



Quarterly Report *from the Board*



An update from the **General Service Board**

AUGUST **2025**

Welcome to this edition of the General Service Board Quarterly Newsletter. We hope to provide a broad strokes overview of recent GSB activities.

The GSB met in Adelaide this July to discuss the current status of all working groups and committees and to progress all advisory actions. As you will see below, there is a lot going on!

For Area Delegates and indeed for the Trustees, conference in November is the calendar date we are all working toward. The topics are receiving much attention and indeed gathering ideas, information and opinion to inform Conference in making these decisions is key. More even than a yes or no vote, it will be important to come to Conference with some rationale to inform the collective group conscience of Conference.

...an Area Delegate's effectiveness depends on an ability to transmit the world picture to the Area Committee and then inspire them to pass on this information and their own enthusiasm to GSRs, to Groups and to Central Service Offices." Section 6 AA Service Manual

Reporting through the general service structure in all directions is important and we hope this newsletter will help in achieving this function. As office bearers in AA it is sometimes a fine line to walk between authority and servant.

In his 1959 Grapevine article, Bill wrote:

No society can function well without able leadership in all its levels, and AA can be no exception. ... At other times we are quite as apt to demand that AA's leaders must necessarily be people of the most sterling judgment, morals, and inspiration ... Real leadership, of course, has to function in between these entirely imaginary poles of hoped-for excellence."

Though individual approaches may vary, we remain united in one altruistic aim: to help the still-suffering alcoholic.

Grant T - Central Region Trustee - Chair of the General Service Board

For comments or questions email: generalservicetrustee2@aa.org.au

Introducing Class A Trustee - Rochelle Davenport

Those of us who are Class B Trustees, alcoholics, often find our way to the Board table after years of being nudged (and at times dragged) into service by our sponsors and by the necessity of change, something that, over time, has - through the unexpected alchemy of AA, been transformed into love.

Our Class A Trustees, the non-alcoholics, come to this work for a very different reason. They give their time freely and generously, simply because that is who they are. They are incredibly generous and committed and we are very fortunate to have them with us.

With that in mind, we are delighted to introduce our newest Class A Trustee, Rochelle Davenport, who joined the Board in late 2024.

I would describe myself as someone who likes to keep busy while embracing new experiences, meeting new people and making a positive contribution. Early in 2024, after a regular volunteering arrangement ended due to entity restructure, I immediately went online in search for my next long-term endeavour.

When the Class A Trustee opportunity appeared on Seek Volunteer, AA was already front of mind for me. A close loved one had at that time been attending meetings for around six months. I am not sure how I imagined this experience would be for them however I must confess it was reassuring to see they did not return home afterwards exalting and twirling around like a brainwashed cult recruit!

Nonetheless, the quiet and subtle shift from their consistent participation over this period was certainly noticeable. Truthfully, I can only describe it as a kind of “serenity”. Already having perused their copy of the Big Book, I did some more reading online and eagerly applied!

Fast forward a couple of months and I was visiting the GSO in Sydney getting an introduction to the archive materials by Andrew and Cheryn and a tour of the literature supplies by Patrick, where I gawped at the stack of brochures printed in multiple languages, addressing the topic of alcoholism from multiple angles. Looking through the archives, I was fascinated to read about the same problems experienced in my household encapsulated decades earlier including a lengthy article in a 1970s edition of “Women’s Weekly”.

Not long after, I took part in my first National Conference last November. The level of energy and focus was impressive and certainly intense at times too; I became powerfully aware of the shared responsibility for upholding the legacy of AA and believe I truly experienced the meaning of “group conscience”. I enjoyed connecting with and hearing the experiences and views of delegates both here and when I attended my first National Convention in Sydney this year. Back at GSB I am currently involved in the recently created Working Group to investigate a Board Charter.

I was born in Canberra, raised in Sydney and am now happy to call Melbourne home. I have studied both Psychology and Accounting and for the past five years have been working in the Finance department of a large housing and homelessness service provider.

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Introducing Class A Trustee - Rochelle Davenport

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Here I have had the opportunity to observe the circuitous loop of alcoholism/addiction and homelessness, how tackling the issue of homelessness is not always as simple as giving an individual a roof over their head, rather involves taking an integrated approach.

Becoming a part of the GSB has provided me with the opportunity to not only contribute and develop my technical skills but also enhance my life skills by way of my own self-reflection and awareness. I have since become a grateful member of Al-Anon, continually contemplating the role which non-alcoholics can play in raising awareness and spreading the message that AA works.

Rochelle Davenport - Class A Trustee

Communications Committee

Work from the technology team continues apace over a wide range of initiatives in updating current sites, in the online meetings space and with email communications stepped up with the new CRM and clean style now in use. If you are not already signed up to receive communications from GSO & GSB, here is a link to subscribe.

<https://aa.org.au/subscribe-to-aa-emails/>

Many hands have been busy creating our new-look, fully featured website, designed for ease of use and targeted impact for specific user journeys with the SEO & GA backend (and all the high-end tech stuff). aa.org.au is very nearly ready and will launch in the next month, with members.aa.org.au close behind.

Ensuring inclusivity is everyone's responsibility. Right now, only 208 of 1,810 meetings listed on meetings.aa.org.au are marked as wheelchair accessible. Please review your group's listing on the meetings website meetings.aa.org.au and make any submit any necessary updates.

Grant T - Central Region Trustee

Press Releases

In order to attract those who might benefit from joining us in AA the General Service Board has been investigating ways for us to get our message out, both better and more widely.

To help us in that we have engaged with MediaNet who have connections into more than 36,000 media contacts, and also who provide assistance in both compiling effective messaging and media monitoring.

We are also now in the process of compiling a schedule of future Press Releases which aims to cover important AA events and other stories of interest to our members, as well as to those who might become our members in the future.

If anyone would like to offer up suggestions for suitable press stories which we might include, or would like to assist in the development of content for future announcements, we would love to hear from you.

Neil Schafer - Class A Trustee

Eastern Region

Service Committee and Fellowship Activity

Over the past quarter, I have continued to attend regular meetings of the Trustee Service Committee, Remote Communities Committee, and Eastern Region Delegates. These gatherings have provided opportunities to support our Fellowship's service efforts, listen to concerns, and share updates from the General Service Board.

I was also privileged to attend the Darwin Service Meeting, where I presented on a range of topics relating to General Service, the role of the Board, and matters coming before Conference. In addition, I served as a speaker at the Newcastle Rally, the March Area E Assembly, and the May Area G Assembly, strengthening connections across our Region.

Working Groups and Projects

Several Working Groups remain active:

- Guidelines Review – Following the February Board meeting, a new Trustees Working Group (with Cheryn, Andrew, and myself) was formed to address concerns with the guideline approval process. This led to a Conference Topic now approved for consideration.
- First Nations Audio Book – Work continues to ensure accessibility of AA literature and resources in culturally relevant forms.
- Corrections Book – Development is progressing to provide appropriate material for members in custody.
- One National Structure – The Advisory Action #015/2024 Working Group has begun surveying members and CSOs to gauge appetite for uniting general service and

- central service structures. Early responses have been strong, offering valuable insights for the Group's ongoing work.

AA80 National Convention

The AA80 National Convention in Sydney was an outstanding success, the result of sustained effort from Host Committees and members nationwide. Committee meetings leading up to the event culminated in a vibrant celebration of our Fellowship, with excellent participation and international engagement.

Remote Communities

Remote Communities have seen a particularly active period. The launch of the Message Stick has extended AA's reach to many locations around Australia, with an audio version now prepared for broader sharing. Additionally, the National Professional Luncheon (held on 25 June, following AA80 celebrations) carried the message of AA to 108 professionals in a single day. This initiative was a testament to the hard work of members across the country and the strong support of the Fellowship.

Area G

Area G has successfully completed the unification with their local Central Service Office. The Office is now operating with renewed vigour, supported by a full complement of volunteers. A new "drive-in" service has also been introduced, making it easier for members to collect literature directly from the Office.

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Eastern Region

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Looking Ahead

The next stage of work includes consolidating the progress of our various Working Groups, continuing to gather feedback on Advisory Action #015/2024, and supporting ongoing projects that strengthen unity and accessibility across the Fellowship.

I remain deeply grateful for the opportunity to serve as Eastern Region Trustee and for the ongoing support and engagement of members throughout our Region.

Garry S - Eastern Region Trustee

Northeastern Region

Area A

The Area Committee is currently struggling to fill key roles such as Area Chair and Secretary. While the Area Delegate has an Alternate in place, they are actively working with others to strengthen the committee and encourage members into service.

On a positive note, all three DCM positions are filled, which has been of great benefit locally. The Districts are carrying the message and hosting events such as workshops, helping members connect and grow.

Area B

Area B is very active, with the 3rd-year Delegate playing a leading role in re-establishing Districts. There is also an Alternate Delegate in place. The Delegate has been highly engaged, attending many District events and meetings to support the Fellowship and its activities.

Area C

Area C is also active, with Districts strongly carrying the message. The 1st-year Delegate is energetic and visible, attending many District and Area events.

As with Areas A and B, the ongoing challenge of distance remains a factor for members and trusted servants across the Region.

Advisory Action #015/2024 – Unified Structure

Advisory Action #015/2024 directs the Board to:

“Investigate the appetite, mechanisms, and potential implementation of uniting the general service and central service structures in Australia to uphold our primary purpose.”

The Working Group (WG) meets regularly, most recently on 17 July. At this stage, the WG remains focused on “investigating the appetite.” A national survey has been completed, and all CSOs in Australia have been approached to provide feedback as CSO Committees.

The response has been strong, offering valuable data and ideas that will assist the WG as it continues its work. The WG wishes to thank the many members who contributed their time and thoughts.

Conference Steering Committee

The 2025 General Service Conference will take place in November. The Conference Topics have now been released, and Groups are encouraged to discuss these at a group conscience and pass their feedback to their Area Delegate.

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Northeastern Region

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This ensures Delegates can attend Conference fully informed and equipped to share the conscience of their Areas.

Discussing Topics at a group conscience is a practical and spiritual example of our principles at work. Sincere thanks go to the members of the Conference Steering Committee for their efforts so far.

National Convention 2026 – Gold Coast

The 2026 National Convention will be held on the Gold Coast from 1–4 May 2026. Registrations are now open, and enthusiasm is already building. The Convention Committee meets monthly to progress planning.

Two international speakers have accepted invitations to attend:

- Katie P – [CLICK Link To Listen](#)
- Bob B – [CLICK Link to Listen](#)

A table hosted at the International Convention in Vancouver generated strong interest among overseas members.

The Convention website is

aanatcon2026.com.au

Members can register, access early-bird savings, find details of the AA Cruise in January 2026, and purchase raffle tickets for a First Class Cabin (including spending money).

Enquiries may be directed to:

infonatcon2026@aa.org.au

Nominations Committee

Several service opportunities are currently open, and members are encouraged to consider standing:

- World Service Delegate
- Northern Region Trustee
- Central Region Trustee
- Bids for the 2027/2028 National Convention
- Bids for National Forums

Details of these positions and how to apply can be found at: aa.org.au – [Service Opportunities](#).

John O - Northeastern Region Trustee

Document Review Committee - Service Manual Rewrite Update

Work on the Service Manual rewrite is progressing well. A technical writer has been engaged and is currently preparing the second draft, with each section undergoing careful review to ensure clarity and accessibility.

Particular attention has been given to governance and to the roles of the Board, committees, and groups. These sections have been updated to reflect developments within the Fellowship over the past two years. Early feedback suggests the draft is easier to read, more consistent in tone, and simpler to navigate.

The next stage will be to consolidate the revised sections into a full draft for broader review. This year's Conference will also be considering several important topics that may influence how information is organised across the Service Manual, Guidelines, and Operating Procedures.

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Document Review Committee - Service Manual Rewrite Update

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The project team is alert to these possibilities and ready to adapt the draft accordingly.

Although the work is detailed and time-intensive, the project remains on schedule. We are confident that the final Service Manual will be a clearer, stronger, and more useful resource for service members across Australia.

Gabrielle N - General Service Trustee

Quarterly Report - From the World Service Delegates

We have been in conversation with a member in Papua New Guinea who has asked for help in providing some literature for a new meeting they are hoping to start. Assistance has also been given in enabling them to contact AA World Services regarding the translation of literature into Pidgin English.

We have supported this request as a country that contributes to the International Literature Fund. As there has been no response from the WSO, a member in PNG is now exploring the option of undertaking their own translation.

This year's Brown Paper Bag Appeal has raised \$14,295.00 to date, with further contributions still coming in. We believe this year's appeal has been another success, thanks in part to the new QR code created by the GSO.

Our Asia Oceania Service Meeting (AOSM) will take place in October, with Brian and Andy representing Australia.

The AOSM is held every two years, and this year's meeting will be at the YMCA in Singapore. Brian will serve on the Working with Others Committee, and Andy has been assigned to the Website, Literature and Publishing Committee.

Australia has also contributed funding from our International Sponsorship Fund to assist the Bhutan World Service Delegate to attend the meeting.

In addition, we have been invited to participate in a Zoom conference hosted by AA Iran on the weekend of 4-5 October, which we plan to attend in part.

Recently, Andy gave a service presentation to members of our Russian fellowship, sharing his experience of how the Australian service structure operates.

Our request to the US and Canada for permission to print downloadable pamphlets has again received no response, apart from confirmation that the matter is still under consideration.

Brian F - World Service Delegate (Term 2)

Andy P - World Service Delegate (Term 1)

Worldservicedelegate2@aa.org.au

Brown Paper Bag Appeal 2025

Supporting Our AA Family in the Asia-
Oceania Region



MAY 2025 Quarterly Report

General Service Trustees

| Income | Goal Per Quarter | Quarter 4: Apr - May - Jun 25 |
|------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|
| Contributions (Self Support) | \$119,885.00 | \$122,015 |
| Literature Sales | | \$123,727 |
| AA80 Convention | \$69,778 | -\$3,184 |
| Total Income | | \$242,558 |

| Expenses | | Quarter 4: Apr - May - Jun 25 |
|--------------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| Cost of literature sales | | \$50,820 |
| Operating Expenses | | \$107,082 |
| Total Expenses | | \$167,096 |
| Net Profit / Loss | | \$74,655 |

Financial Update and Clarification on Contribution

We are pleased to report that contributions this quarter exceeded operating expenses by \$13,000. This is an encouraging result and a positive reflection of the Fellowship's commitment to being self-supporting through our own contributions.

We encourage members to keep this momentum going. The contributions we make directly support the national services we all rely on—services which are continually being upgraded and adapted to meet today's needs.

There's one small but important point that's sometimes misunderstood. We often hear it said that "contributions go to the General Service Office." In fact, contributions are made to the General Service Board. The Office is one of our most valued services and plays a vital role in coordinating much of the work that supports AA across Australia. But it isn't the body that makes decisions about how our resources are used. That responsibility rests with the Board, which serves as AA's legal entity and custodian on behalf of the Fellowship. It may sound like a fine distinction, but it really matters in understanding how AA is structured and how we safeguard our services.

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Financial Update and Clarification on Contribution

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Our Seventh Tradition contributions do so much more than keep the lights on at the Office. They support literature, public information, archives, international sponsorship, and many other services—all of which help carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. The Office is an important and greatly valued part of that picture, but only one part of a much bigger whole.

And finally, a word about language. In AA we talk about “contributions” rather than “donations.” A contribution carries with it a sense of shared responsibility and gratitude. Each of us is not only a beneficiary of AA, but also a custodian of it. When we contribute, we’re helping to carry the message today and to safeguard our Fellowship for those who will need it tomorrow.

Andrew T & Gabrielle N - General Service Trustees

From the Archive

Exploring our history is a valuable way to understand how AA’s structure developed and why it continues to serve us so well today. With this in mind, we’re delighted to bring you a series of stories from our archives. To begin, we share an account of one of Bill W’s final major structural initiatives—his encouragement for fellowships outside North America to establish and take responsibility for their own service structures through the establishment of the World Service Meeting in 1969.

The World Service Meeting -

A decentralised approach to World Service

When the first General Service Conference was established in North America in 1950, Bill W believed that the newly established service structure had a responsibility to a growing world wide Fellowship. He initially envisaged that the General Service Conference might eventually expand to include delegates from other countries:

“...Though the Conference might someday be enlarged to include the whole world, we felt that the first delegates should come from the U.S. and Canada only...”

Over the following years there was a growing recognition that New York could not realistically continue to provide support on a global scale. Distributing this responsibility was seen as both practical and necessary. The original vision of a centralised structure was abandoned. Instead, a decentralised approach gradually took shape, with autonomous service structures slowly emerging around the world.

The World Service Meeting was established in 1969, to encourage emerging AA fellowships to take responsibility for their own services. Bill W wanted to avoid what he saw as a number of flaws in the then-centralised structure, with its over reliance on the US and Canadian service structure.

One major concern was that this arrangement deprived other countries of the vital responsibility of developing their own leadership. His aim was to encourage leadership to emerge independently in each country, rather than concentrating responsibility in the United States.

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The World Service Meeting - A decentralised approach to World Service

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It was considered essential not to deny other nations the “healthy responsibility” of providing their own services.

There was a desire to avoid New York being regarded as the “world capital” of Alcoholics Anonymous. As Bill W wrote, “Psychologically, such an ever-growing concentration would be most unwise.”

Additionally, there was a strong emphasis on both financial and service provision self-sufficiency. The US / Canadian structure could not be expected to carry the ongoing cost of providing services for the rest of the world indefinitely. Each service structure was encouraged to become fully self-supporting as soon as they were able, both in terms of service provision and financially.

Bill stressed that New York did not wish to withdraw entirely from overseas service, but that over time they would shift as much of the administrative load as possible to the emerging service centres abroad.

In the next exciting installment we will share how our first World Service Delegates brought this message home and what happened next.

*With thanks to Andrew T for writing this article
Cheryn P - National Archives Coordinator*



The 60th Australian National Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous with Al-Anon & Alateen Participation

For registration & further information visit
aanatcon2026.com.au

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facebook.com/groups/aanatcon26

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