

# OPERATION OF THE NATIONAL AA WEBSITE

## www.aa.org.au

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- Consistent with our Primary Purpose of carrying AA's message of recovery, access to the site and all its contents will be unrestricted.
- The site will be used to provide information about AA to newcomers, members, health professionals, the media and the general public.
- Decisions about content and operation of the site will be based upon and reflect the spirit of the *12 Traditions* e.g., based on attraction not promotion.
- Links to other sites will only be permitted in limited circumstances and are subject to approval by the *General Service Office Management Group*.
- The full name of any member should not appear on the website.
- As far as possible work on the website should be done by volunteer AA members.
- Decisions to expand the size and scope of the site should be agreed by the *General Service Office Management Group*.
- The site will be reviewed by Conference each year in accordance with Advisory Action 27A/2001.

### FURTHER CONSTRAINTS:

Conference 2004 resolved that to avoid confusion as to suitability of material for AA websites, it was recommended that the following material not be published on websites:

- Poetry
- Prayers
- Song lyrics
- Tributes to individuals
- Plays
- Previously published non-AA material
- Anything unrelated to AA

It was further recommended that personal telephone numbers or last names of contacts not be published, including those that appear in email addresses.
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## SECURITY

The General Service Office Manager should ensure that she/he has all the necessary documentation to prove the Board owns and has complete control of the National Website and, in particular, its URLs: [www.aa.org.au](http://www.aa.org.au) and [www.alcoholicsanonymous.org.au/](http://www.alcoholicsanonymous.org.au/).

The General Service Office Manager should maintain an Operations Manual which has full details about the site to ensure it can continue seamlessly in the event of any of the management team leaving. This must contain all usernames and passwords used in the site. It should also contain up to date 'How-to' information.

## STYLE

The style is deliberately calm and understated. Bright colours, fancy logos, and glaring graphic devices should be avoided. Ease of reading and navigating through the site should be preserved.

## CONTENT

The content is divided up into five main areas:

Home page	Newcomers	Members	Health Professionals	Media
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•The <i>Preamble</i>,</li> <li>•Meetings search</li> <li>•National Convention notice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•“<i>For anyone new to AA</i>”</li> <li>•“<i>AA fact file</i>”</li> <li>•“<i>Is AA for you?</i>”</li> <li>•“<i>A newcomer asks</i>”</li> <li>•How to contact AA</li> <li>•“<i>Message to teenagers</i>”</li> <li>•Find a meeting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Find a meeting</li> <li>•What's on</li> <li>•How to contact AA</li> <li>•“<i>AA fact file</i>”</li> <li>•Useful materials – including structure diagrams, PI materials, literature price list, What Nat Office does, Insurance information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•<i>Information for professionals</i></li> <li>•“<i>For anyone new coming to AA</i>”</li> <li>•“<i>AA fact file</i>”</li> <li>•Find a meeting</li> <li>•How to contact AA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•“<i>Information for professionals</i>”,</li> <li>•Anonymity letter to the media</li> <li>•“<i>For anyone new coming to AA</i>”</li> <li>•How to contact AA.</li> </ul>

## LINKS TO OTHER WEBSITES

At present we link **only to**: the GSO New York website; the site for the next Australian National Convention, and Al-Anon Family Groups in Australia. There is a slight danger that some links could be seen as AA's indirectly endorsing commercial sites and bodies that happened to be linked to other sites to which we were linked. However, people are increasingly sophisticated about web links and will take these links in their stride. Possible confusion related to the National Convention site would be outweighed by the value of the link.

In 2007, Conference considered whether the National Website should be linked to Area websites with a disclaimer, as practised by New York. It resolved that the Service Website should provide such links, but not the National site (Advisory Action #026/2007).

## MEETINGS LISTS

The meetings lists on the National Website are probably its most valuable service. It means that members from anywhere in the world can look up a meeting at any time of day or night. As more and more members gain access to the Internet, this value of this service will increase. Compared to the cost of printing, the costs of providing a web-based system are very small. It also reduces the time taken up by General Service Office staff in providing meeting information.

A member in each state called an *updater* keeps the meetings lists up to date. They have been given a username and password and instructions on how to change the meetings. In most cases the updaters get the information for the changes from the capital city Local/Central Service Office in their state which provides current meeting lists such as "*Your Pathfinder*".

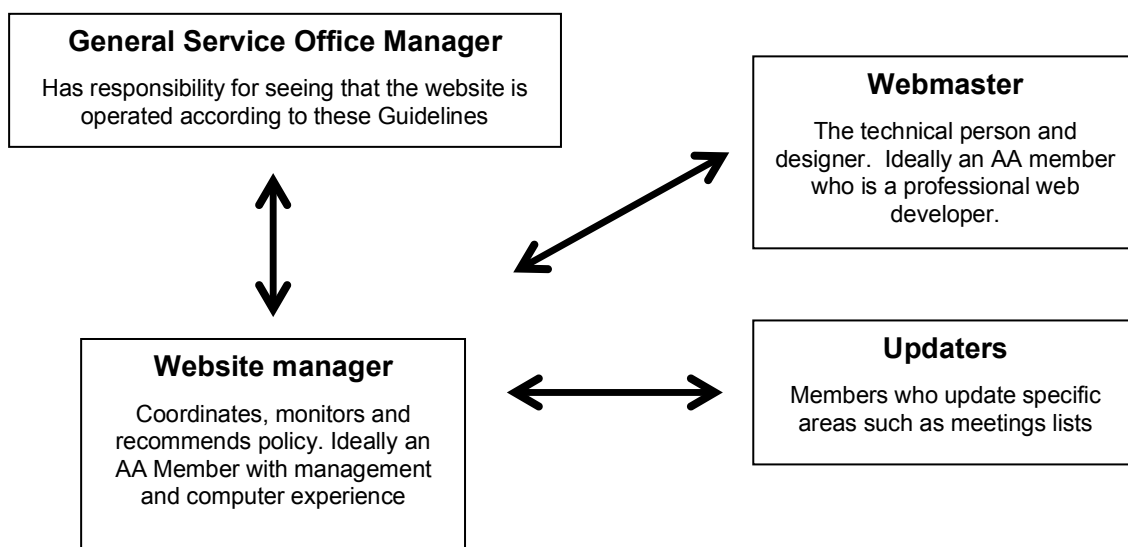
There may be circumstances when complaints come from the Fellowship in respect of the website listings including meetings that some members believe should not be listed. The process for handling these complaints is that the General Service Office, the updater and the website manager listen to them carefully and try to gather as much information as possible relating to the meeting in question. The current policy on listing is: "We will list all AA meetings. We will listen carefully to objections to any particular meeting. We will remove it only if it clearly and repeatedly breaches the *Traditions* in a manner which would cause serious damage to members or the Fellowship as a whole."

Therefore, a decision not to list or remove a meeting will be based on as much factual information as possible tested against the relevant *Traditions*. It is expected that this will be extremely rare.

***A Guideline for Updaters is available from General Service Office.***

## OPERATIONS

The National Website management structure is as follows



## OTHER AA WEBSITES

Members, groups and other AA bodies often ask for help in setting up their own websites. They should be directed to the ***Frequently asked Questions (FAQ) on AA websites*** to be found on the North American site [www.aa.org/](http://www.aa.org/). This document recommends that other bodies should be entirely responsible for setting up their own websites and the General Service Office should not provide assistance in the form of money or hosting facilities.

In 2007, Conference resolved that an AA Service Website be established in Australia, supported and funded by the General Service Board to facilitate the sharing of the work the Fellowship does in PI&PA, T&CF and other service activities. This site is for internal communication, whereas the National Website is for AA's external outreach.

## MONITORING

At least once a year the Board should report to Conference on the National Website. The Board should:

- Ask permission for any major changes before undertaking them.
- Ensure that all content is still relevant and up to date.
- Review trends revealed by the automatic statistic gathering system. In particular the number of visits should be monitored.
- Check that the people who update the meetings lists in each state are still doing their job.
- Check on security and ensure that the Operations Manual is up to date.
- Report on the links to other websites.
- Report on any complaints it has received.