect trusted servants with others who perform the same service in their respective communities.

For members whose interest is the [Service System](#), you will not be left out of an opportunity to dialogue. Please watch your email for updates about the [Service System](#) Project and avenues of discussion.

[NA Way \(2013-01-11\) 20 pgs](#)

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NA in Russia

The ECCNA 28, which came to Moscow on 17-19 August 2012, was our first international celebration of recovery. During ECCNA 28 we also celebrated the 20th anniversary of Moscow NA. We had convention-related activities like main speaker meetings, marathons and topic meetings, NA [Service System](#) workshops, and presentations for the newcomer.

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[Service System](#) Project

The [Service System](#) Project was created to take an overall look at how to improve local services and address some of our long-standing challenges in service delivery. This is the third cycle of the project. For this conference cycle, the World Service Conference approved a plan with two main focuses: field testing and further discussion of some of the ideas in the SSP that need clarification.

We're calling this a "field test," not a formal "beta test," because we are limited by the nature of the test and our time frame. Several communities are providing feedback on their experiences implementing the ideas in the proposals, and we are encouraging anyone interested in trying out any aspect of the proposals to contact us and let us know how we can help. We started the field test in November 2012, and we hope to complete the process by the end of July 2013, which will allow time to include a summary in the 2014 *Conference Agenda Report*. Although our field test has some limitations and it's not possible to conduct a truly "scientific" test, we have already learned a great deal and we expect the process will provide important information for us to move forward. For more information on field testing, including several resources/tools that have been developed, see the Field Testing Frame and Tools sections at www.na.org/servicesystem.

There are also some aspects of the proposals that still need to be clarified, such as how to adapt the system to meet the needs of particular communities (such as larger and smaller NA communities), how literature distribution and fund flow might operate in a revised system, the role of zones, WSC seating, etc. For more information on discussions slated for this cycle see the "Ongoing Discussions Related to the [Service System](#) Proposals" document in the Related Materials section at www.na.org/servicesystem.

As always, we welcome your questions or concerns. Also, if your NA community is trying any aspect of the proposals such as GSUs, consensus based decision-making, etc., please share your experience with us by emailing servicesystem@na.org. We need your help translating the ideas in the proposals into actual practice on a local level. Updates about the project will be posted online as they are available at www.na.org/servicesystem.

[NAWS News \(2013-03-18\) 10 pgs](#)

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[Service System](#): We are continuing to field test GSUs and LSUs. If you are trying any aspect of the proposals such as GSUs, CBDM, etc. please share your experience with us at servicesystem@na.org. The more help we can have translating the ideas in the proposals to actual practice on a local level, the easier it will be for us to frame a transition plan to present at WSC 2014. Updates about the project will be posted online as they are available: www.na.org/servicesystem.

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INSPIRED BY OUR PRIMARY PURPOSE MOVING FORWARD IN THE NEW YEAR AND IN THIS CONFERENCE CYCLE

We experienced a productive board meeting 23-26 January in Chatsworth, CA. We started our board meeting on Wednesday with a discussion of a component from the [Service System](#) Proposals, the local service unit, including an update on the core group of field testers for the LSU. Thursday was one of the board meeting days

facilitated by Jim DeLizia with a focus toward the [Service System](#) Project, specifically the state/nation/province component of the system. We considered local service coordination with its inherent challenges and began to brainstorm about possible approaches for them. We also discussed delegate funding to the World Service Conference and the role of the Alternate Delegate. At our April board meeting, we anticipate reviewing the role of zones in a system of service delivery.

Our first strategic planning session for the cycle was a facilitated discussion on Friday, with the Business Plan Group members in attendance. This helped us with the resources discussion—where we are and how we can improve. One action in this session was to ascertain whether the currently identified Key Result Areas remained applicable; we had not changed these in ten years. We identified relevant KRAs for where we are going in the next ten years such as Public Relations and [Service System](#).

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[SERVICE SYSTEM](#) A LOOK BACK ...

Sometimes in a three cycle project, we need to look back and see where the project started. Long before a project plan was presented to the World Service Conference, we had service discussion topics each cycle, beginning in 2000 and ranging from Service at the Group Level through Infrastructure. These Issue Discussion Topics echoed the same struggles on a local level: apathy, poor communication, no training for trusted servants, mismanagement of funds, poor atmosphere of recovery in service meetings, and lack of trusted servants to fulfill service delivery. The [Service System](#) Project grew out of a need to find new solutions for these recurring problems.

At one time, NA World Services was plagued by systemic issues such as duplication of services, poor communication, and competition for resources. By the early 1990s, service efforts were threatened and overwhelmed which led to the World Services inventory process. From 1993 to 1998 various committees examined what we had and proposed ideas for change. This led to the reformation of the Board of Trustees, the WSO Board of Directors, and the WSC committees into a single World Board; the creation of the World Pool and the Human Resource Panel; a unified budget for all of world services; and the writing of the NAWS Vision Statement (which later formed the basis for A Vision for NA Service). Structural changes were coupled with process changes including strategic planning, a project-based work cycle, and the use of consensus based decision making to name a familiar few.

However, the rest of the service structure has never undergone such an in-depth examination of service provision and overhaul. Service delivery on the local level (areas and regions) mirrors ideas presented in *The NA Tree* in 1976. Thirtyseven years later, our service delivery at the local level remains the same. We continue to apply the same structural “die model” to a growing diverse global fellowship because it seems to be the only option we have.

The WSC 2008 approved formation of the [Service System](#) Project, and the first step was to create A Vision for NA Service which was unanimously approved at WSC 2010. Additionally in the 2008-2010 cycle we looked at our current service delivery and realized we needed to think systemically, not just in terms of structure. Structure is one component piece in a system that also includes members, processes, and resources all working toward our common vision.

At WSC 2010, the [Service System](#) Project was reaffirmed for a second cycle by unanimous consent. The 2010-12 Strategic Plan phrased it this way:

”Issue: [Service System](#) Revitalization, Objective 4: Transition from a service structure to a [Service System](#) that is driven by unity in fulfilling our primary purpose and that is flexible in meeting the diverse service needs and goals of NA communities.”

Today with the 3rd cycle of this project approved at WSC 2012, we are beginning to consider development of our transition plan. WSC 2012 passed a series of resolutions, and we are testing the “theories” of the proposals by field testing GSUs (Group Service Units) and LSUs (Local Service Units). Sometimes, with a project that spans several conferences which recognizes communication breakdown and change with trusted servants, it is wise to look back before moving forward again. Now, if you have any questions about how we got here or concerns with how we are moving forward, let us know. We’ve created an email address dedicated to the project: servicesystem@na.org.

LOCAL SERVICE UNITS

We continue field testing the ideas in the [Service System](#) Proposals. The field testing frame posted on the [Service System](#) Webpage at www.na.org/servicesystem explains the field test in detail. There are a number of communities around the world who are already implementing parts of the [Service System](#) Proposals, often modified in some way, and they are reporting their successes as well as their stumbling blocks. The “core community” field testers have agreed to form LSUs and/or GSUs exactly as those bodies are described in the [Service System](#) Proposals. They are sending us all of their materials—agendas, guidelines, minutes, tools—and we have agreed to talk with them regularly—at least monthly—and support them however we can. Because of our resource limitations, these core communities are all located in North America. Many of the core communities’ initial LSU meetings took place following our board meeting yet we did hear from a few on their progress.

The number of core communities is relatively small because that is all we can sustain at this level of support, but we are interested in any communities that are field testing or want to field test the ideas in the proposals. Let us know what’s happening in your community and how we can help. If you’ve adapted the ideas in the proposals in some way to make them “fit” better with your local community, let us know. And keep in mind, we can learn as much from struggles as we can from easy transitions. All of it can be helpful information when we are drafting a transition plan.

In our meeting, we discussed exciting aspects of LSUs and elements that may be confusing and pose challenges. Most of the stumbling blocks seem to be places in the proposals that need better definition or more elaboration. Literature distribution is a good example of one of those aspects that might be confusing; it’s something we believed needed better definition in the proposals. Field testing is helping us gather some practical examples of how local communities are dealing with collecting contributions and distributing literature. Some other concerns we identified in our meeting were simplification of tools, collaboration with neighboring areas, syncing planning cycles, and transition training. Equally important was identifying what is exciting in the process. Some of our exciting points were: goals produce results, planning for services, empowering all members, attracting members to service through defined projects and tasks, and a more inviting service atmosphere.

WWW.NA.ORG/SERVICESYSTEM

We have updated the [Service System](#) webpage and we regularly post new material. In addition to the tools we are drafting for the field test, we have posted a couple of new PowerPoints for local workshops—a “101” session that gives a very brief overview of the [Service System](#) Proposals and an update session that explains the project focus for this cycle. We’ve also posted a document titled “Ongoing Discussions Related to the [Service System](#) Proposals” that highlights some of the areas in the proposals we know we need to talk about this cycle. We have posted this document so you know what we plan to discuss in our upcoming board meetings and so that you can give input on any of the topics if you wish. We particularly encourage those involved at the zonal level to send ideas about the role of zones in a revitalized [Service System](#).

STATE, NATION, AND PROVINCES

We mentioned in the November 2012 *NAWS News* that we were going to separate our discussions about seating criteria from those about service delivery within small and large SNPs where a single service body may not make the best sense. We started our facilitated session with a general question about state/nation/provinces:

“How can a SNP effectively perform one of its primary functions—to coordinate local service bodies as needed into an efficient system of service?” We talked in small groups about the challenges SNPs face in filling their roles and identified four general challenge areas:

- communication (internal, external, and ability to link communities together),
- logistics (planning, coordination, scheduling),
- mindset/attitude (willingness to collaborate, reallocate tasks, trust in value of SNP to help mend regional splits), and
- resources (human and financial).

Once we completed the identification of challenges, we began to brainstorm some solutions for each of the four challenge areas. Some of the ideas we had included:

- communication
 - o a statewide 800 number
 - o effective use of technology
 - o workshops/IDTs rather than providing reports
- logistics including planning and scheduling
 - o a revised Planning Basics for SNPs
 - o coordination of scanning and plan process (calendars) with LSUs
 - o a resource development focus
- mindset/attitude
 - o building from our strengths
 - o partnering with zones for workshops
 - o community building workshops at SNP that demonstrate value in the process
- resources
 - o propose a new funding approach
 - o communicate the tangible results of giving time and money
 - o clear budget for plan goals with consideration for a budget template

Of course, these solutions are not exhaustive yet they will begin to move us forward in mapping out an effective and efficient coordination of local service, and provide the basis for facilitated discussions with regions.

In closing out this session, we looked at the practicality of small and large SNPs. We decided that we would contact some of the regions in large states that have several regions within the state, including some we know that have discussed the possibility of reunifying after a regional split to hear their thoughts about how to best provide services on a statewide level. We know the ideas in the [Service System](#) Proposals may not work the same in all places. We need to talk with those involved in service in large states with multiple regions, or small states that comprise only part of a region, or states that are split between an urban region and a region for the rest of the state so we can get their ideas about what would work best where they live. Following our fact-finding telephone calls, we may find that we need a face-to-face meeting. We are trying to determine what makes the most sense for unified and efficient service delivery within geographic boundaries.

THE WSC

One of our focuses this cycle has been the issue of WSC Seating and the WSC component of the [Service System](#).

We have certainly struggled with some aspects of creating standardized seating criteria, and two related but separate issues have come out of our discussions. Those two issues are delegate funding and alternates at the WSC. We have seen some discussion of delegate funding on the conference participant discussion board so we are obviously not the only ones who are thinking about these topics.

We are all influenced by our own personal experience and that certainly pertains to how we look at the WSC. What we have known is comfortable, and it's easy to view the unknown with resistance or suspicion. To help us

get away from this reaction, we asked ourselves what we think is possible and what will serve NA for the future.

Since all of these issues seem to elicit a personal reaction, we tried to look at all of the data we have available. Prior to the world services unification in 1998, the WSC and its expenses (H&I literature, the annual meeting, boards and committees, the Development Forum, travel, publications, etc.) were all paid through contributions and were accounted for in the WSC Budget. That income and expense averaged at roughly \$500,000 per year with fewer than 100 seated regions.

In 1998, all income and expense for any world service activity was consolidated into one budget. At the same time, seating at the WSC began to increase and perhaps more importantly, the costs of projects began to rise primarily because NAWS funds workgroup participation whose membership had begun to be much more global. In 2000, we moved from an annual conference with some funded delegates to a two-year conference cycle and complete delegate funding. In the 2000 *CAR*, we stated that this seemed the most logical way for us to collectively take responsibility for attendance at the conference. The intent was to equalize access to, and participation at, the conference by a worldwide fellowship. Prior to 2000, the WSC functioned with a Developmental Forum that ensured funding for those who were not financially able to attend a conference held in the US. There was, however, some perceived inequality with regions that could send their delegate versus those who needed assistance. The belief behind the move to complete delegate funding was that if we all continued to contribute what we could, this would be a form of equalizing the cost.

The primary objection to the 2000 motion was fear of funds being withheld or spent in other ways. However, we didn't believe fear of what "might happen" ought to keep us from moving forward with what was believed to be best for the conference. Our collective thinking was that, ideally, if participation at the WSC is a top priority, then the fellowship will respond and take responsibility for this decision. That ideal has not really been what has occurred throughout the fellowship, however. Many regions have stopped considering conference funding a regional responsibility, and this doesn't seem to be a sustainable direction for the future. Since 2001, what was once under the WSC budget and considered WSC expenses, have exceeded contributions by over \$1,800,000. That trend is something we can no longer sustain with declining literature sales.

The conference now costs approximately \$500,000 for the biennial meeting whereas the 2000 WSC cost was approximately \$121,000. The expense increase is partly due to delegate funding but also due to the increase in the size of the WSC. The audio-visual needs, set up of the room, and other hotel charges are all more expensive as the conference grows. We expect this trend to continue once the seating moratorium is lifted and more delegates are seated. We have seated 20 regions since 1998 – 15 of those since 2000. We do not see how we can continue delegate funding with spiraling WSC costs.

We seem to be at a crossroads. The issues that we looked at in the 2000 *CAR* included delegate funding, alternates, zonal forums, and decision making at the WSC. Some thirteen years later we seem to need to evaluate most of this yet again. We need to be able to look past our own personal experience and opinions, and consider what the best course of action for the future of the fellowship is. In other words, we can do that by visualizing how we want to see the WSC meeting 5 years from today. That is only a few conferences away. Having discussed delegate funding thoroughly, we believe that the most responsible action is to recommend that delegates not be automatically funded by the WSC to attend the WSC. Those regions unable to fund their delegates attendance would go through an application process as was done in the past with the Development Forum. The Development Forum, which were those delegates needing funding before 2000, seemed to be something we could pay for.

We are hopeful that delegates and others will want to discuss this with us. We need to be able to make a collective decision as a conference to find a more sustainable approach to funding for the future. Please share your thoughts and ideas on the conference participant discussion board or write to us at worldboard@na.org. We welcome your thoughts and ideas about this and other ideas to lead us forward.

ALTERNATE DELEGATES AND WSC ATTENDANCE

As already stated, we are concerned about the cost and size of the WSC, and that all of this time and energy we have put into looking at our [Service System](#) actually serves our future needs. The role and perceived value of alternate delegates at the conference was also a part of our discussion, without the same clear conclusion we came to as a board with delegate funding. Several issues about alternate delegates seemed to warrant evaluation. One is the overall size of the WSC, the second is the seeming inequality of more US alternates, and the third is the overall cost to the fellowship of the WSC. For the past five WSC's, the average of US alternates attending the WSC is over 90%, while non-US alternates are less than 50%. In a discussion based conference with many small group discussions, this "inequality" seems to skew the discussions to be even more US centric. If the size of the WSC was almost ninety people fewer, the physical needs, as well as cost, of the WSC would diminish, and the ability to adapt to future growth would increase. We estimate that the attendance of alternate delegates costs the fellowship about \$200,000 per conference.

This is by no means a discussion of whether or not the alternate delegate has value. Absolutely they do. Our question is whether or not they have to attend the WSC and if this human and financial resource would be best served by using it at home. It is not a matter of what we might like but what do we believe is needed to capture the voice of the global fellowship and what can we sustain?

We talked at our meeting about the value of alternate delegate attendance; we recognize they are an extra set of ears and eyes – a resource for the delegate. Additionally, their attendance may offer a training opportunity and a benefit to the home region. And, when continuity is able to be maintained from alternate to delegate that appears to be added worth, yet often "life shows up," and continuity is not possible. Communication can be increased back to the home region by having an alternate in attendance; yet, we also wondered whether the communication to all members actually is increased or is there a possible duplication of efforts.

Now, as we considered possible downsides to alternate delegate attendance at the conference, we immediately identified that not every delegate has an alternate present. Other thoughts that came up during discussion included the fact that alternates are not active participants in formal sessions, and that additional regional funds are being used to send the alternate delegate and this money may be better used in their home region on service delivery.

This discussion inspired us to begin envisioning a possible new role for the alternate delegates in the new system. If an alternate's function and responsibilities were solely focused to support their home region with service delivery, how might service improve? The alternate could reach out to areas and assist their service delivery efforts. Alternates would be an additional conduit of information and offer workshops to members. Alternate delegates may assist in the training and mentoring of members. We realized also that in large states/nations/provinces, there could be a team of alternate delegates performing services throughout a large geographic area.

This was our first discussion of the role of alternate delegate in our new [Service System](#); hence we have no recommendation at this time. We hope that you will discuss usefulness of alternate delegate presence at WSC and start to think about how value may be increased in service delivery without attending the conference.

We look forward to hearing your discussions; you may identify benefits with attendance that we missed and you may envision creative advantages to having an alternate delegate remain focused toward service delivery in their home NA community. We are in the process of envisioning a different model that has advantages and adds value to the conference and to the regions. Please share your thoughts with us at worldboard@na.org

We will continue to have the discussions outlined above regarding delegate funding and role of alternate delegate in our [Service System](#). We will also be adding the discussion of the role of zones at our April meeting.

WEBINARS

We are continuing our webinars with members of Step Writing Committees as part of Sponsorship Behind the Walls. These webinars offer the opportunity for information exchange and discussing solutions for common issues. We hope more members of Step Writing Committees as part of Sponsorship Behind the Walls will sign up to participate.

We are excited about the prospect of being able to offer this service and connect trusted servants with others who perform the same service in their respective communities. For members whose interest is the [Service System](#), you will not be left out of an opportunity to dialogue. Please watch your email for updates about the [Service System](#) Project and avenues of discussion.

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STRATEGIC PLAN

We worked in small groups with the following topics: how we picture the growth and change of trusted servant's roles and their decision-making processes; relationships outside of NA and how we are perceived by those who seek relationships with NA (potential members, local communities, etc.); how we are organized and how we work together within the [Service System](#) (including structure and process); and a 10 year picture of our resources and how resources have been developed to sustain our ongoing growth.

Recovery and service material:

Recovery literature index page was accessed more than 250,000 times over the year with over 80% of that going on to the English literature page.

Service material is harder to track because of the new site, but the [Service System](#) page has been accessed approximately 9,000 times during this year.

[NA Way \(2013-05-08\) 16 pgs](#)

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NA Cuba: ¡Sigan viniendo!

In these three events we made presentations and had exhibits. We facilitated workshops about NA's Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, Twelve Concepts, the groups, the [Service System](#), public relations/public information, hospitals and institutions, planning, and LAZF and NAWS projects and activities.

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[Service System](#) Update

Where we've been:

The [Service System](#) Project was first approved at the 2008 World Service Conference. Since then we developed A Vision for NA Service and proposed eight resolutions that were passed at the 2012 WSC. For a more in-depth look, the latest *NAWS News* recaps the history of the project

Where we are:

We are continuing to field test ideas for local service described in the proposals, and we've posted a variety of resources on the website, including presentations and workshop materials, and tools for local communities.

Where we're going:

Core community field testing ends July 2013. We'll report on the field test when it's concluded, and information we gather will help inform the *Conference Agenda Report* and the Conference Approval Track material. For complete project information and materials, visit www.na.org/servicesystem

Webinars

We are excited about the prospect of being able to offer this service to connect trusted servants with others who perform the same service in their respective communities.

For members interested in the [Service System](#) project, please watch for updates and avenues of discussion.

[NAWS News \(2013-06-18\) 8 pgs](#)

[Service System](#): We are continuing to field test GSUs and LSUs. If you are trying any aspect of the proposals such as GSUs, CBDM, etc. please share your experience with us at servicesystem@na.org. The more help we can have translating the ideas in the proposals to actual practice on a local level, the easier it will be for us to frame a transition plan to present at WSC 2014. Updates about the project will be posted online as they are available: www.na.org/servicesystem.

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INSPIRED BY OUR PRIMARY PURPOSE THIS CONFERENCE CYCLE CONTINUES TO EVOLVE

Thursday was spent in a facilitated discussion focused on the state/nation/province component of the [Service System](#) Project. We considered local service coordination and how it may look operationally. We looked at approaches under the categories of communications, human resources, structure, and finances. We also continued to explore the role of the Alternate Delegate at the WSC and the roles of zones as part of the [Service System](#).

Friday was spent discussing the status of the current field testing of GSUs and LSUs and our perspective of where this project is currently and what we see as possibilities for the immediate future. Our experience shows that although what we have been most focused on and debating is structure, what is bringing about the most benefit is new processes and ways to approach our service efforts. We do much of what we do in NA because that is how it has been done before rather than anything that is written in our service material.

In order to keep us focused on process and improvements, we are recommending that we provide questions or motions for decisions about GSUs and LSUs in the 2014 *Conference Agenda Report*. More than that seems like it cannot be rationally processed at one time. We, as well as the majority of WSC 2012, remain committed to new visions for State-Nation-Provinces (SNPs) and the role of zones, but we also believe more discussions on these are needed. Since these are potential system-wide changes, we believe moving forward in stages is more practical and realistic.

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[Service System](#)

FIELD TESTING UPDATE

We have been conducting field testing of the ideas in the [Service System](#) Proposals since November 2012. We have had communications with more than 70 communities worldwide about some form of field testing. Some have contacted us merely to get more information while others have shared with us their experiences trying some of the project's ideas such as establishing GSUs, implementing a planning cycle, utilizing consensus-based decision making, or talking about regional reunification to form statewide bodies or sharing services

among regions within a state. Some of the communities have let us know about how they've adapted the ideas in the proposals for local use. For instance, some communities are devoting every other area service meeting exclusively to a discussion of group needs or have set aside time before each ASC for that discussion. Others have dissolved their standing subcommittees or some of their subcommittees in favor of workgroups.

Along with the communities informally testing the ideas, or some variation of them, we are working closely with nine "core communities" in the US and Canada that have agreed to test what we have been calling GSUs, or GSUs and LSUs exactly as described in the proposals. One-third of those communities are testing GSUs and two-thirds are testing GSUs and LSUs. Some of these communities had already begun holding GSU or LSU meetings of some kind and others had not begun implementation of any kind. We have traveled to most of the communities to help them launch their field tests, and we have made a commitment to keep in contact with each community at least monthly.

TOOLS

As we've been working with the field testers, we've been working to move the ideas in the proposals off the drawing board and into practice. Part of how we've been helping to do that is by developing service tools to support the GSUs and LSUs. Among the tools we've drafted are:

- GSU and LSU agendas,
- reporting templates,
- a facilitation guide,
- a survey form to help gather community input before a planning assembly,
- a tool to help develop project plans,
- documents that briefly explain the "basics" of the GSU and LSU, and
- CBDM basics.

We know there are many more tools that would help field testers such as budgeting tools, more tools to support the LSB, and additional reporting templates, to name just a few. We also already have ideas about how to revise and improve the tools we have. All of the tools are posted to www.na.org/servicesystem, and we will continue to post new tools and revisions as we are able.

Most of the field testing communities held their first LSU or GSU meetings in January. In order to have results of the field test in time to consider them when drafting the *Conference Agenda Report* and Conference Approval Track material and preparing for the conference, the formal field test is scheduled to end in July. We are, therefore, more than half way through the formal field test. Most communities testing LSUs have had two LSU meetings and are beginning to implement projects.

The test is already helping us refine the ideas in the proposals in countless ways. For instance, we drafted an agenda and tools to help communities prepare for and conduct a planning assembly. Then after assisting with several assemblies, we came to realize a few things. For instance, in gathering information for the scanning part of the planning process, communities were having a hard time considering external trends or issues in addition to the trends or issues within NA in their communities. One of the ways we may be able to help with that is by suggesting that those involved with PR and H&I within the service body be given a special role in gathering that information prior to the planning assembly.

Another discovery we had is that LSBs have had a hard time converting the prioritized goals into project plans. We realized that we could build in more time at the end of the planning assemblies for LSUs to collectively develop some approaches to the goals they've prioritized. They may also want to assign particular people to draft project plans to bring to the next LSB meeting. If, say, the project was about training and mentoring of GSRs, the LSU might assign a couple of the most experienced GSRs to draft a project plan for the LSB to review and refine at their next meeting.

On the GSU level we are discovering quite a lot as well. The proposals suggest that one way that GSUs could meet is to be hosted by a different group within the GSU each month. What we've found, however, is that rotating GSUs don't seem to work as well as GSUs that meet at a consistent time and place each month. In most cases it seems too difficult for members to keep track of a changing location and meeting time. Another discovery is that rural GSUs need extra attention. There are usually fewer groups and those groups have farther to travel so extra efforts have to be taken to make rural GSUs successful in some communities.

These are the sorts of things we are learning from the field test. There are too many to list here but this report should give you examples of the kinds of insight we're gaining from field testing. It's one thing to read about driving a car; it's another thing to actually do it. The testing communities really are teaching us how to practically implement and operate LSUs, LSBs, and GSUs. The field test is helping us go from blueprint to frame to home.

Perhaps the most significant thing we are seeing is that transforming an ASC to an LSU/LSB and GSUs is a lot of change for one community to undertake all at once. In addition, in most of the field testing communities the majority of the burden is being shouldered by a very small number of people and many of those people are feeling pressure or burn out. Testing in many communities seems to be winning over some of the skeptics; that is, some folks who were suspicious of the proposals now see the benefits and potential benefits and have become supporters. But the communities that are feeling the least amount of stress or overwhelm seem to be those that started a gradual process of change prior to formally becoming a core community in the field test. Two things seem key to a successful transition on a local level: the community must make efforts to develop a broad base of support and change must be gradual and in stages—an evolution not a revolution. This latter consideration has been critical in guiding our thinking about a transition plan.

TRANSITION PLANNING/WHERE WE ARE NOW

At this board meeting we began talking about what we could expect to put in the *Conference Agenda Report* and Conference Approval Track material. Given the results of the field test to date, it should come as little surprise that we are again talking about more of an evolution of the material and ideas, than a revolution or abrupt upheaval.

What field testing is teaching us is that communities need time to phase in the elements of local service delivery rather than trying to implement everything all at once. And before that process even begins they need time to educate and inform the community and build support for the transition. Given that, rather than trying to implement the entire system following the next conference, we are beginning to think that it may make sense to focus on taking at least a cycle or two to implement local services first—what we have been calling GSUs and LSUs—in stages. Then we would focus on field testing SNPs and then we could offer an implementation plan that covered the SNP part of the system at a later conference.

Of course, the [Service System](#) Proposals do describe a system and so none of the parts make complete sense if they are operating outside of that system. But the reality is that the transition ahead of us will have to be taken in stages to be successful. This more gradual, staged approach would allow communities to take a reasonable more gradual approach to transitioning from ASCs to LSUs and GSUs (see the text box for our thoughts on new language for these service bodies). At the same time, regions that are part of multi-region states can continue talking about (and performing) shared services. In some cases, we know regions have begun talking about consolidating, as well. These sorts of joint efforts and conversations can help lay the groundwork for SNP field testing in the future and implementation efforts that follow.

As we said, these are just our preliminary thoughts about what might be included in the *CAR* and discussed at the conference.

We will, of course, report more as our ideas develop.

NO MORE “UNITS”

Many of you have let us know you're not fond of the “unit” part of the GSU and LSU name. We are talking about changing the names to something like “Group Forum” or “Group Support Forum” and “Local Service Conference.”

ROLE OF ZONES

Before we started our board discussion about the role of zones we identified possible barriers which include resistance as some zones like how they function and may not be open to change. We also recognized that some members do not think zones should become a new level of service or part of the delegation stream while others zones may want to continue without a defined purpose.

Following the identification of possible barriers, we began our discussion with the premise that zones need to add value in the revitalized [Service System](#) and incorporate the principles of the [Service System](#). We then took a look at probable needs that a zone can fill. In this discussion, we identified basic core functions for all zones. Leadership Development is a key area as a zone could share responsibility for workshops with regions, assist with training and mentoring by utilizing experienced trusted servants such as former RDs, and be a communication link with world services. We looked at Planning as a key function primarily in the role of teaching those in the zone how to plan and scan. With planning as a function, we recognized that a skilled facilitator is necessary to the success of planning. Another key function we identified was community development which is analogous to Fellowship Development which may encompass a resource/training pool, a source for best practices exchange, trusted servant recruitment for services like H&I, PI and may host planning assemblies.

We recognized that zones serve as a communication/unity link and a point of connection amongst trusted servants in a geographic area. This may lend itself to increasing communication and sharing of best practices amongst the SNPs in attendance.

The one area that was difficult to assess was zones being a part of the fund flow system. On one hand, zones with an activity associated with a zonal meeting such as the Canadian Assembly of NA may be part of the fund flow system while other zones may not be a part of the fund flow system. Additionally we will be looking at cost factors for zones in light of travel and lodging costs and costs associated with service provision by a zone.

We wanted to share with you our beginning discussion yet we have not reached any recommendations. We will be continuing our discussion at future board meetings and most likely at the conference.

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WEBINARS

We are moving forward. Webinars offer the opportunity for information exchange and discussing solutions for common issues. As we reported, we held a Public Relations web meeting 22 February and a second on 30 May. The Hospital & Institutions Webinar was held 27 March with a second scheduled for June. The Inmate Step Writing and RSO web forums continue on a quarterly basis.

We reviewed our new KRAs to ensure they accurately reflected broad areas for NAWS today and over the next five conference cycles. Our KRAs in the revitalized plan are: [Service System](#), Public Relations, Communications & Technology, Trusted Servant Development, System-wide Funding, and Member Support.

[NAWS News \(2013-08-21\) 12 pgs](#)

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Service System: We are closing out our field test of what we are now calling GSFs and LSCs. Partially as a result of these field tests, we have decided to offer decisions about local services for the 2014 conference and to continue gathering information about services at the state/nation/province level. Decisions about local services will be in the 2014 *CAR* and if the conference passes them, the transition plan, which will be in the CAT, will be offered. We continue to post tools and updates about the project online as they are available: www.na.org/servicesystem.

Zones: We continue to talk about the role of zones in a new Service System and there is more on that topic in this *NAWS News*. One idea we're thinking about is how many zones would be most effective within the US. What do you think about between three and six US zones instead of eight? Let us know your thoughts: worldboard@na.org.

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How Can We Help??

More than two decades ago, World Services began a process focused on how to improve NA services. Starting with World Services' inventory in 1992 and continuing into this decade, we have been looking at service issues relating to groups, members, areas, and regions. We have gathered and reported on information from Issue Discussion Topics such as Infrastructure; Atmosphere of Recovery; Leadership; Our Freedom, Our Responsibility; etc. We reviewed all the data, and everyone involved seemed to agree that apathy, lack of trusted servants for carrying the message of recovery, low GSR attendance, poor fund flow, and inadequate service delivery (for instance, phonelines that don't get answered) were some of our issues. No one seemed to argue with these facts. Our most requested workshops have been helping members get involved in service and Building Strong Homegroups.

More than five years ago World Services proposed initiating a comprehensive change from a service structure to a system which we hoped would help resolve some of our ongoing struggles. The World Service Conference agreed, and together we decided to move forward. This proposal was not a magic bullet; none of us anticipated that overnight we would have all the money to do service, all GSRs participating at area service, and an abundance of trusted servants. Rather, we began building on our foundation, our primary purpose. With that in mind, our first job was to revise A Vision for NA Service.

We have been discussing the topics of Infrastructure and Our Service System for the last four years. We believe it is now time to take the results of those discussions, including the information gathered from the 2008 Conference Agenda Report, and move into framing recommendations for the fellowship to consider. Our existing service structure was developed for a fellowship with much different needs than we now have globally. Because of this, it is no surprise that we have volumes of information about ineffective services. However, we also have heard new and creative ideas that local NA communities have adopted, and we hope to build on these.

From the 2008 Service System project plan

Now, years down the road of proposed change into a Service System, some members appear to be blaming World Services for forcing a change upon us, when in fact we have done our level best to partner with the Fellowship every step of the way to bring the Service System Project closer to a common vision. We seem to agree on where we fall short in our service efforts and even have common concurrence of identified problems, and a shared vision for NA service—so how can we move forward together?

We know from our personal experience that change is messy; many of us, most likely, recall our lives being in flux as we worked Steps Six and Seven, yet we also know how our lives improved—as did our relationships with others once we were on the other side of change. This analogy is true with the Service System Proposals. We believe that change is necessary for the future stability and flourishing of NA. It is our responsibility as

trusted servants to inventory, analyze, and suggest ways to improve. As a fellowship, we have inventoried our service efforts repeatedly through the years and have shared those “assets” and “defects” openly with each other.

As *It Works: How and Why* tells us, “When the pain of remaining the same becomes greater than our fear of change, we will surely let go.” (*IWHW*, Step Six) Did any one of us know how we would be on the other side of Steps Six and Seven? No. The proposed [Service System](#) changes ask us to let go of the old and risk moving to something new.

Now that we are presented with the opportunity to change, our road has gotten narrower. Many are excited at the opportunity to improve our services and to grow. However, there are those who are standing their ground, defending NA’s right to continue in the same way we have always done things. As responsible leaders, the board has found ourselves obligated to make suggestions that some find off-putting or objectionable. Some may see the exercise of this responsibility as overbearing, and some may disagree with our suggestions, but doing less than our best to serve the future of NA was never an option for us.

In a paragraph just as true today as when it was written decades ago, the Basic Text cautions us that, “Everything that occurs in the course of NA service must be motivated by the desire to more successfully carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers. It was for this reason that we began this work. We must always remember that as individual members, groups and service committees, we are not and should never be in competition with each other. We work separately and together to help the newcomer and for our common good. We have learned, painfully, that internal strife cripples our Fellowship; it prevents us from providing the services necessary for growth.”

We have, as a Fellowship, adopted A Vision for NA Service and now we must figure out how to move forward to realize this vision. At the 2014 World Service Conference the Fellowship, through the *CAR*, will have the opportunity to choose the direction for our shared future. Our option is a leap of faith. Each and every one of us, everyone on the World Board and everyone reading this issue of *NAWS News*, is motivated by our desire to carry the message of recovery to addicts. In a sense, we are planting trees that someone else will be sitting under. What is the legacy we want to give to members who are not here yet? How can we move forward together and how can World Services help?

INSPIRED BY OUR PRIMARY PURPOSE

THIS CONFERENCE CYCLE IS MOVING TOWARD WSC 2014

Thursday was spent in a facilitated discussion focused on the [Service System](#). We started our day focused on the future of the WSC—how can the WSC evolve as an effective, efficient body that demands fewer of NAWS’ resources. We also considered delegate funding that is not automatic and a new/revised role for the alternate delegate in line with the board’s recommendation that the AD would not attend the WSC. Prior to reaching our recommendation, we considered a number of factors: the size of the conference and the ability to engage in CBDM, capacity and sustainability of our current configuration; our wants versus our needs; the fact that we are out of balance with many more US participants and fewer international members; and the improbability of moving to another venue due to cost. We even discussed removing the rounds, yet that is the setting where discussion, ideas for the future, and more interpersonal exchange happens. We closed out Thursday with next steps in the discussion on the role of zones.

Friday was opened with an update on the [Service System](#) field testing, concurrence on closing the formal field testing phase, and a discussion offering those who participated in field testing an opportunity to assess how it went. We made a decision on terminology that we explain further in the “terminology” section below. What had been referred to as the LSU (Local Service Unit) will now be termed the Local Service Conference (LSC); the GSU (Group Support Unit) will be called the Group Support Forum (GSF); and the Local Service Board (LSB) remains unchanged. Following the [Service System](#) discussion, we approved a revised version of *An Introduction to NA Meetings* for inclusion in the 2014 *CAR* and reviewed the Traditions Book project development and next steps.

FISCAL UPDATE

We wish we had something new to report pertaining to Basic Text sales and contributions. The fact remains that contributions are below the WSC-approved budget amounts, and Basic Text sales continue to decline. Of course, this is a serious and ongoing financial problem, but an even bigger concern is the fact that fewer members are seeking our book each year. At some point we have to discuss instilling a sense of responsibility in our members to care for their Fellowship and help to carry the message to the addict who still suffers. This discussion, like the [Service System](#) discussion, needs to be one focused on sustainability and what we want to build for those yet to find a new way of life.

[Service System](#)

Sometimes it's hard to know what affects NA as a whole. The Fourth Tradition offers a way to balance the freedom of autonomy with our responsibility to preserve NA unity. We are challenged in Tradition Four to apply autonomy in ways that will enhance the growth and vitality of NA. Autonomy encourages groups to become strong and lively but also reminds them that they are a vital part of a greater whole: the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous. We consider our common welfare when we make decisions in our groups.
Tradition Four, *IWHW*

Members who regularly read *NAWS News*, participate on the WSC participant discussion board, or serve Narcotics Anonymous may have heard some of the spirited opposition to the [Service System](#) Project.

Differences of opinion

can be healthy and ultimately lead to better decisions, but it takes open minded dialog to get there. We embrace the discussion and we ask that we all remain open-minded.

We all want the same thing for NA: We want to be as effective as possible in achieving our primary purpose of carrying the message to addicts who still suffer. Yet we seem to differ in ideas about how to do that. In fact, some of our differences may actually be misunderstandings.

Perhaps the most common misunderstanding we hear is that World Services intends to force change, including restructuring, on groups, areas, and regions. We want to be clear: NAWS is not planning to impose structural or procedural changes to local service bodies. The idea that NAWS could or would somehow force a group to affiliate with a certain body, or an area to reunify with another area, or a region to reunify with another region is simply not true.

However, the [Service System](#) Proposals do recommend structural change—local service bodies that are formed along county, town, or city lines; group forums consisting of recovery groups in the same neighborhood; service bodies that are formed along state, country, or province lines. They also suggest service bodies adopt certain processes: planning and consensus-based decision making, for instance.

But it is crucial to keep in mind that any decisions—how to structure oneself, how to make decisions, how to plan services—will be made collaboratively. If the Fellowship decides to move forward adopting the ideas in the [Service System](#) Proposals, groups, areas, and regions will talk together about what changes they want to make. A transition into a new [Service System](#) wouldn't be about World Services telling any local service body what to do. It would be about World Services providing the tools and blueprints for local service bodies to talk together about what they want a transition to look like.

We hope to get a Fellowship conscience at WSC 2014 on whether members want to move forward in the first stage of a process of change to a new system. We have invested a great deal of time, energy, and money into this project and we still believe in dedicated support of groups, planning and budgeting for local services, service body boundaries that make it easy for potential members and professionals who refer addicts to find us, and collaborative decision making.

More than anything, in this *NAWS News*, we are asking how we all can move forward in a spirit of loving service and unity toward our future.

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Terminology

We reported in the last *NAWS News* that we had heard from many of you that the word “unit” didn’t really sound like an NA service body. We continued our discussion about terminology at this meeting and came to consensus on the term “group support forum” rather than “group support unit” as it’s been called up to now. We also agreed that “local service conference” was a better description than “local service unit.” We will start to use this new terminology and as we update the documents on our website we will make the changes to them over time.

Field Testing Update

We are wrapping up the formal part of our field testing, though we know several of the nine core communities as well as many of the non-core community field testers plan to continue holding group support forum meetings and planning conferences. We will be working between now and the conference to collect thoughts from the field testing communities and we will continue to report on what we find in *NAWS News* and the conference reports.

Perhaps the most important thing we’ve found is that communities need to take the time to develop awareness and community support, and changes need to be planned so that they can be adopted in stages.

Some ideas we have collected that may help that evolution include:

Service bodies transitioning from monthly ASCs to quarterly LSCs might start by changing from a monthly service meeting to one that’s held every other month, before moving to a quarterly meeting to create a more gradual, less drastic shift.

Some of the projects that come out of the initial planning assembly could be specifically focused on the transition itself, so workgroups are tasked with figuring out difficult pieces of the transition.

One idea for transitioning to group support forums is to begin with one GSF for the whole community that gradually morphs into a number of them. A single GSF can model best practices and help people see value in them.

It may help to have CBDM be among the first things to be implemented. Given the potential strain on a service body from so much change, learning to build consensus may be a helpful first step to put in place to ensure a more effective change.

Other things that have worked well in some of the testing communities include:

Group support forums seem to thrive best when they are given some structure. There has been success in making someone on the local service board initially responsible for administering and facilitating the GSF and then gradually training someone from within the GSF to take the helm.

There has also been some success in setting up topics for group support forums for the year. These topics could be related to or coordinated alongside the planning cycle for the local service conference.

If GSFs are seen as more of a community resource, they seem to be more successful. Most of the field testing communities have been challenged to get the word out to the community at large that the group support forums exist, where and when they are, and what they do.

Tools

We continue to develop tools to help with the field test and to give a more concrete idea of what the ideas in the proposals might look like when put into practice. The most recent tools we’ve developed are a sample agenda for the third local service conference and an “LSB Basics” document. We are also currently working on several calendar-type tools.

Among the other tools we know we would like to develop at some point are:

- Reporting template from local service board to the groups—like a monthly LSB equivalent of the front page of *NAWS News*.

- Reporting template for ongoing services/subcommittees to the local service conference (or local service board)

- Post-planning assembly local service board agenda or task list, or perhaps LSB task lists for LSB meetings between each local service conference

 - Tools to process survey results

 - Budget tools

We've already learned quite a lot about how to improve the tools we've drafted, and we will probably get more ideas as we talk further with the communities that have field tested them. To date, we've been fully occupied supporting the field test and developing new tools. Nonetheless, we hope to find the time to revise at least some of the tools we've developed for the test so that they can be more useful in the cycle ahead should the conference determine to proceed with a transition.

Role of Zones

We continue to talk about the role of zones in a new [Service System](#). What seems essential to all zones is their role as a hub for fellowship development. Zones are a forum where regions can gather to feel connected, share resources and experiences, and foster unity. They function well as training forums and help regions with planning and leadership development.

Of course, that's not all that zones do. Some have a public relations or translations role. Others work on events and hospitals and institutions work. They can also help border communities to communicate within their own state when they belong to a neighboring region.

Were the conference to adopt the recommendation (described below) about eliminating alternate attendance at the conference, zones would be an even more crucial training ground for alternate delegates. A zone can be a sort of microcosm of the WSC, a place to engage with others who serve beyond the local fellowship. Yet at the same time zones are intimate enough settings to allow substantive, in-depth discussion.

Given this role or potential role as a microcosm of the conference, we also discussed US zones and whether it makes sense to have fewer, larger US zones. This would increase the diversity within the zone and for some would make their zone feel more valuable as a result. If the primary focus of zones is fellowship development, that purpose might be better realized in a zone that could share a broader range of experience. This is a discussion we want to have with delegates. It makes sense to us to have between three and six zones in the US rather than eight. What do you all think? We look forward to continuing this discussion with you. As always, we can be reached at worldboard@na.org.

WSC Seating

We reported in the last *NAWS News* that we want to hold off making any recommendations about a possible transition from regions to state/nation/province service bodies as well as recommendations about a seating policy for the conference. Nonetheless, we need to offer something as an “in the meantime” recommendation, what we might call a band-aid while we talk further together as a conference about what we want a seating policy to look like.

This was another challenging discussion for us. Some of us can see the wisdom in a zonal seating approach for the future, while others of us are not as enthusiastic about that idea. Regardless of where we stand about our ideas for a future conference, without further development of the state/nation/province parts of the [Service System](#) as well as shared agreement about the role of zones, we have to come up with a stop-gap recommendation while we consider how to move to a bigger vision.

What seems to make the most sense to us for now is to consider no new seating requests. As some of our sponsors say, “When you don't know what to do, just wait.” Planning for the growth of NA over the years and

the impact on the conference is no easy feat. We need to work together to drive toward a vision for the conference. When we can come to that shared vision of the future WSC, it will give us a foundation upon which to begin to build seating criteria.

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WSC PARTICIPANT WEBINAR

We held our first WSC Participant Webinar Saturday, 13 July and were energized by the participation of 86 delegates or alternates. We thought this was a great start with delegates and hope that we can achieve even greater participation in the future. This was our largest webinar yet. Of course, we will be considering ways to improve this service.

Our format was simple. We began with a short presentation and then the board responded to questions that participants posed. We had a few general topic areas: [Service System](#), delegate funding, alternate attendance at the WSC, CDBM at the WSC, and current and future webinars. Delegate funding and alternate attendance garnered the most questions with delegates wanting to know the implementation date, would there be motions in the 2014 *CAR*, and how many regions had committed to funding their delegates. There were a number of questions about sustainability of the WSC and actions that may be taken like fund-raising. The webinar-focused questions centered on producing notes/ transcript of the call, cost to host the webinar, and inquiries as to whether an additional webinar would be held.

Some of the [Service System](#) questions were focused toward the upcoming *CAR* and CAT. Participants wanted to know what aspects of the [Service System](#) would be addressed in the *CAR* and asked about changes in the naming with GSU and LSUs versus area service committees. There was a question as to whether the transition plan would be in the CAT or the *CAR* and about regional proposals pertaining to the [Service System](#).

The above list of topic areas of questions is not the exhaustive list; it is provided to give a sense of the basic focus for this webinar. The complete question list was emailed to all WSC participants. We truly hope that those who were unable to join us this time can participate with us when we hold another WSC participant webinar.

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[Service System](#) Update

Where did it come from?

The [Service System](#) Project grew out of the need to find new solutions to some of our most persistent problems. We've all heard people complain about "area circus," but why does service have such a bad rap sometimes? All too often our communication is poor, we don't train trusted servants well and there are many open positions, we duplicate our services, and we argue over small details.

Of course, that's not true everywhere. Some areas and regions keep their focus on our primary purpose and our vision. They make decisions collaboratively, and they plan their priorities and expenses. The [Service System](#) Proposals attempt to build on those success stories and offer a model for local services to implement planning and a focus on the groups.

Where are we headed?

Right now we are coming to the end of a period of field testing the specific ideas in the proposals, and we've already learned a lot. Perhaps most significantly, we have learned that what is true in our personal recovery is also true in service: Change takes time. Planning, budgeting, working on projects, making decisions by consensus, in some cases restructuring—these are big changes from the way many service bodies operate now. Communities need time to talk together about what a new system of service delivery might look like if applied where they live, and to phase in the elements of local service delivery rather than trying to change everything at

once. Right now, we are talking about materials in the *Conference Agenda Report* and Conference Approval Track materials that reflect this approach—evolution, not revolution.

You can find more information about field testing and all of the other aspects of the project on the [Service System](http://www.na.org/servicesystem) webpage (www.na.org/servicesystem) and in the latest issue of *NAWS News*:
<http://www.na.org/nawsnews>

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Formation of the AZF

Leanne: After the 2012 World Service Conference, there was more talk worldwide about the role and future of zonal forums, especially when taking into account the [Service System](#) Proposals. This led me to personally question our involvement in the European Delegates Meeting. South Africa has been a part of the EDM for a few years, but the extent of our participation has been to submit our biannual community reports. We do not attend EDM meetings due to financial constraints (although in 2009 our regional delegate was able to attend the summer EDM in Barcelona because he was attending WCNA 33).

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2014 World Service Conference

As we are going to press with this issue of *The NA Way Magazine*, we are also busy drafting the 2014 *Conference Agenda Report*. The *CAR* will be published in English by 27 November 2013, and translated versions will be available one month later. The *CAR* will contain several motions related to the [Service System](#) Project, a motion to approve “An Introduction to NA Meetings,” and two motions about the conference itself, as well as a number of regional proposals. We are also trying an experiment this year, and may have videos explaining the content of all or part of the *CAR* online at the World Service Conference web page:

<http://www.na.org/conference>.

As always, the *CAR* will be mailed to conference participants and regions, and it will be available for sale at NA World Services or as a download at www.na.org/conference

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[Service System](#): We are offering decisions about local services in the 2014 *CAR*. If the conference passes them a transition plan will be offered as part of the [Service System](#) Project Plan in the CAT material. More about the project can be found on the webpage here www.na.org/servicesystem

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CONFERENCE APPROVAL TRACK

The CAT was published a couple of days early on 24 January 2014 and contains the NAWS Strategic Plan with four proposed project plans. The project plans presented for 2014–2016 are for the [Service System](#), the Traditions Book Project, Fellowship Issue Discussion Topics, and Public Relations. Additionally, the CAT includes the NAWS budget as well as the WSC seating memo and a description of proposed changes to *GWSNA*.

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Service System

One of the projects being proposed next cycle is a continuation of the [Service System](#) Project. We mention in the CAT cover memo, but it's worth repeating here, that there has been some misunderstanding about this project plan. We have referred to this project plan as a "transition plan" because it outlines work world services can do to support communities in the process of or thinking about transitioning to a new system. For instance we plan to continue developing tools and resources for local implementation of [Service System](#) elements such as planning, group support, mentorship, and consensus-based decision making. This is not a plan for local communities giving them instructions or guidance on how to move forward; it outlines the work NAWs could do to support those efforts over the next two years.

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N/A