



November 2011 Northern California RD Report



The World Board met during the week of October 19-22nd. This meeting was dedicated to finalizing what will appear in the 2012 Conference Agenda Report and review/update of the NAWS Strategic Plan. The Service System Workgroup, including myself, had participated in online dialog with the board on the shaping of draft Resolutions for the CAR. As a partial preview of the third draft Service System Proposals, I'm including an essay, based on discussions during our combined meeting in June, on the role of Zonal Forums in a new service system:

Zones for Third Draft Service System Proposals

The board has only had preliminary discussions about the possible roles of zones in a new service system. The ideas described here are all the result of brainstorming and discussion and don't represent decisions or final thoughts. Rather, these are the board's ideas at this time that they are sharing 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 greater set of 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 admin body at a zonal level? The answer to these questions varies 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 what states, countries, and provinces make them up, and at zonal boundaries and composition to see if makes sense to consider changes in any or all of their composition. Rather than having them self-determine their boundaries, perhaps it makes sense for the boundaries and composition of zones to be decided at the World Service Conference since the conference can take a more holistic view of the world how NA communities around the world might best be served.

Similarly, zones perform a wide variety of different roles and accomplish a span of tasks depending on the zone. 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. Zones are positioned on an axis. They present a great opportunity to share laterally across nations/states/provinces, and to receive information from and give information to NAWS. As part of systematizing our services we should think about formalizing the roles that zones may have given their unique position.

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 LAZF.

2. **Leadership development:** Because world services travels to zones that request a visit, it's an easy place for NAWS to spot local leaders, and at the same time, since there are "train the trainer" sessions and workshops rolled out at a zonal level, motivated members can get workshop materials and display those leadership qualities back home when they put on workshops. This is a place where leaders could be recognized and cultivated; training, perhaps even training targeted at 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 regularity about the way in which zones 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 there could be open forums or sharing sessions among state/nation/provinces.
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. They are a place where unseated communities can feel part of a larger NA, and are also a good forum for more experienced members to stay involved in service. Because of their informal nature, it's relatively easy for interested members to attend and feel relatively 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, IDT 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 in fact, talked about a zonal seating option for the World Service Conference, but 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 point for coordination of NA services among NA service bodies. They can function to facilitate communication, coordination, information, and guidance.

Again, these ideas are all the result of a brainstorming session at a World Board meeting. They are offered as food for thought. 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 coordinated 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.

Western Russia - ECCNA 28

The Western Russia host committee for ECCNA 28 has created a newsletter providing information about the August 2012 convention in Moscow. For those of you interested in reading the inaugural November 2011 Newsletter of the European Convention and Conference of NA, you may download a copy at: <http://eccna28.org/newsletter.html>

In the newsletter, you will find the following statement issued by the Western Russia Host Committee:

"We would like to express our gratitude to the former and current members of the Northern California Convention of Narcotics Anonymous Committee for their time and patience in helping us to structure our work."

The Western Russia RSC resolved on 27 March 2011 to create a subcommittee .responsible for organizing and promoting the annual celebration of recovery of the areas of our Region. ECCNA28 in Moscow will be the first Convention that the WRCNA Committee is responsible for. The Committee meets every third Saturday in Moscow. They have translated and adopted the NCCNA Guidelines as their working guidelines, and Michelle S, former NCCNA Chair, has been assisting them.



Central California Regional Assembly

On Saturday, October 22nd, I facilitated a GSR Assembly for the Central California Region of NA in Bakersfield. My planned co-facilitator took ill, so I ended up facilitating a full day of presentations for an audience of about 50 members. We began the morning with an extensive PowerPoint presentation on the history, development, and application of the Twelve Concepts for NA Service. With that as a primer, we spent the rest of the day in two extended sessions on the NAWS Service System Proposals. It was an eclectic audience, with a rich combination of newer members, a former long-time WSO Employee, and a few past and present RDs, and even an early-eighties "RSR" in the audience

FST Mid-Year Review and Team Building Gathering

After facilitating the Regional Assembly for Central California on Saturday, I hit the road for our FST team building and mid-year review gathering in Sacramento on Sunday, October 23rd. I really enjoyed this opportunity to break bread with the rest of the team, discuss how we're doing collectively, and even dare to "Blue Sky" where we could envision regional services going in the distant future. I think that particular exercise would also be a great one for the RSC itself to engage in as part of strategic planning for the next cycle.

Narcotics Anonymous Keynote at INFGO

The 24th International Federation of Non-Government Organizations (IFNGO), World Conference was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 8th - 11th. A major aim of the Conference was to provide a forum for decision makers and professionals to gain an understanding of NGO issues and needs in relation to addressing alcohol and other drug use and associated harm, with a particular focus on the Asian and Pacific regions. Amongst the keynote speakers are representatives from the following agencies:



- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Vienna
- Head of Infectious Diseases, University of Malaya, President, Malaysian AIDS Council (MAC)
- Director, Regional Support Team, Asia and the Pacific, Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), Bangkok, Thailand
- Chairman, International Drug Policy Consortium, United Kingdom
- 1st Vice President ASIAN Federation of Therapeutic Communities & 2nd Vice President World Federation of Therapeutic Communities
- Secretary of the National AIDS Commission, Indonesia
- UNODC (United Nations Office of Drug Control) Representative for East Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok
- Director General, National Anti-Drugs Agency Malaysia (NADA)
- **Executive Director for Narcotics Anonymous World Services, Inc.**

Needless to say, being asked to keynote an event such as this is a huge testimony to the increased credibility and viability of Narcotics Anonymous. We're now a small step closer to that part of our Vision for NA Service stating: *"Narcotics Anonymous has universal recognition and respect as a viable program of recovery"*. Of particular interest to the participants at this conference is the success NA has experienced internationally. Currently, NAWS has sixty-one employees and has branch offices in Canada, Belgium, India and Iran. The Iranian branch office opened its doors for services in 2005 and Iran has accorded NA World Services the NGO of the year award twice. Our ED is uniquely qualified to speak on our behalf, given that he has been our Co-Executive Director and Executive Director for a combined total of 18 years. If you'd like to learn more about our Executive Director, or any of the keynotes, or the conference itself, you can go to: <http://www.ifngoconference.org/speakers.html>

Thank You for all you do in service,

Matt S



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NAWS online Contribution Portal: <http://www.na.org/?ID=donation-external-index>