

# 65<sup>TH</sup> AUSTRALIAN GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

MY HOME GROUP – COMMITMENT TO ACTION



NOVOTEL BRIGHTON LE SANDS | NOVEMBER 3-4 2023

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**SECTION I**  
INFORMATION

# AGENDA

## Conference Theme: My Home Group – Commitment to Action

Date & Time	Session
<b>Saturday 4 November</b>	
8.30am-8.45am	Opening address – Chair, General Service Board
8.45am-9.00am	Roll Call – Conference Chair
9.00am-10.30am	Committee 1 – voting on topic recommendations
10.30am-11am	Morning Tea
11.30am-1.00pm	Committee 2 – voting on topic recommendations
1.00pm-2.00pm	Lunch
2.00pm-3.30pm	Committee 3 – voting on topic recommendations
3.30pm-4.00pm	Afternoon Tea
4.00pm-5.30pm	Committee – voting on topic recommendations
5.30pm-6.30pm	Q&A from reports by Delegates, Trustees, World Service Delegates, General Service Office
6.30pm-7.30pm	Dinner
7.30pm-10.30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee recommendations not finalised</li> <li>• CSC report and updates</li> <li>• Legacy items report and updates</li> </ul>
<b>Sunday 5 November</b>	
8.30am-9.00am	What's on your mind <i>Includes an opportunity to review or revisit anything new that has come up in prayer &amp; meditation in relation to the previous day's decisions.</i>
9.00am-9.15am	Bids
9.15 am-10.00am	Election of World Service Delegate; ratification of Class A Trustee appointments; ratification of General Service Trustee appointment
10.00am-10.30am	Floor Actions
10.30am-11.00am	Morning Tea and check out
11.00am-12.00pm	Presentation of Financial Report and acceptance
12.00pm-12.30pm	Farewells from outgoing Delegates and Trustees and Group photo
12.30pm-1.30pm	Lunch
1.30pm-2.15pm	Ask It Basket
2.15pm-2.30pm	Conference Close
2.30pm-3.30pm	Post Conference Delegates Meeting – elect Conference Chair 2024 General Service Board Meeting

# AREA DELEGATES

	Area	Panel Number	Year
<b>EASTERN REGION</b>			
Mick Brennan	A	63	2021
	B		
Mary Heard	C	64	2022
Darren Davis	D	65	2023
Andrew Scott	E	65	2023
	F		
Tristram Ellicott	G	63	2021
Damien Graham	H	63	2021
John Starr	I	63	2021
<b>SOUTHERN REGION</b>			
Anthony Carroll	A	65	2023
	B		
Alan Bourne	C Alt	65	2023
Lisa Rowe	D	63	2021
<b>CENTRAL REGION</b>			
Avril Brown	A	64	2022
Anna Leditschke	B	65	2023
<b>WESTERN REGION</b>			
Lesley Ferguson	A	64	2022
Marjo Nissinen	B	64	2022
<b>NORTHERN REGION</b>			
Doug Wade	A	65	2023
<b>NORTH EASTERN REGION</b>			
Dann Bailey	A	65	2023
Rick Cottrell	B	65	2023
Terresa Allen	C	64	2022
<b>VIRTUAL</b>			
Andrew McNee	A	65	2023

# GENERAL SERVICE BOARD

<b>CLASS A TRUSTEES</b>			
Narelle Buchanan		62	2020
Matthew Church		65	2023
<b>GENERAL SERVICE TRUSTEES</b>			
Cheryn Porter	Chairperson	62	2020
Andrew Taylor		54	2023
<b>REGIONAL TRUSTEES</b>			
Geoff Smith	Southern	58	2021
Grant Tucker	Central	51	2022
Dominic Hyde	Western	58	2023
John O’Leary	North Eastern	57	2023
Garry Scott	Eastern	59	2023

## Other Voting Members

Greg Byrne	World Service Meeting Delegate Panel 23	2020
Brian Ferguson	World Service Meeting Delegate Panel 64	2022

## Non-Voting

Chris Surplice	General Service Office	2011
Patrick Scherf	General Service Office	2021

# WHY DO WE NEED A GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

**The late Bernard B. Smith, non-alcoholic, then Chairman of the North American Board of Trustees, and one of the architects of the Conference structure, answered that question superbly in his opening talk at the 1954 meeting in New York:**

“We may not need a General Service Conference to insure our own recovery. We do need it to insure the recovery of the alcoholic who still stumbles in the darkness one short block from this room. We need it to insure the recovery of a child being born tonight, destined to alcoholism.

We need it to provide, in keeping with our Twelfth Step, a permanent haven for all alcoholics who, in the ages ahead, can find in AA that rebirth which brought us back to life. We need it because we, more than all others, are conscious of the devastating effect of the human urge for power and prestige which we must insure can never invade AA. We need it to insure AA against government, while insulating it against anarchy; we need it to protect AA against disintegration while preventing over integration. We need it so that Alcoholics Anonymous and Alcoholics Anonymous alone, is the ultimate repository of its Twelve Steps, its Twelve Traditions, and all of its services.

We need it to insure that changes within AA come only as a response to the needs and the wants of AA, and not of any few. We need it to insure that the doors of the halls of AA never have locks on them, so that all people for all time who have an alcoholic problem may enter these halls unasked and feel welcome. We need it to insure that Alcoholics Anonymous never asks of anyone who needs us what his or her race is, what his or her creed is, what his or her social position is”.

## DECLARATION OF UNITY

This we owe to AA's future;  
To place our common welfare first;  
To keep our fellowship united.  
For AA unity depends on our lives  
And the lives of those to come.

# CONFERENCE 2023 COMMITTEES

## Conference Committee #1

	Area	Year
Mick Brennan (Chair)	A Eastern	3
Damien Graham	H Eastern	3
Mary Heard	C Eastern	2
Avril Brown	A Central	2
Darren Davis	D Eastern	1
Doug Wade	A Northern	1
Dominic Hyde	Western Regional Trustee	
Matthew Church	Class A Trustee	
Chris Surplice	Committee Secretary	

## Conference Committee #2

	Area	Year
Lisa Rowe (Chair)	D Southern	3
John Starr	H Eastern	3
Lesley Ferguson	A Western	2
Anna Leditschke	B Central	1
Andrew Scott	E Eastern	1
Rick Cottrell	B North Eastern	1
Greg Byrne	World Service Delegate	
Narelle Buchanan	Class A Trustee	
Chris Surplice	Committee Secretary	

## Conference Committee #3

	Area	Year
Tristram Ellicott (Chair)	G Eastern	3
Terresa Allen	C North Eastern	2
Marjo Nissinen	B Western	2
Anthony Carroll	A Southern	1
Andrew McNee	A Virtual	1
Dann Bailey	A North Eastern	1
Alan Bourne	Alt C Southern	1
Grant Tucker	Central Regional Trustee	
Garry Scott	Eastern Region Trustee	
Patrick Scherf	Committee Secretary	

## A MESSAGE FROM BILL W

Bill gave this talk in 1954 in front of a group of A.A.s in Fort Worth, Texas. He spoke at length about A.A. history, and specifically, of the development of the Third Legacy:

(A 4-minute recording of Bill delivering the following message was then played):

... So, there was a long discussion, in which I had a sad falling out with a good many of my friends, some of whom had been trustees, and it was quite a bitter and harrowing chapter in our affairs, which none of you know about.

This struggle, to see whether this movement would always be headed by a self-perpetuating hierarchy of oldtimers, or whether these affairs, so vital to the welfare of A.A. all over the world, should be turned over to you.

And finally, after six years of hassling about it, I finally got the consent of the Board of Trustees to come out to you, and tell you this story and to say:

Here is a means, which in an experimental form, we have put in a pamphlet marked 'The Third Legacy.'

Here is a means by which you can get some delegates and state committeemen and send folks up to New York, to take charge and to take over what is now your business.

And so why don't you come up there and look this deal over, and the trustees will agree to make themselves responsible to you instead of to nobody.

And you look it over and see what you think about it, and if at the end of four years you like the way that it's temporarily laid out, then we'll drive a plug in this thing, then we oldtimers up there, including yours truly, will say, "Look folks, these vital services are yours, to have and to hold."

This Conference of delegates shall hereafter be the custodians and the guardians of our Traditions. This is yours. This is the remainder of your Third Legacy. Will you accept it?

So, since 1951 we have been holding these yearly Conferences, to see whether this movement was interested enough, was responsible enough, felt those services were worthwhile enough, to maintain so long as God will need this society.

And I think it's the conclusion of every delegate who has been there that yes, we should take these things over.

So, in 1955 we propose to hold an International Convention, at which time, on behalf of the oldtimers, and of Smithy and me, we shall say to you, here is the remainder of your Third Legacy.

This Conference shall become our successor.

To you we hand the last torch. Carry on. Face your destiny with surety and courage, and God love you.

## THE TWELVE TRADITIONS (The Long Form)

*Our A.A. experience has taught us that:*

**One** – Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is but a small part of a great whole. A.A. must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare comes first. But individual welfare follows close afterward.

**Two** – For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority – a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience.

**Three** – Our membership ought to include all who suffer from alcoholism. Hence, we may refuse none who wish to recover. Nor ought A.A. membership ever depend upon money or conformity. Any two or three alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an A.A. group, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation.

**Four** – With respect to its own affairs, each A.A. group should be responsible to no other authority than its own conscience. But when its plans concern the welfare of neighboring groups also, those groups ought to be consulted. And no group, regional committee, or individual should ever take any action that might greatly affect A.A. as a whole without conferring with the trustees of the General Service Board. On such issues our common welfare is paramount.

**Five** – Each Alcoholics Anonymous group ought to be a spiritual entity *having but one primary purpose* – that of carrying its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

**Six** – Problems of money, property, and authority may easily divert us from our primary spiritual aim. We think, therefore, that any considerable property of genuine use to A.A. should be separately incorporated and managed, thus dividing the material from the spiritual. An A.A. group, as such, should never go into business. Secondary aids to A.A., such as clubs or hospitals which require much property or administration, ought to be incorporated and so set apart that, if necessary, they can be freely discarded by the groups. Hence such facilities ought not to use the A.A. name. Their management should be the sole responsibility of those people who financially support them. For clubs, A.A. managers are usually preferred. But hospitals, as well as other places of recuperation, ought to be well outside A.A. – and medically supervised. While an A.A. group may cooperate with anyone, such cooperation ought never to go so far as affiliation or endorsement, actual or implied. An A.A. group can bind itself to no one.

**Seven** – The A.A. groups themselves ought to be fully supported by the voluntary contributions of their own members. We think that each group should soon achieve this ideal; that any public solicitation of funds using the name of Alcoholics Anonymous is highly dangerous, whether by groups, clubs, hospitals, or other outside agencies; that acceptance of large gifts from any source, or of contributions carrying any obligation whatever, is unwise. Then, too, we view with much concern those A.A. treasuries which continue, beyond prudent reserves, to accumulate funds for no stated A.A. purpose. Experience has often warned us that nothing can so surely destroy our spiritual heritage as futile disputes over property, money, and authority.

**Eight** – Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional. We define professionalism as the occupation of counseling alcoholics for fees or hire. But we may employ alcoholics where they are going to perform those services for which we might otherwise have to engage nonalcoholics. Special services may be well recompensed. But our usual A.A. Twelfth Step work is never to be paid for.

**Nine** – Each A.A. group needs the least possible organisation. Rotating leadership is the best. The small group may elect its secretary, the large group its rotating committee, and the groups of a large metropolitan area their central or intergroup committee, which often employs a full-time secretary. The trustees of the General Service Board are, in effect, our A.A. General Service Committee. They are the custodians of our A.A. Tradition and the receivers of voluntary A.A. contributions by which we maintain our A.A. General Service Office at New York<sup>\*\*</sup>. They are authorized by the groups to handle our overall public relations and they guarantee the integrity of our principal newspaper, the A.A. Grapevine<sup>\*\* \*\*</sup>. All such representatives are to be guided in the spirit of service, for true leaders in A.A. are but trusted and experienced servants of the whole. They derive no real authority from their titles; they do not govern. Universal respect is the key to their usefulness.

**Ten** – No A.A. group or member should ever, in such a way as to implicate A.A., express any opinion on outside controversial issues – particularly those of politics, alcohol reform, or sectarian religion. The Alcoholics Anonymous groups oppose no one. Concerning such matters, they can express no views whatever.

**Eleven** – Our relations with the general public should be characterized by personal anonymity. We think A.A. ought to avoid sensational advertising. Our names and pictures as A.A. members ought not be broadcast, filmed, or publicly printed. Our public relations should be guided by the principle of attraction rather than promotion. There is never need to praise ourselves. We feel it better to let our friends recommend us.

**Twelve** – And finally, we of Alcoholics Anonymous believe that the principle of anonymity has an immense spiritual significance. It reminds us that we are to place principles before personalities; that we are actually to practice a genuine humility. This to the end that our great blessings may never spoil us; that we shall forever live in thankful contemplation of Him who presides over us all.

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# THE TWELVE CONCEPTS FOR WORLD SERVICE

## **CONCEPT I**

Final responsibility and ultimate authority for AA world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.

## **CONCEPT II**

When, in 1955, the AA groups confirmed the permanent charter for their General Service Conference, they thereby delegated to the Conference complete authority for the active maintenance of our world services and thereby made the Conference - excepting for any change in the Twelve Traditions or in Article 12 of the Conference Charter - the actual voice and the effective conscience for our whole Society.

## **CONCEPT III**

As a traditional means of creating and maintaining a clearly defined working relationship between the groups, the Conference, the AA General Service Board and its several service corporations, staffs committees and executives, and of thus insuring their effective leadership, it is here suggested that we endow each of these elements of world service with a traditional "Right of Decision".

## **CONCEPT IV**

Throughout our Conference structure, we ought to maintain at all responsible levels a traditional "Right of Participation", taking care that each classification or group of our world servants shall be allowing a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.

## **CONCEPT V**

Throughout our world services structure, a traditional "Right of Appeal" ought to prevail, thus assuring us that minority opinion will be heard and that petitions for the redress of personal grievances will be carefully considered.

## **CONCEPT VI**

On behalf of AA as a whole, our General Service Conference has the principal responsibility for the maintenance of our world services, and it traditionally has the final decision respecting large matters of general policy and finance. But the Conference also recognises that the chief initiative and the active responsibility in most of these matters should be exercised primarily by the Trustee members of the Conference when they act among themselves as the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous.

## **CONCEPT VII**

The Conference recognises that the Charter and the Bylaws of the General Service Board are legal instruments: that the Trustees are thereby fully empowered to manage and conduct all of the world service affairs of Alcoholics Anonymous. It is further understood that the Conference Charter itself is not a legal document: it relies instead upon the force of tradition and the power of the AA purse for its final effectiveness.

### **CONCEPT VIII**

The Trustees of the General Service Board act in two primary capacities: (1) With respect to the larger matters of overall policy and finance, they are the principal planners and administrators. They and their primary committees directly manage these affairs. (b) But with respect to our separately incorporated and constantly active services, the relation of the Trustees is mainly that of full stock ownership and of custodial oversight which they exercise through their ability to elect all directors of these entities.

### **CONCEPT IX**

Good service leaders, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are at all levels indispensable for our future functioning and safety. The primary world service leadership once exercised by the founders of AA must necessarily be assumed by the Trustees of the General Service Board of Alcoholic Anonymous.

### **CONCEPT X**

Every service responsibility should be matched by an equal service authority - the scope of such authority to be always well defined whether by tradition, by resolution, by specific job description or by appropriate charters and Bylaws.

### **CONCEPT XI**

While the trustees hold final responsibility for AA's world service administration, they should always have the assistance of the best possible standing committees, corporate service directors, executives, staffs and consultants. Therefore, the composition of these underlying committees and service boards, the personal qualifications of their members, the manner of their induction into service, the systems of their rotation, the way in which they are related to each other, the special rights and duties of our executives, staffs and consultants, together with a proper basis for the financial compensation of these special workers, will always be matters for serious care and concern.

### **CONCEPT XII**

General Warranties of the Conference: in all its proceedings, the General Service Conference shall observe the spirit of the AA Tradition, taking great care that the conference never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds, plus an ample reserve, be its prudent financial principle; that none of the Conference Members shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority over any of the others: that all important decisions be reached by discussion vote and whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that no Conference action ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; that through the Conference may act for the service of Alcoholics Anonymous, it shall never perform any acts of government; and that, like the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous which it serves, the Conference itself will always remain democratic in thought and action.

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## **THE TWELVE STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS**

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol - that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

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# GENERAL SERVICE BOARD RESOLUTIONS 2023

The Board resolved to accept the job description written by Dominic Hyde for the National AUSYPAA coordinator and that the position be advertised in AA Around Australia and on the National and Members website.

The Board resolved as a result of Topic #006/2023 referred to the Board by the Conference Steering Committee that a place on the National Website and Members Website be created, to place information on current paid job vacancies/Career opportunities, Trustee opportunities and volunteer opportunities for the skills register pool. The Nominating Committee would be responsible for this.

The Board resolved to change Article 4 of the Articles of Association in the Service Manual by rewording the last sentence to read 'Any Trustee having retired shall not be eligible for reappointment, except in the case where a Class A Trustee has retired before completion of their term of office.'

The Board resolved that the Skills Register be used and developed to collect member information for Working Groups.

The Board resolved that the formal procedure for the appointment of Class A Trustees drafted by Cheryn Porter be included for review as part of the Inventory being undertaken.

The Board resolved to appoint Matthew Church as Class A Trustee for a 5-year period effective from 8 April 2023.

The Board resolved as a result of Topic #027/2023 referred to the Board from the Conference Steering Committee regarding raising the price of literature in line with current annualised CPI and review annually, that the Management Group undertake a regular review of literature pricing and associated costs. Note. Most literature is GST free due to the purpose of our not-for-profit status. GST free literature cannot be sold 50% above the cost price.

The Board resolved that no action is needed re topic #012/2023 referred to the Board from the Conference Steering Committee as the travel to conventions by staff are part of their employment terms.

The Board resolved that Dominic Hyde be the contact for Virtual Area enquiries as Remote Communities Chair.

The Board resolved that Geoff Smith attend the Virtual Area Assembly to assist the Assembly with the question of Should we be taking donations from AA members from other countries in the online meetings?

The Board resolved that the recommendation from Management Group re the cost of funding Trustees at National Conventions be sent to the Inventory meeting to discuss the cost of travel altogether.

The Board resolved that the change to point 1 of the Scope, Remote Communities Committee be accepted and will now read 'Remote Communities Committees will work to ensure access to AA is available to those in underserved or remote communities. Committees focus on overcoming barriers that could make it hard to access the AA program – barriers such as geography, language or culture.'

The Board resolved to undertake a Board Inventory which includes an update of the Board Consciousness document and the Strategic Plan, taking into account Governance and legal obligations of the ACNC and AICD checklists, starting with the first meeting on 2 September 2023.

The Board resolved in response to a concern from a member regarding Welcome to Country being read at the opening meeting and all other meetings of the Perth Convention, that as there are 2 topics in Conference, they would like to hear what conference think about this topic.

The Board made resolutions of a confidential nature in regard to the Annual Performance Reviews of the staff.

The Board resolved that staff Job Descriptions would be updated and Contracts of Employment be investigated as part of the Inventory process being undertaken and that salaries be reviewed accordingly.

The Board resolved that the office staff be asked to transition back to working in the office.

The Board resolved that Gabrielle Nicholson be elected as General Service Trustee for a four-year period commencing 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024.

The Board resolved that the previous decision to seek a General Service Trustee outside of the Sydney area be rescinded and that the original guideline contained in the Service Manual be reinstated.

The Board resolved to review the Information section of the Board folder including all CSP for Committeees and a generic CSP created by the Document Integration Group consisting of Matthew, Geoff, Andrew and Cheryn, to be presented at the February Board meeting.

The Board resolved that the Trustees were allocated to the following Committee's

Document Review Committee – Gabrielle, Geoff and Matthew

Trustee Services – Garry, Dom, Narelle, Brian and Andy

Nominations – Andrew, john

Internal and External Communication – Grant, John and Narelle

CSC – John, Geoff

AA80 HPC – Garry will Chair when Cheryn rotates off

**SECTION 2**  
OUTCOMES OF TOPICS

**TOPIC #004/2023: (Gender- neutral 12 Step banners for meetings)**

Recovery on the Spectrum (RotS) feels that groups should have the option of purchasing gender-neutral 12 Step banners for meetings. e.g.: “Step 11 – Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Them, praying only for knowledge of Their will for us and the power to carry that out.”

RotS acknowledges that the GSB does not have the ability to approve and implement such a change due to the issues with the copyright being held solely in the US. However, RotS would like the GSB to look into how groups in Australia may get copyright approval to purchase or produce gender-neutral banners. RotS is not suggesting that ALL banners should be gender-neutral, as the “Him” pronoun is very important to some; we are just suggesting that the option be made available. We are not suggesting a change to the Big Book, just that the option be available to purchase 12 Step banners which replace the word “Him” with either “Them” or “God”. The “Him” pronoun can make people very uncomfortable and acts as a barrier to retention of newcomers, however we acknowledge that the pronoun is important to many, which is why the option should be available.

**Advisory Action #004/2023**

Conference resolved for the Board to produce a model answer to the question around inclusive based language be placed on the members website and updated regularly with input from World Service Delegates.

**TOPIC #007/2023: (Standardised interim financial reporting)**

That the General Service Conference (GSC) consider the suggestion that the General Service Board (GSB) present standardised interim financial reporting to Regional Trustees at Board meetings (January July and November) that can then be shared with Area Delegates and in turn General Service Representatives (GSR’s).

**Advisory Action #007/2023**

Conference resolved for the GSB to present a simple, standardised overview/snapshot of the financial position of the GSB at each Board meeting that can be shared with Area Delegates and GSR’s. This will provide transparency and gives groups an opportunity to adjust their contributions throughout the year to assist in AA Australia remaining solvent.

**TOPIC #008/2023: (Members who do not identify as human)**

There are members who do not identify as human. We are known as otherkin. The change to the Preamble did not include us. We respectfully request any changes to A.A. literature should include us.

Conference resolved to reject this topic. AA Australia does not have the capacity to influence changes to literature copyrighted by AAWS or The Grapevine. However, the committee does support inclusivity of all alcoholics when considering changes to Australian copyrighted literature.

**TOPIC #009/2023: (Raise the profile of the 12 Concepts). That the GSC explore options to raise the profile of the 12 Concepts for World Service.**

Advisory Action #009/2023

Conference recommends that a Working Group be formed to explore options to promote the 12 Concepts, without changing existing literature.

**TOPIC #010/2023: (Video/audio summary/podcast of conference highlights)**

Advisory Action #010/2023

Conference resolved the topic be rejected and that an audio version of the conference report be made available on the members website as a companion to the written version.

**TOPIC #011/2023: (Rewrite/update the Australian Service Manual)**

That the GSC implement a thorough and fearless review and rewrite the Australian Service Manual, to update, correct and clarify and improve the legibility of the volume. The US AA Service Manual has greatly benefitted from this process and is providing many younger members with an interest in and avenue to involvement and engagement.

Advisory Action #011/2023

Conference resolved for a rewrite and update of the Australian Service Manual be undertaken by a Working Group.

**TOPIC #013/2023: (Reformatting GSO Paperwork)**

GSO have a look at the forms such as this topic form and other paperwork that comes out from them and make it easier to read and use. The formatting is often horrible and clunky and jumps around and is hard to use. That is before we talk about spelling and errors. Nobody submits a form in word anymore its 2023.

Conferenced resolved to accept the topic noting that there is a current and ongoing process for document review and improvement.

**TOPIC #014/2023: (Acknowledgement of Country Statement at AA Meetings)**

“Acknowledgement of Country” (AoC) statements have recently appeared in meetings of AA groups and some AA Service entities (including the Australian General Service Conference, Australian General Service Office, and Australian General Service Board). An AoC statement is part of the political process established by the Australian Government towards Reconciliation with our First Nations’ peoples. As such, an AoC is a controversial political issue and unrelated to AA’s Primary Purpose. The use of an AoC statement engages in “outside issues” unrelated to alcoholism or AA, contrary to principles stated in the AA Preamble and Tradition 10. The General Service Conference needs to address use of an AoC statement by AA Groups and Service entities. We recommend soliciting input from AA Groups around the country, with particular reference to how use of an AoC relates to our Primary Purpose, and the experience and wisdom contained in the Twelve Traditions and AA Preamble.

Conference rejected this topic, while further action is required to explore ways in which AA can more effectively carry the message to First Nations people, this is unrelated to use of an Acknowledgment of Country statement at groups, conventions, committees, or sub committees, where group autonomy applies.

**TOPIC #015/2023: (Need for secular AA leaflet)**

It is proposed that the GSB create a modern leaflet covering the inclusion of people of secular beliefs in the AA Fellowship.

Advisory Action #015/2023

Conference resolved that the GSB create a modern leaflet covering the inclusion of people of secular beliefs in the AA fellowship.

**Topic #016/2023: ('Welcome to Country' at National Conventions)**

The Board and Conference direct the host planning committee of the National Convention to not include a 'welcome to country' or 'acknowledgements of traditional owners' announcements or any other political activism during the convention.

Conference rejected this topic, inclusion of a Welcome to Country or use of acknowledgement of country at conventions is up to each Host Planning Committee. Noting that the Host Planning Committee is accountable to but not directed by the General Service Board.

**TOPIC #017/2023: (Gold Coast Bid to Host NatCon 2026)**

Gold Coast, Area C, North-Eastern Region host the 2026 National Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous, Australia.

Conference resolved to accept the bid for National Convention 2026 to be hosted on the Gold Coast by Area C, North-Eastern Region.

**TOPIC #018/2023: (Using materials like the ‘Cochrane Report’)**

Request that Conference provide guidance to the fellowship about the use of outside materials that are pro AA - for example, the “Cochrane report”. Specifically, its use in locally created digital PICPC material, where outside branding, or logos, are used, along with quotes from, and links to, non-AA material when this information is presented alongside conference approved literature as part of an AA PICPC kit or document.

1. How is this problematic with regards to affiliation and endorsement?
2. How, if at all, might this information be communicated to professionals by AA members that’s in alignment with our traditions, specifically tradition 6 and 10.

If conference decides this does pose conflicts with our traditions, conference could assign the issue to a committee to update PICPC guideline GL-7 and the service manual “section eleven” to help provide clarity to the fellowship.

**Advisory Action #018/2023**

Conference resolved that the questions in the topic be assigned to a GSB Working Group for thoughtful response.

**TOPIC #019/2023: (Shorten Class A Trustee Terms)**

The General Service Board consider changing the current Class A Trustee term from 5 years to 3 years plus an optional 4th year plus an optional 5th year should the Class A trustee and the board wish to exercise one or both of those 1-year options.

Conference resolved to reject this topic.

**TOPIC #020/2023: (Put Cochrane Report in Professionals pack)**

An adoption of the Cochrane report into AA literature Professionals pack to be approved for the purposes of Public Information and working with the professional community.

Conference rejected the topic that an adoption of the Cochrane report be put into AA Literature packs as whilst the report may be helpful in recommending AA, official use implies endorsement and affiliation, referring to Tradition 6.

**TOPIC #021/2023: (Reduce Delegates Term to 2 Years)**

Suggest to Policy & Admissions Committee that Conference Delegates 3-year term be reduced back to a 2-year term.

Conference rejected this topic, consensus of current and previous delegates seems to be that 3 years is the appropriate term of service taking into consideration the learning curve of the role. Furthermore, under the new committee structure 3rd year delegates sit on the Conference Steering Committee, are eligible to chair a conference committee and even eligible to be chair of conference itself.

**TOPIC #022/2023: (Electronic 7th Tradition)**

Our home group would like guidance from the GSO regarding electronic transfer of payments for 7th tradition, and suggested methods for home groups to facilitate this. We seek guidance on anonymity and legal/administrative issues with bank transfers, and prioritising allocation of funds to home group running costs before splitting the remainder to 60-30-10 (or 50-30-10-10).

Advisory Action #022/2023 and #023/2017

Conference resolved to accept this Topic with a report from the Finance Working Group being presented at Conference based on Advisory Action #023/2017 which resolved that the GSB be requested to research cashless options available and produce an information sheet for groups that wish to become cashless for Conference 2018.

A report was presented to Conference with details out how to open a bank account and will be uploaded to the member website. Point of Sale systems do not work with the AA structure as they require an ABN. The Social Media and Technology Committee is in the process of looking at App based online transaction services as an option for Groups. The Committee will keep the Groups informed.

**TOPIC #023/2023: (Volunteers for Phone Line)**

Conference to consider asking for volunteers from any location around Australia to assist in answering the 24-hour phone help line.

Advisory Action #023/2023

Conference resolved to explore options for an expanded model of the 24-hour phone help line to ensure all calls made to the National AA help line get answered. This may include national volunteers added to existing rosters, CSO's or AA phone service in each state or region be the default answer line for unanswered calls.

**TOPIC #024/2023: (New PI Poster)**

New Poster for PI/CPC to become conference approved. Created by member and posted on National PI/CPC WhatsApp Group (Appendix A).

Advisory Action #024/2023

Conference resolved for the new PI/CPC poster be made available for PI/CPC use.

**TOPIC #025/2023: (Proposal for a Secular Leaflet)**

That the proposed leaflet (Appendix B), directed to persons who are agnostic or atheist, be considered as approved AA literature for Australia distribution to AA offices and groups. AA has listed worldwide secular AA meetings for decades. In comparison, secular AA meetings in Australia are relatively new with a steady increase in the number of meetings and attendees in recent years, both face to face and on-line. All are listed on the Australian AA website, where many discovered secular AA meetings by chance. The awareness and visibility of secular AA groups in Australia requires enhancing. This leaflet is a succinct trifold, double-sided leaflet which has been designed for this purpose.

Conference resolved to reject the proposal for a secular pamphlet but refers to Topic #015/2023 and during the board's deliberations on Topic #015/2023, Conference recommends the board take this pamphlet into consideration.

**TOPIC #026/2023: (One Group, One Vote)**

One group – one vote is the fundamental principle of Alcoholics Anonymous. This needs to be stated clearly in the AA Group Handbook.

This topic was rejected as the issue is covered adequately on page 15 of the AA Group Handbook.

**TOPIC #028/2023: (Resume Printing Service Manual and Guidelines)**

Resume printing of the Australian AA Service Manual and the Guidelines

Conference rejected this topic.

**TOPIC #029/2023: (Dyslexic Font for Big Book)**

Have copies of Alcoholics Anonymous (Big Book) printed for dyslexic people.

Advisory Action #029/2023

Conference resolved to refer the topic of having copies of Alcoholics Anonymous (Big Book) printed for dyslexic people to the Board to seek expert advice to determine the best solution.

## TOPIC 030/2023: (Change to Service Manual)

### Recommended change to Service Manual

As there has been some confusion regarding the meaning of the following paragraph from the Delegate Section of the Australian AA Service Manual (under the heading 'About the Alternate Delegate'), the Conference Policies & Admissions Committee requests that the Conference Report Charter and Service Manual Committee consider making the following recommendation to Conference.

That the following paragraph:

*There are only two situations in which the Alternate Delegate can be seated at Conference: - if there is an elected Delegate who, for some reason, is unable to attend Conference; and when the Delegate position is vacant. The Alt Delegate will be considered as having served one year as a Conference member and will only be permitted to attend two more Conferences in the Delegate position. (i.e. 3yrs) be replaced by:*

*\*A Delegate serves one term of three consecutive years. It is strongly recommended that a delegate serve a single term. An Alternate Delegate may, after attending one Conference in place of the Delegate, be elected to serve a full three-year term. (\*please note, this is the wording used in the US/Canada Service Manual).*

### Advisory Action #030/2023

Conference resolved to accept the change to the Service Manual with the following changes.

There are only two situations in which the Alternate Delegate can be seated at Conference.

1. If there is an elected Delegate, who for some reason, is unable to attend Conference and,
2. When the Delegate position is vacant. An Alternate Delegate may, after attending one conference in place of a Delegate, be elected to serve a full three-year term.

One may only attend Conference once in the capacity of Alternate Delegate.

**TOPIC #031/2023: (GUIDELINE # 39 Virtual Area Guideline)**

The Conference Policy and Admissions committee recommends that the current Guideline #39 be replaced with the guideline below. The reason for this recommended change is to clarify the guideline's intention that group GSRs reside in Australia. A group's GSR should be in a position to become a member of the Area Committee, which requires them to be a legal resident, and/or become the elected Area Delegate or Alternate Delegate, which requires them to attend the general service conference in Australia.

**VIRTUAL AREA GUIDELINE** For various reasons, some groups have decided to hold their meetings via cloud-based video communications apps rather than the traditional physical meetings. Should such groups wish to gather to form an online Area, the following process applies. If the proposed Area wishes to become part of an existing region, they should submit the attached Form A to the Conference Policies & Admissions Committee. This is a slightly amended version of the form used by physical Areas. Should the proposed Area wish to stand alone and not be part of an existing region, they should submit the attached form B to the Conference Policies & Admissions Committee. Such an Area would come under the auspices of the Trustees' Remote Communities committee, with the Chair of this committee being available for consultation, etc. The Area may choose to elect an Area Committee, consisting of an Area Delegate, Alternate Delegate, Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer. All Area Committee members should live in Australia for the duration of their term of service. When electing an online group service representative (GSR) or an online Area Committee, members /groups are encouraged to consider the suggested qualifications as per Section 3 of the Service Manual. The GSR is generally the group's mail contact for the Australian General Service Office and usually assists with the planning of and/or attends regional forums and conventions in the Area. The GSR may be in line for election later as a DCM, Area Officer or Area Delegate. It is suggested you consider carefully whether your candidates are qualified in terms of experience and availability for the role. Once the application to become part of the Australian General Service Conference Structure has been approved by Conference, the Area will be entitled to send their Delegate to the Australian General Service Conference. As for all other Areas, the cost equalisation levy will apply.

Please note: Online-only groups belonging to, or considering joining, a virtual Area, should be hosted in Australia and their GSRs should ideally live in Australia.

**Advisory Action #031/2023**

Conference resolved to accept that the virtual area guideline GL #39 be replaced with the guideline as outlined in the topic to clarify the guideline's intention that group GSRs reside in Australia.

## LEGACY ITEMS

<b>Advisory Action #</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status at date of Conference 2023</b>
<b>16/2019</b>	Conference resolved that a book be compiled and published, containing a selection of personal stories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander AA members, their journey to AA and experience, strength and hope. The book could be an excellent resource to carry the message to prisons, health services and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community organisations. The book will have a national focus – sharing stories from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members from all States and Territories, including, if possible and appropriate, a cross section of stories from men, women, young Indigenous people, transgender, disabilities.	Conference resolved to accept the draft manuscript 'Message Stick' with cover art and agreed that 3000 copies be printed at approx. \$10 a copy.  Conference resolved to send all authors a free copy of the book.
<b>22/2019</b>	Policy & Admissions Working Group A - That Conference undertake a review of its current voting structure, having regard to the Right of Participation, to identify options for change that would enable Area Delegates to constitute more than two-thirds of the voting members at the Australian General Service Conference.	P&A Working Group Report was presented to Conference.
<b>2020</b>	The Board resolved that the Chairman of the General Service Board would invite members of the Board of Narcotics Anonymous to meet with them at some time during the July Board meeting to discuss issues relating to dually addicted members.	This will be revisited at the February Board meeting for Action.
<b>26/2020</b>	To be added to group handbook - group problems should be resolved by group conscience and that the General Service Conference, the General Service Board and the General Service Office have no responsibility for solving group problems'	Added to electronic copy,  Next hard copy reprint due-August 2024
<b>2/2021</b>	That Conference resolve to create a dedicated first response page on aa.org.au for the still suffering alcoholic who has not yet joined our fellowship and invite all AA websites to place links to this page as their website's response to requests for information on help to stop drinking from the still suffering alcoholic.	See Conference Folder for Technology Report

<b>4/2021</b>	Conference resolved to accept the Conference PI&CPC Committee's recommendation that a Chat Now feature on the national website be developed.	Chat Now is up and running with a link on the website.
<b>6/2021</b>	Conference resolved to accept the proposal that radio community service announcements targeting indigenous and LGBTI+ communities be accepted.	<p>Last update 2022 - LGBT+ in progress Indigenous needs someone to champion the project. Update? Action?</p> <p>LGBTQI+ community contacts advise radio is not a medium they'd look to for info</p> <p>1st Nations contacts have not responded. - Suggest putting on hold to see if a more holistic approach to 1st nations attraction arises following the 2 topics at 2023 conference</p> <p>Rolled over to a 2024 Working Group</p>
<b>7/2021</b>	Conference resolved to accept the Conference PI&CPC Committee's recommendation that the proposal to produce a series of engaging videos aimed at professionals with the health, prisons and armed forces sectors be accepted.	<p>Last update 2022 - PI&amp;CPC Working Group in contact with a member experienced in this project.</p> <p>Agreed to start with a corrections version - Chris and Narelle to explore content framework.</p> <p>Rolled over to a 2024 Working Group</p>
<b>8/2021</b>	Conference resolved to accept the amended Conference Literature Committee's recommendation that a short paragraph encouraging groups to inform members as to how their contributions are distributed be included in the AA Group Handbook.	Next reprint is scheduled for-2024. GST to write paragraph.

<b>12/2021</b>	Conference resolved to accept the Conference Literature Committee's recommendation that the Australian AA Group Handbook be updated to include an extra section on how an online group may function.	Next reprint - 2024 GSB to follow up after conference depending on Topic before conference 2023.
<b>024/2021</b>	Conference resolved to accept the Conference PI&CPC Committee's recommendation that any future videos submitted for Conference approval should have paid actors or non AA members	Paragraph be added to GL-07
<b>025/2021</b>	Conference resolved to accept the Conference PI&CPC Committee's recommendation that the General Service Board <b>explore options</b> for co-ordinating the use of digital media as a method of PI on a national scale.	PI & PA committee found expense was prohibitive for national version. Local versions at discretion of local entities.  <b>Completed</b>
<b>32/2021</b>	Conference resolved to accept the Conference Treatment Facilities & Accessibility Committee's floor action; recommendation that the General Service Board be requested to take the steps necessary to produce an Auslan translation of Chapter 5 of the Big Book as soon as possible.	Quotes Received, next steps to be discussed at February 2024 Board Meeting.
<b>45/2021</b>	<i>Conference resolved to accept the following Floor Action:</i> That the Australian General Service Conference request the Australian GSB to bring the sentence: New volunteer corporate directors will ask why any paid woman staff member should also be a director and thereby have a vote as good as their own (Concept IV ,Section 12, pg 26) to the attention of the US/Canada GSB, for potential consideration for removal from the Service Manual and other AA conference approved literature.	GSB will write to GSB North America following up on addressing this.
<b>2021</b>	The Board resolved that a sub-committee of young people should be set up to advise on developing strategies for encouraging young people into AA and particularly into AA Service.	This will be revisited at the February Board meeting.

<p><b>2/2022</b></p>	<p>Provide more clarity and expand on Section four – the District and District Committee Member - in the Australian General Service Manual, Ninth Edition. Unlike Section 5 of the Service Manual which provides a lot of information about the Area, and suggestions on how to set up and run an Area Assembly and who can vote etc, the literature does not provide as much clarity for conducting a District meeting or who makes up a District committee. It is suggested that Section Four of the Manual be updated to provide groups with more guidance on what a District is and how to conduct a District meeting. Information such as the scope of a District Committee could be helpful (which is clear and concise for an Area in the Manual, but not for a District).</p> <p>Advisory Actions 002/2022 and 002-B/2022</p> <p><i>Advisory Action #002-B/2022</i> Conference resolved to accept the Conference Report Charter &amp; Service Manual Committee’s recommendation that Chapter II of the 2021-2023 revised and updated edition of the US/Canada Service Manual be used as a source document instead of the document submitted with the Topic.</p>	<p>Conference resolved to accept the revised Section 4 – the District and District Committee Member in the Australian General Service Manual.</p>
<p><b>4/2022</b></p>	<p>To have conference approved literature of a less formal, easier to read and use type, that improves a Correctional Facility detainee’s or Treatment Facility’s patient’s engagement with Alcoholics Anonymous after they have left the facility and also if possible, whilst they are in their facility. Referred to Conference Correctional Facilities Committee. Advisory Action #004/2022</p>	<p>Conference resolved to approve the Bridging the Gap literature presented by the Correctional Facilities Committee.</p>
<p><b>05/2022</b></p>	<p>Institute National Put up an AA Poster week of December 11 to recognise one of our co-Founders sobriety dated.</p>	<p>National PI Coordinator Rob C who has been raising awareness. - Efforts by all Conference members to be stepped up after Conference.</p>
<p><b>6/2022</b></p>	<p>That the National AA website needs to be improved for those in search of a meeting. Currently the search function needs to be more accurate for finding meetings by location</p>	<p>In progress. Technology and Social Media Working Committee.</p>

<b>7/2022</b>	A search for meetings with wheelchair access on AA.org.au returns only x 4 nationally.	Completed
<b>10/2022</b>	Conference resolved to accept the Conference Literature Committee's recommendation that the General Service Board investigates and pursues mechanisms by which Australian members (and the worldwide Fellowship generally, can have a say in future decisions regarding changes to our key literature. *Note: The Conference Literature Committee agreed that there are references in the US/Canada Conference Charter that encourage consultation and communication between Conferences, and recommended that these channels be explored and developed, led by our World Service Delegates	In progress, to be discussed further at the February Board Meeting
<b>13/2022</b>	That the General Service Conference (GSC) of Australia take its Inventory. The last formal Inventory of the GSC was undertaken in 1994 (28yrs ago).	#013/2022: Conference Inventory – set for 2024: awaiting Report from Working Group. See P&A Working Group report
<b>23/2022</b>	<p>Conference resolved to accept the Conference Literature Committee's Recommendation that a limited run of an 80th Anniversary Australian Big Book be published, with the provision that a robust process is undertaken to ensure known page numbering issues and any typographical errors are reviewed and fixed as part of this process.</p> <p>It was further resolved that the submitted Foreword be accepted, on the proviso that the Preface of the 50th Anniversary Edition is also included.</p>	In progress. AA80 Committee

# CONFERENCE STEERING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

## **Deadlines for receipt of Conference Topics 2024**

The Conference Steering Committee recommends that the deadline for receipt of Conference Topics for 2024 be 4pm Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2024.

Conference resolved that the deadline for topics in 2024 is 4pm Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> June, 2024.

## **2024 Conference Dates.**

The Conference Steering Committee recommends that the dates of the Annual General Service Conference be 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> November 2024

Conference resolved that the 66<sup>th</sup> Australian General Service Conference be held from the 2nd-3rd November, 2024.

## **Conference Steering Committee meeting**

The Conference Steering Committee recommends that the 2023 CSC meet with the 2024 CSC as soon as possible after Conference to conduct a post-Conference debrief, update the CSC CSP and set dates and priorities for 2024.

Conference accepted the 2023 Conference Steering Committees recommendation.

## **Topics Form**

The Conference Steering Committee recommends that the updated topic form for 2024 be distributed as soon as possible after the 2023 conference. The Committee further recommends that the 2024 CSC conduct a thorough review of the form, processes and means for submitting topics.

Conference accepted the 2023 Conference Steering Committee recommendation.

## **Conference Transcription**

The Conference Steering Committee recommends that the CSC investigate the most cost-effective way (some of this work has been initiated already) for the key audio recordings of the 2023 Conference be transcribed to text and edited, for archive and easy reference as well as to form the basis of the Conference Report.

Conference accepted the 2023 Conference Steering Committee recommendation.

## FLOOR ACTIONS

**The Chat Now Committee requests that a QR code with a direct link to the Chat be added to all new AA PI Posters.**

Conference voted to entertain this Floor Action.

Advisory Action #32/2023

Conference resolved that a QR code is needed for Chat and that this Floor Action be sent to the Social Media and Technology Committee to make sure the QR code works for both the Chat Now and website. GSO would get the QR code printed as a sticker to put on existing posters and then ensure that it is added to new posters when reprinting.

**To be added to the National Convention Guideline (GL-15) that only conference approved literature be displayed on tables at National Conventions.**

Conference voted to entertain this Floor Action.

Advisory Action #33/2023

Conference resolved for that a GSB Working Group to look at the National Convention Guidelines to provide clearer direction for Conventions.

# BIDS

## REGIONAL FORUMS

Central Region – Area A bid for the Regional Forum in 2025, Conference resolved to accept this bid.

Eastern Region – Area H bid for the Regional Forum for 2024, Conference resolved to accept this bid.

Southern Region – Rather than put a bid in for a Regional Forum in Tasmania for 2024 – Southern region to come together to work out how best to invigorate. No ‘bid’ was made.

## ELECTIONS AND RATIFICATION OF TRUSTEES AND WORLD SERVICE DELEGATES

### WORLD SERVICE DELEGATE

A Third Legacy Procedure vote took place to elect a candidate for the position of World Service Delegate from the following candidates.

1. Andrew Poad
2. Judy Woolstencroft
3. Shelley Brunson

Andrew Poad was elected to World Service Delegate for a four-year term commencing 1 January 2024.

### RATIFICATION OF TRUSTEE ELECTIONS

Conference resolved to accept the appointment of Matthew Church by the General Service Board as Class A Trustee for a five-year period commencing April 2023.

Conference resolved to accept the appointment of Gabrielle Nicholson by the General Service Board as General Service Trustee for a four-year period starting 1 January 2024.

## ASK IT BASKET

1. What is happening in Adelaide next year?

The National Convention is in Adelaide next year from 29 March – 1 April  
National PI Forum 2024

2. Where does the Conference group photo go?

The Conference group photo will be put in the Conference Folder on the Shared Drive.

3. Of the people who voted what are the numbers of Trustees, World Service Delegates and Delegates?  
19 Delegates and 9 Trustees and 2 World Service Delegates

4. How do we best address Topics which are incoherent, provocative or repetitious?

The Conference Steering Committee is redrafting the Topics submission form to enable members to provide more concise topics and ask for clarity. Moving forward the Topic form will be accessible on the Members website all year round with a closing off date for the current conference year so members will be able to submit topics up until that time and then after that time the topics will go to the next year.

5. Will we keep three Conference Committees next year?

This will depend on the number of Topics submitted – three worked this year with 24 Topics, 8 assigned to each Committee. This is for the CSC to decide after the 9<sup>th</sup> June 2024 when the Topics have been received. Any ideas regarding the forms or reports please email the Conference Steering Committee members.

6. Did we ask for volunteers for Working Groups?

Patrick will give the CSC chair the list of Working Groups that have come out of Conference this year and the current delegates will be able to put their names to a Working Group in the Delegates Meeting after Conference ends.

Working Groups sit under a Trustee Committee, with two Trustees allocated to that committee each year. They will staff the Working Group through the delegates and from the Skills Register.

The Skills Register will be available on the Members website on a Service recruitment page where all service positions including General Service Trustee and World Service Delegate will be advertised. This will be maintained by the Trustee Nominations Committee.

# GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2023

## ADVISORY ACTIONS

The group conscience of the Fellowship of ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS in Australia was expressed in the following Advisory Actions to the General Service Board. The background to these Advisory Actions and the submissions from the Groups, individual members or from the General Service Board in the form of Topics which led to them were presented in full detail to all Areas prior to Conference.

The Advisory Actions are directly allocated to the appropriate Trustee Committee where if necessary, a Working Group will be formed by the Chair of the Committee. This Working Group will consist of Conference Delegates, Trustees, Alumni and any member of the fellowship that has been vetted by the Nominations Committee with a specific skillset relevant to the Advisory Action subject.

### TRUSTEES COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

This committee covers internal communications, and Public Information, Technology and Social Media. Board members responsible for this Committee for 2024 are:

Grant Tucker [centralregiontrustee@aa.org.au](mailto:centralregiontrustee@aa.org.au)

John O'Leary [northeasternregiontrustee@aa.org.au](mailto:northeasternregiontrustee@aa.org.au)

Narelle Buchanan, Class A Trustee [narellebuchanan@aa.org.au](mailto:narellebuchanan@aa.org.au)

2023 Advisory Actions allocated
<b>Advisory Action #015/2023</b> Conference resolved that the GSB create a modern leaflet covering the inclusion of people of secular beliefs in the AA fellowship.
<b>Advisory Action #32/2023</b> Conference resolved that a QR code is needed for Chat and that this Floor Action be sent to the Social Media and Technology Committee to make sure the QR code works for both the Chat Now and website. GSO would get the QR code printed as a sticker to put on existing posters and then ensure that it is added to new posters when reprinting.
<b>Advisory Action #004/2023</b> Conference resolved for the Board to produce a model answer to the question around inclusive based language and our copyright restrictions be placed on the members website. Conference also resolved for the World Service delegates to continue to investigate how we can have a voice in changes to copyrighted literature.

### Working Groups

Social Media and Technology Working Group

## TRUSTEES DOCUMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE

This committee covers Literature and Archives and Policy Guidelines and Service Manual.

Board members responsible for this Committee for 2024 are:

Gabrielle Nicholson [generalservicetrustee2@aa.org.au](mailto:generalservicetrustee2@aa.org.au)

Geoff Smith [chairgsb@aa.org.au](mailto:chairgsb@aa.org.au)

Matthew Church, Class A Trustee, [matthewchurch@aa.org.au](mailto:matthewchurch@aa.org.au)

<b>2023 Advisory Actions allocated</b>
<b>Advisory Action #009/2023</b> Conference recommends that a Working Group be formed to explore options to promote the 12 Concepts, without changing existing literature.
<b>Advisory Action #011/2023</b> Conference resolved for a rewrite and update of the Australian Service Manual be undertaken by a Working Group.
<b>Advisory Action #018/2023</b> Conference resolved that the questions in the Topic #018/2023 regarding the use of outside materials that are pro AA ie 'Cochrane Report' be assigned to a GSB Working Group for thoughtful response and to update PICPC guideline GL-7 and the service manual "section eleven" to help provide clarity to the fellowship. Questions in the Topic are as follows: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. How is this problematic with regards to affiliation and endorsement?</li><li>2. How if at all, might this information be communicated to professionals by AA members that is in alignment with our traditions, specifically traditions 6 and 10.</li></ol>
<b>Advisory Action #33/2023</b> Conference resolved for that a GSB Working Group to look at the National Convention Guidelines to provide clearer direction for Conventions on Conference approved literature available only on Convention literature tables.

### Working Groups

Document Integration Group

National Archives Committee

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## TRUSTEES NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

This committee acts to see that all vacancies for Class A Trustee, General Service Trustee, World Service Delegates, sub-committees and working groups are properly filled with members and workers of the greatest possible competence, stability and industry.

Board members responsible for this Committee for 2024 are:

Andrew Taylor [generalservicetrustee1@aa.org.au](mailto:generalservicetrustee1@aa.org.au)

John O'Leary [northeastregiontrustee@aa.org.au](mailto:northeastregiontrustee@aa.org.au)

### Working Groups

Class A Trustee Working Group

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## Trustees Services Committee

This committee covers Professional Awareness, Remote Communities/Accessibility, Health/Treatment, Corrections/Criminal Justice System and World Services/International.

Board members responsible for this Committee for 2024 are:

Garry Scott [easternregiontrustee@aa.org.au](mailto:easternregiontrustee@aa.org.au)

Dominic Hyde [westernregiontrustee@aa.org.au](mailto:westernregiontrustee@aa.org.au)

Narelle Buchanan [narellebuchanan@aa.org.au](mailto:narellebuchanan@aa.org.au)

Brian Ferguson [worldservicedelegate1@aa.org.au](mailto:worldservicedelegate1@aa.org.au)

Andy Poad [worldservicedelegate2@aa.org.au](mailto:worldservicedelegate2@aa.org.au)

<b>2023 Advisory Actions allocated:</b>
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<b>Advisory Action #029/2023</b>
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Conference resolved to refer the topic of having copies of Alcoholics Anonymous (Big Book) printed for dyslexic people to the Board to seek expert advice to determine the best solution.
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## Working Groups

Message Stick

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## Management Group

The purpose and function of the Management Group is to facilitate every aspect of efficient and effective office management, as specified by Article 19 of the Articles of Association as contained in *The AA Service Manual*.

It is also this committee's responsibility to review all minutes and reports from National Convention Planning committees and to encourage their use of the guidelines for National Conventions (as drawn up by the Australian General Service Conference) in company with the US/Canada Guidelines on Conference and Conventions.

This committee is mainly a reviewing committee. However, it is also the chief instrument of communicating the progress of Advisory Actions and other general service projects between Conferences to Area Delegates and members of the General Service Board.

Andrew Taylor [generalservicetrustee1@aa.org.au](mailto:generalservicetrustee1@aa.org.au)

Gabrielle Nicholson [generalservicetrustee2@aa.org.au](mailto:generalservicetrustee2@aa.org.au)

Chris Surplice – General Service Office Staff [chris@aa.org.au](mailto:chris@aa.org.au)

Patrick Scherf – General Service Office Staff [patrick@aa.org.au](mailto:patrick@aa.org.au)

<b>2023 Advisory Actions allocated</b>
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<b>Advisory Action #030/2023</b>
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Conference resolved to accept the change to the Service Manual with the following changes. There are only two situations in which the Alternate Delegate can be seated at Conference.
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|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. If there is an elected Delegate, who for some reason, is unable to attend Conference and,</li></ol> |
|--|

2. When the Delegate position is vacant. An Alternate Delegate may, after attending one conference in place of a Delegate, be elected to serve a full three-year term.

One may only attend Conference once in the capacity of Alternate Delegate

**Advisory Action #007/2023**

Conference resolved for the GSB to present a simple, standardized overview/snapshot of the financial position of the GSB at each Board meeting that can be shared with Area Delegates and GSR's. This will provide transparency and gives groups an opportunity to adjust their contributions throughout the year to assist in AA Australia remaining solvent.

**Advisory Action #010/2023**

Conference resolved that an audio version of the conference report be made available on the members website as a companion to the written version.

**Advisory Action #031/2023**

Conference resolved to accept that the virtual area guideline Guideline #39 be replaced with the guideline as outlined in the topic to clarify the guideline's intention that group GSRs reside in Australia.

**Advisory Action #022/2023 and #023/2017**

Conference resolved to accept this Topic with a report from the Finance Working Group being presented at Conference based on Advisory Action #023/2017 which resolved that the GSB be requested to research cashless options available and produce an information sheet for groups that wish to become cashless for Conference 2018.

A report was presented to Conference with details out how to open a bank account and will be uploaded to the member website. Point of Sale systems do not work with the AA structure as they require an ABN. The Social Media and Technology Committee is in the process of looking at App based online transaction services as an option for Groups. The Committee will keep the Groups informed.

**Advisory Action #023/2023**

Conference resolved to explore options for an expanded model of the 24-hour phone help line to ensure all calls made to the National AA help line get answered. This may include national volunteers added to existing rosters, CSO's or AA phone service in each state or region be the default answer line for unanswered calls.

The Board will conduct an ongoing review of the telephone system to ensure we have the best option for the telephone services.

**Advisory Action #024/2023**

Conference resolved for the new PI/CPC poster be made available for PI/CPC use.

**Advisory Action #16/2019**

Conference resolved to accept the draft manuscript 'Message Stick' with cover art and agreed that 3000 copies be printed at approx. \$10 a copy.

## **Working Group**

AA80 Host Planning Committee -Garry Scott [easternregiontrustee@aa.org.au](mailto:easternregiontrustee@aa.org.au)

Finance 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition Working Group

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## **Conference Steering Committee 2024**

John O'Leary [northeastregiontrustee@aa.org.au](mailto:northeastregiontrustee@aa.org.au)

Geoff Smith [southernregiontrustee@aa.org.au](mailto:southernregiontrustee@aa.org.au) or [gsbchair@aa.org.au](mailto:gsbchair@aa.org.au)

Lesley Ferguson Area B Western Region

Terresa Allen Area C North Eastern Region

Marjo Nissinen Area A Western Region

Mary Heard Area C Eastern Region

Avril Brown Area A Central Region

## **SECTION 3**

### **AUDITED REPORT 2022-2023**



# **SECTION 4**

## REPORTS

# AREA DELEGATE REPORTS

## EASTERN REGION

### AREA A

Hi all, my name is Mick and I have had the privilege of serving Area A, Eastern Region (ER) for the past 3 years as their Delegate.

Area A currently has five active Districts and three in recess. Our Area navigated the previous few years by holding our Assemblies online, then alternating between physical and online Assemblies. At our May 2023 Assembly we agreed to host all four of our yearly Assemblies face to face, rotating them around the Area. It was interesting to note that holding assemblies online did not necessarily improve or increase participation in terms of numbers. One of the outcomes of our Area Inventory this year was that the Area consider holding more assemblies in the remote or recessed parts of the Area to encourage enthusiasm and participation and to also return to physical assemblies only. Another key change to our Assemblies was to introduce 'GSR time' in our Assemblies. It arose from a suggestion in the Service Manual and provides GSR's with their own specific time at each Assembly to speak freely; to voice their ideas, concerns, or suggestions.

At two of our four assemblies this year we have had members of the GSB attend – this I feel has been a real positive for our Assemblies, to not only put faces to the names of our Board members, but to also have the opportunity for group members within Area A to ask questions and liaise directly with our Board.

A snapshot of the status of the meetings and groups within the Area is provided in this report. Two key positions remain vacant on our Area Committee (T&CF and Public Information and Public Awareness – formerly known as PI&CPC). We have had difficulty in filling these roles for some time, however groups and Districts within Area A have been doing a lot of work, particularly in the PI&PA field across the Area.

#### ***Area Inventory***

Area A conducts an inventory every two years and this year we had a Delegate from the North-east Region facilitate the inventory for us at our February Assembly. The inventory questions were developed from a number of sources, including other group inventory listings, The Australian AA Service Manual, Area A's 2021 Inventory Report and centred around the core activities and responsibilities of Area A. A few key outcomes were identified. These included: improving GSR and DCM orientation, review the Area prudent reserve, holding more assemblies in remote and recessed parts of the Area, and encourage stronger participation at group and district levels.

#### ***Archives***

Area A has a huge volume of archival material. The Area has a place in Australian AA history as being the first recognised Area within our General Service Structure. The 75th anniversary of AA on the NSW North Coast will be celebrated in 2024, and the Area (via the efforts of our Area Archivist) is planning on producing a booklet celebrating that milestone. There is an abundance of historical material already documented and the project will require some travelling to interview people & collect further material.

#### ***Summary from Area Registrar***

There are encouraging signs of growth and development in Area A with three new face-to-face meetings commencing in the more remote parts of the Area (Guyra, Walgett and Bingara).

- Across Area A there are currently 121 active groups, which include:
  - Online: 23, including 2 hybrid.
  - In person: 98.

- Duration. Most meetings are of one hour duration, but there has recently been an increase in one and a half hour meetings, with one meeting (Bingara, fortnightly) advertised at 150 minutes.
- There are five women’s meetings and two men’s meetings.
- Meeting types and formats. For both In Person and Online/Hybrid, there is a wide range of meeting types and format, including:
  - 46 ID meetings.
  - 10 Big Book Study meetings.
  - 5 Living Sober Meetings.
  - 14 Steps and Steps and Traditions meetings.
  - 9 Speaker/Topic and literature study and discussion meetings.
  - 6 Spiritual Concept/Progress meetings.
  - 9 As Bill Sees It meetings. and 9 Daily Reflections meetings.

The other meetings are “Just for Today”, Meditation and Promises.

### ***Area A Districts update***

There has been a hive of activity this year in the five active districts within Area A. Most Districts have been heavily involved in doing various PI&PA work – either via their District Committee or individual group’s efforts. Rallies and fellowship events have been well attended throughout the Area this year, including;

- Hastings District rally (Port Macquarie in May)
- Byron Bay convention (September)
- Banana Coast rally (Coffs Harbour, August)
- Lightning Ridge Rally (June)
- Murwillumbah rally (September)
- Grafton rally (October)
- Manning Great Lakes District Rally (Forster, October)

### ***Corrections update***

This year we received an offer of support from the Area G (ER) Corrections Chair to start AA meetings in the Mid North Coast Correctional Centre near Kempsey – within Area A. The first physical meeting was held in early September and there will be ongoing meetings held within the MNCCC on the first Monday of the month and an online meeting every Thursday. Area G have agreed to assist us until we have enough members within the southern part of Area A who can take over the monthly F2F meeting. The online meetings will provide a great service opportunity for any eligible member within the Area who is willing to carry the message in the T&CF space.

### ***Topics for Conference***

Two topics were submitted from Area A this year. There has been a significant interest in the Topics this year with groups and Districts discussing the Topics and sending in feedback. I attended a District meeting to also discuss what Topics are, how to submit them and the process of Conference and how it works. Our pre-conference Assembly (30<sup>th</sup> Sept) provides an opportunity for Groups to discuss all the Topics and provide the Delegate with a sense of the Area on each Topic.

I look forward to attending Conference in November and participating in our national Group Conscience on behalf of Area A, Eastern Region. It has been a real privilege to serve the Groups of Area A and I thank them for their support and trust over the past three years.

Yours in Service,

Mick Brennan

Panel 63 Delegate, Area A, Eastern Region  
Friday morning group, Pottsville NSW  
areaanswdelegate@outlook.com

## **AREA B**

No attendee

## **AREA C**

Area C has 45 meetings weekly.  
All face to face, possibly one still hybrid.

We currently have 4 districts - Newcastle, Hunter, Lake Macquarie and Port Stephens  
Only Newcastle district has all positions filled.  
All districts are represented at Area by DCMs

Area has 4 assemblies per year.  
We are now providing food and have an attendance of 30 – 40.  
We have also been having guest speakers at Area assemblies which has been successful.  
We had one assembly on the role of the GSR and one on the traditions.  
All positions at Area are filled.

### Treatment Facilities

WHOS in Cessnock brings residents to meetings regularly.  
Belmont Hospital has a regular H&I  
Martyr Hospital has not run an H&I since COVID but we are currently trying to reestablish them

### PI and CPC

All districts have PI and CPC coordinators.  
Spiritual Awakenings has been distributing information packs to local medical centers.  
Elmore Vale Big Book Study has agreed on a project to distribute posters in the community and also letter box dropping of business cards.  
AA attended the Hunter Homeless Connect Day on Wednesday 9 August at the Newcastle Exhibition Centre where volunteers distributed Public Information.  
District PI/CPC Coordinator for Lake Macquarie Matthew advised professional pamphlets have been delivered to Belmont Police Station.  
AA ad released in August issue of The Local Newspaper. The Local provided 60% discount and confirmed they will continue to run free advertising for AA when space allows.

### Treatment Facilities

#### **Cessnock Gaol**

We are looking at restarting in October. We have 6 applications for Gaol clearances and looking for more volunteers. The meetings will be held in 2 sections on a Monday afternoon and there is the possibility of more sections wanting AA meetings.

#### **St Heliers Gaol at Muswellbrook**

Weekly with average of 10 Inmates in attendance.

**The Eastern Region Service Forum** was successful.

We sold 56 tickets and had between 60-70 in attendance.

The Newcastle alcoholics put on a fantastic spread with heaps of baking.

The committee worked well together.

We had an accountant on the finances, a hotel manager on the catering plus a fantastic chair person. and a few other very committed members who turned up to every meeting and were out in full swing over the weekend. It was very much a team effort.

We will have a review next Tuesday and submit a document to the members' website for future committees.

The speakers were all inspiring and generally it was a fun time.

## **AREA D**

My name is Darren Davis and I'm an alcoholic. I am a member of the "Caringbah Unity Group" in the southern part of Sydney metro area, within the Sutherland Shire. Our Group temporarily hosts four meetings per week, two of which are hybrid face to face and online, one of our meetings is online and one of our meetings is face to face only. I have been involved in service at the home group since 1994 and help terms of GSR at both Area D & Area G during tenure at various home groups.

I have been honored to serve two terms as the Area D secretary, one back in 1998/2000 and more recently in 2018/2020 when returning to live withing Area D after 20 years living in Area G. I am now with a real sense of duty privileged to serve as a 1<sup>st</sup> year delegate, serving the fellowship that has saved my life and the lives of dozens of loved opens.

Other committees for AA events in the past have been fruitful in my recovery also which have been from NEWYPAA – for 8 years, Sydney Mens weekend for 11 years and the Sydney Round up formerly known as the Boomerang Round Up for 6 years.

Eastern Region Area D is a geographic area which stretches from Camden in Sydney's west, as far north as Horsely Park and Smithfield, through suburbs that include Croydon, Ashfield and Summer Hill and east to Kurnell and Bundeena and then south through the Illawarra and as far south as Berrara in the Shoalhaven.

Area D each week hosts over 100 meetings and growing, there has been a resurgence of face to face meetings and numbers are growing once again after dropping off significantly during the pandemic as members found refuge within online meeting platforms.

Majority of assembly members have relished in the return to the rooms more so over the last two years, all sharing stories of the ebbs and flow of home group membership, with some members opting for online participation for their own reasons respectively. Many stories of newcomers both enjoying the online aspect and for some the personal touch that happens in F2F.

Area D convenes four Area Assemblies annually, currently we have moved online permanently which continues to provide access for more remote members to attend. We have enjoyed the attendance of remote groups GSR's we who bring with them more good news that A.A. is reaching alcoholics in their local communities.

## **Corrections**

South Coast Corrections facility update

4 members have completed registrations, VIN issued, and are now entering via video link.

The Meeting has changed time to 10:00am to allow better participation from the inmates. This has continued to keep attendance increased. The members from within the facility are now running their own independent meeting on Monday's 3:00pm. This means that there are now 2 meetings per week – fantastic news!

Meeting is Big Book based with members reading select passages from the Big book and 12 steps and 12 traditions and then sharing.

## **Districts**

The Macarthur District continues to be represented by their District Committee Member alongside a steady GSR attendance. Their inspirational service to their district includes Macarthur district continues inspire the members of our area attending groups.

The "South Coast District, Eurobodalla" formed 18months ago by several groups around the Batemans Bay Area enjoyed through another pocket of AA loving members finding their way to Area D.

The Sutherland Shire & St George District (**Newly formed District**) has 4 member groups, 14 members, 9 who have a vote. A bank account has been established and they are financial. H&I work taking place at one local drug and alcohol facility and actively engagement with another. PI&CPC committee established, currently obtaining quotes for discussion, approval and actioning. Recently had a successful fundraiser with over 100 attendees for an International Guest Speaker) at Caringbah Unity Group / local meeting.

Between Area Assemblies much of our communication continues to happen through WhatsApp which has made it easy to communicate amongst groups GSR's. Members can be invited into the group where new GSR's are sent a welcome pack that contains some valuable info for new role. The emphasis is on the importance of staying informed of current AA service opportunities, upcoming events and matters affecting AA as a whole. Flyers, reports and both Area agendas and minutes are posted.

This is my 1st General Service Conference Report, and I would like to thank all members who currently serve on the Area D Committee and all GSRs and other attendees for their service.

Our next Area Assembly is the 22nd of October.

Yours in Service

Darren Davis

Eastern Region Area D Delegate

## **AREA E**

Dear Conference members, my name is Andrew Scott, and I am an alcoholic and a member of the Road to Recovery Group of AA that meets on Friday night at Kirribilli and Tuesday night North Sydney, NSW. I am the current Alternate Area Delegate for Area E. Our Area covers Sydney's Northern suburbs and Northern Beaches, we meet monthly at the St. Ives Central Service Office rotating Monday through Thursday at 7.30pm.

I am not sure how many meetings are held within our area, there must be dozens, about five different Group Service Representatives attend regularly. Meeting minutes are circulated via Mailchimp to a list of subscribers and uploaded to the Area E website <http://areaeeraa.info/> that is in the process of being updated. The Area E meeting schedule is posted here as well.

H&I service work in Area E includes the following treatment facilities.

- Douglas Unit at the Royal North Shore Hospital
- Northside Clinic
- Henley Psychiatric Unit

Rosters for H&I service are managed by members of Area E.

There are currently several vacant service positions.

- Secretary (being backfilled)
- PI & CPC (open for 2yrs+)
- Web Master (being backfilled)
- Area Delegate (open for <1yr)

Recent initiatives by the Area E Committee include the introduction or reintroduction of Area Assemblies, the first of which is planned for 28 October. A venue has not yet been set, groups within the area have been invited to host this Area assembly, a decision will be made at the next Area E meeting. This assembly seeks feedback from the various group conscioues on Topics for Conference. At the last Area E meeting, I was successful in gaining majority support to take on the responsibilities of Area Delegate for the upcoming National Conference in Sydney and I am excited to have been given the opportunity to learn more about it. It has been great to attend monthly online meetings with GSRs for the Eastern Region, I am in awe of the knowledge of the long-term members of this cohort and hope to be of some use to them in the coming years.

North Sydney Central Service Office manages the all-important divertor service for the AA helpline that is in need of further support.

## AREA F

No attendee

## AREA G

Area G, Eastern Region is well supported by in-area groups both financially and across all sub-committees and activities. A brief overview of activities taking place in the area follows:

### PI & CPC Highlights

The ER Area G PI Sub-Committee

- Distributes Big Books and other AA literature to Area G libraries
- Set up and staffed a stall at the annual GPEC (GP Exhibition and Convention) in Darling Harbour
- Sponsored radio spots on local community radio over Xmas New Year 2022/23
- Is currently developing a range of activities across:
  - Indigenous reach out
  - Professional bodies, particularly Legal and Health community services
  - Advertising, including on community radio, at sporting events and on transport (busses, taxis and train stations)
  - General Audience Education, including literature in libraries, street libraries, posters in cafes etc

For details or further information please contact the chair of the Area G PI & CPC sub-committee, Michael S: [areagpublicinfo@gmail.com](mailto:areagpublicinfo@gmail.com)

## Treatment Highlights

Over the last 12 months, Area G has maintained an active relationship with various facilities in the area, including but not limited to, William Booth, St. Vincent's Hospital Gorman Unit, Kathleen York House, Glebe House, Foundation House, The Sydney Retreat, The Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Concord Hospital Ward 69, Wesley Hospital Ashfield and The Bourke Street Program.

Literature ranging from pamphlets, posters and pocket size copies of Alcoholics Anonymous, US 4th Edition and Australian Edition Big Books have been donated to all of the above facilities.

Area G facilitates and coordinates H&I meetings in most of these services.

A monthly BBQ is hosted by A.A. members at the Gorman House Detox unit.

The Bridging the Gap program continues to be used by facilities connecting people leaving treatment with an A.A. member to help them integrate into A.A.

Development of a sponsorship directory continues with the aim to assist people in treatment working the A.A. program, and Treatments has worked alongside Corrections to connect sponsors with members in prisons.

For details or further information, please contact the chair of the Area G Treatment sub-committee:

[areagreatments@gmail.com](mailto:areagreatments@gmail.com)

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## Corrections Highlights

### **New AA literature in 40 correctional facilities**

Area G has donated one copy of each title, Living Sober, Came to Believe and the US version of the Big Book to the 40 libraries in correctional facilities in NSW.

### **Long Bay Correctional Centre - Meetings**

In March 2023 AA extended its reach into Long Bay Area 1, on a Tuesday, in addition to the existing Wednesday meeting in Area 3.

### **Long Bay Correctional Centre – Sponsoring Offenders**

Five men in Long Bay are being actively sponsored by a member of the corrections committee – there is scope to extend this 12<sup>th</sup>-step work if more AA members become available, currently on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings.

### **Silverwater Women's Correctional Centre**

In April 2023, an 'open' AA meeting commenced at Silverwater Women's Correctional Complex (SWCC).

Most women are processed here and sent to either Dillwynia Women's Correctional Centre (Dillwynia) or Mid North Coast CC, West Kempsey (MNC), so sponsorship is problematic at this facility.

### **Dillwynia Women's Correctional Centre**

On 1 September 2023, face-to-face AA meetings will commence at Dillwynia, an Area H Facility, and continue the first Friday of every month as follows: Morning - 10.30 am to 11.30 am Area 2 (General population) and Afternoon - 12.30 to 1.30 pm Area 1 (QRS wings)

Dillwynia does not have the IT infrastructure to launch online meetings but has been offered for the future. Area G contributes attendees and covers the cost of refreshments at the meetings.

### **Parklea Compulsory Drug Treatment Correctional Centre**

No response to the offer of meetings at this facility. However, there is no capacity for the Committee to offer any further meetings at present.

### **Mid North Coast Correctional Centre, West Kempsey**

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The committee has been collaborating with Area A.

On 4 September 2023 face-to-face AA meetings will commence at MNC, an Area A facility, and continue the first Monday of every month. The same meetings will be delivered online on Thursdays. They will be open AA meetings.

A member of the committee will continue to sponsor two women in this prison once transferred from Silverwater.

### **Inmates Tablets to be rolled out by CSNSW in 2023**

AA Australia does not presently have permission to include PDF versions of AA literature on inmate tablets (i-pads) where the copyright vests in AA World Services.

Until permission has been granted by AA World Services, the committee has asked Library Services, CSNSW at Brush Farm if a digital version of the Big Book at a cost of \$12.00 per unit, can be uploaded to the tablets and, if so, what needs to be done in terms of consents, process etc to facilitate this. See link here:

<https://www.aa.org/the-big-book>.

A request has also been made to add links to various online AA resources to these tablets.

For details or further information please contact the chair of the Area G Corrections sub-committee, Lynne J: [areagcorrections@gmail.com](mailto:areagcorrections@gmail.com)

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### **Area Finances**

Area G regularly receives healthy donations from groups across the Area.

The ongoing challenge is to spend funds before they mount up – the current bank balance is higher than we are comfortable with. To this end, GSRs are encouraged to propose initiatives that the area can finance. The area continues to generously support outreach activities across area G where possible.

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### **Sydney City CSO**

Address: Offices 1&2, Kings Cross Parking Station,  
9a Elizabeth Bay Rd.  
Elizabeth Bay, NSW, 2011

Email: [sydneycitycso@bigpond.com](mailto:sydneycitycso@bigpond.com)

Phone: 02 9389 6333 (office)  
02 9387 7788 (24 hour help-line)

Hours: Monday - Friday - 9:30am-5:30pm  
Saturday - 10am-2pm  
Sunday – closed

### **Services:**

- AA Literature sales; on-site and via post.
- 24-hour phone service for AA enquiries, AA member and Group support.
- 12<sup>th</sup> step roster to facilitate sponsorship and support visits to alcoholics.
- Support for Area G sub-committee activities (PI, Treatment, Corrective Services, LGBT).
- Cooperation and Support for partner CSOs around Australia.

### **Volunteers:**

- Monday to Friday: Seven volunteers sharing in-person shifts. Two days are currently being covered via phone diversions. Two new volunteers in training. Friday was covered by phone diversions. with
- Saturdays: Coverage shared by four local AA groups.
- 24-hour phone line: Approximately thirty volunteers and four coordinators support and manage the service.
- 12<sup>th</sup> step roster: Around 10 volunteers currently but is expected to reduce due to the declining use of this service over the past two years.

### **Financial Highlights:**

On average, nineteen AA groups in Area G make regular financial contributions to CSO, with some continuing contributions from individual AA members. A larger number of groups resumed live meetings post-COVID, increasing literature sales.

Total Income over the twelve-month period increased by 18% on FY21/22, driven by increased average quarterly sales of literature and offset by reduced average quarterly contributions.

Allocation of surplus funds is managed at Area Assembly, where they are piped directly to PI&CPC, Treatment and Corrections initiatives.

Further, each operating subcommittee has access to a literature reserve set at \$1,000-2,000 to enable timely access to literature between Assemblies. These reserves are periodically reviewed.

A review of our prudent reserve was conducted and determined that no increase was required.

### **Operational Highlights:**

Continued cooperation with GSO, Areas D, E, H and Parramatta CSO in various initiatives and information sharing.

Active group and individual support with information and literature extended outside Area G, including collaboration with groups in Qld, ACT and WA.

Continued sharing of CSO office space with Area Committee meetings and groups requiring private space for individual sponsorship activity resumed and increasing post-COVID.

## **AREA H**

Hello fellow Conference members, my name is Damien Graham, and I am an alcoholic. I am a member of the Blaxland Primary Purpose Group in the Blue Mountains of NSW. I am the current Area Delegate, panel 62 (2020 Alt. Delegate) for Area H. Our Area covers much of Western Sydney and The Blue Mountains and we host up to 90 meetings a week. Whilst many meetings have returned to face-to-face or hybrid post 2020 lockdown and the easing of restrictions, we have a few groups who have chosen to stay online and/or create hybrid meetings.

Since our initial switch to Zoom in early 2020, Area H have continued to meet quarterly online and the participation levels have continued to increase. From an average of 6-8 groups and 12-14 members attending pre-Covid, our quarterly Committee Meetings now boast a healthy 22-24 members present from 8-10 groups. Area H has also created a Steering Committee which meets monthly to help streamline our quarterly meetings and to discuss how best we can move forward as an Area and carry the message most effectively to the alcoholic who still suffers. Some of the initiatives driven by the Steering Committee include: The creation of an updated Area Charter and its subsequent ratification, the re-introduction of workshops prior to our formal quarterly meeting, a more definitive and plain English description of all Area positions, the introduction of a GSR welcome pack, a reorganisation of the quarterly meeting to emphasize the importance of the GSR and

their contribution to the General Service Structure and an initiative to bring CSO within reach of the Area Committee via a CSO Coordinator to increase communication and harmony of services in the Area. The Steering Committee comprises of:

Area Delegate – Damien G, Alt. Delegate – Lauren A, Area Chair – Natasha S, Area Secretary – Natalie A, Area Treasurer – Jennifer C, Area Registrar – Vacant

The remainder of the Area office holders are:

Acting Area Corrections Coordinator – Cherrie G, Area PI&PA Coordinator – Vacant, Area TF Coordinator – Sophie M, CSO Coordinator – vacant but currently represented by 1 CSO Committee member at Area Committee Meetings.

At our February voting assembly, all Office Bearer roles will remain the same except for Area Delegate, and hopefully our vacant jobs will be filled. Area H continues to be fully self-supporting through the voluntary contributions of its own Members and Groups.

This year Area H made a decision to dedicate \$5000.00 to an advertising campaign during Dry July which comprised of 20 different bus routes spanning the whole of our Area for (at least) the whole month of July. We hope many who need AA spotted our back of bus advertisements and called the helpline or visited the website. Credit for the artwork must go to the hardworking members who share their exciting PI&PA resources via a WhatsApp group created by Rob C, National PI&PA Coordinator.

We are also awaiting a definitive picture of the true financial state of our CSO and exploring the possibility of sharing Treasury and management positions in the future if it becomes apparent that this would be mutually beneficial and improve the carrying of the AA message in our Area.

Our GSR's and interested observers plan to meet on Saturday September 30 for an extraordinary meeting to discuss the many Topics to be covered at Conference 2023. This will be facilitated by myself and the Area Secretary and we expect a healthy attendance and some spirited participation which has been the breath of fresh air for our previous few Quarterly Meetings and monthly Steering Committee. It is with anticipation and confidence that I approach Conference this year, having Chaired 2 out of the 4 Committees I served on in 2022 and having the unique privilege of being the inaugural Chair of the Conference Steering Committee in 2023. As a Panel 62 Alt Delegate, this will be my fourth and final Conference, and I am very excited that I will experience a face-to-face Conference before my time is up. I am both proud and humbled to be granted the opportunity to serve the Fellowship without which I would be a sad epitaph on a cheap headstone. Area H has entrusted me with this role and I pray I can do them all justice by participating humbly yet full-heartedly in this year's Conference.

Yours in Service,

Damien G, Panel 62, ER, Area H, Delegate.

## **AREA I**

My name is John S, I am an alcoholic. I am a member of the Sunday Terrigal Beach Speakers Group. I am in my final year as a third year term Delegate for the new Eastern Region Area I. We split from Area C in 2/2021. The final vote was approved by a Conference Mail Poll. We were formally advised by GSO of that decision on the 6<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

Our Area I encompasses both the former Gosford & Wyong Council areas now called the Central Coast Council. Our Area is bounded by the Hawkesbury River to the south (adjoins Area E) up to the south end of

Lake Macquarie in the north and the Pacific Ocean to the East. The new Central Coast Council has suburbs which surround the Brisbane Waters in the south up to the Tuggerah, Budgewoi & Lake Munmorah Lakes to the north where we join onto Area C.

We held our first Area Assembly on the 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021 at Gosford. Our Committee members comprise a Chairperson, Delegate, Alt Delegate, Treasurer & Secretary. There are members who fill the other service positions, those are non voting positions. Assembly meetings are currently held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month in February, May, August & November. The Committee & DCMs will now meet at (6) weekly intervals between Assemblies

### **Vote on Topics for Conference**

Our General Service Conference will be held this year during the first week in November in Sydney. The last (2) Conferences were held on Zoom. This year the Delegates will be meeting face to face. Our E R Delegates have met during previous months to evaluate the Topics lodged & business matters requiring further action at Conference

A meeting was held 13<sup>th</sup> September at Gosford which our ER Trustee Garry S was invited to share his AA experience on the AA procedure of sending a Topic concerning AA matters to be considered by the Delegates at Conference. The period closed for the lodging of Conference Topics on the 16<sup>th</sup> June 2023. The various Conference committees will meet during October to make recommendations to the Board on these Topics. Members were invited to provide a response to the Topics to our Area Secretary so our Delegate was aware of the members voting decision

### **Central Coast Service Office**

This office is located in down town Gosford. It is open from 10am to 4pm Monday to Friday for all 12<sup>th</sup> step enquiries etc and AA literature sales. They also provide an after hours phone service which includes a weekend 24 hour phone service for enquiries. We have a Central Coast Meetings List made available to all members. This year the both arms of Service met so we could get unity among the Office & the Area. Adam P attends our Quarterly Assembly meetings so he can inform the Gosford Service Office Committee. Our Alt Delegate John H attends their monthly Service Office meeting to inform their committee on what service work is being carried out in Area i

### **Central Coast Rally**

This was first held at Terrigal High School in 1990. During the Covid period this event was temporarily postponed. This year the AA Rally with Alanon participation was held at the Girl Guide Camp located at Somersby and was very well supported. A meeting was held on the Saturday with speakers from the Gosford Service office & our Area i committee members along with our Eastern Region Trustee informing members about the service work both arms of service provide. We were asked to man an AA literature table & stand so AA members could be informed on what both arms of Service do in the community. We had numerous enquiries from those who attended

### **ERCC**

The Eastern Region Corrections Committee meet monthly on Zoom. A committee was formalized this year. The members elected have many years of experience in this area of service work. Our Delegate John S represents our Area i. Since our Alt Delegate John H was elected he now attends this meeting to gain knowledge of this very large portfolio of service work that is carried out by the various correction institutions in the community. We have two goals in our portfolio. Mainly the Juvenile Facility at Kariong & the Adult Prison also located at Kariong. The Corrections Offices at Gosford & Tuggerah are contacted on a regular basis. We provide them with AA literature. During Covid many Correctional Facilities & offices would not allow access or meetings to occur. \*Should anyone be interested in this area of service work Application forms are available on the GSO website or by contacting your Area Delegate or DCM.

We were recently advised that the Corrections Dept had approved for the purchase of \$25K of AA literature be placed in the various facilities around the state

### **2023 NEWYPAA CONVENTION**

A successful event was held at the Petersham Town Hall from the 26/27 August 2023. This was well supported by our Central Coast members.

### **2024 ADELAIDE CONVENTION**

Our National Convention with Alanon & Alateen participation will be held next year from the 29<sup>th</sup> March to the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2024 at the Grand Chancellor Hotel, Hindley St Adelaide. The Topic is "Road to Recovery" See the website for early registrations & program information

### **2025 SYDNEY CONVENTION**

Initial preparations have begun for the 2025 Sydney Convention which will be coordinated by the GSO. What they need right now are people who will put their hands up to help out. A Skills Register which is a list of all service roles they need to fill is available for members who wish to be involved. Details of this application form is available on the AA website.

### **NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY & OURIMBAH HUMAN RESOURCES CAMPUS PRESENTATION**

Earlier this year in March we were contacted by the Lecturer in Social Work Frank Baffour to arrange presentation talks for his 2<sup>nd</sup> year Social Work students at both the Newcastle & Ourimbah Campus's. We passed on the request to the Area C Delegate Mary H for the Hunter Region to arrange a presentation at the Newcastle Campus.

Our Alt Delegate John H prepared & presented a power point presentation which he gave to 16 out of 30 class students during March that attended. His notes were downloaded onto all the students computers at both the Newcastle & Ourimbah campus's for them to reference. AA literature & Big Books were handed to the students at the Ourimbah Campus. Our Delegate John S gave an AA talk sharing his AA story & experience about his recovery from alcoholism.

As a follow up we are to arrange a PI Talk to the Social Workers at both Wyong & Gosford Public Hospitals in the near future. They play an important role in the Health Services structure.

### **NSW DEPARTMENT OF COMUNITIES & JUSTICE GOSFORD**

We were invited to attend a meeting and provide a presentation talk to the staff on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of May this year. Our Alt Delegate John H left AA literature for their display stands so clients visiting their Gosford office could avail themselves of what AA does in the community. We hope to develop some long term connections in this area with this agency

### **COURTS & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

**WYONG** The Court Users Forum conducted Quarterly meetings has recommended. AA members attend this short meeting held at the Court to meet up with the Magistrates, Court Officers & Agencies who attend. This has always been beneficial for AA to keep in touch with all the Court Users

**GOSFORD** Since the reopening of Courts access has now become a lot easier to contact all Court Officers & Agencies that we had previous contact with. We started issuing Court Attendance cards for offenders to use with Corrections Officers for help to assist in the preparation of their pre sentence report. We initially started this program in February 1997 with the cooperation of Magistrates & Corrections Officers on the Central Coast at that time.

The Aboriginal Legal Officers attend both Wyong & Gosford Courts on List days where they can refer clients to the local AA Meetings for help.

### **GAOLS**

The (2) Correction Facilities located at Kariong ceased access to AA during the Covid period. We have recently contacted both these gaols and obtained the names of the current managers & chaplains to inform them of the current service work being carried out by the ERCC committee.

### **POLICE STATIONS**

We attend Tuggerah Area Command located at Wyong, Toukley & The Entrance Police Stations. Gosford Area Command, Terrigal & Woy Woy Police Stations. AA literature is placed in the office display stands & also left at the holding cells for Corrections Officers to pass on. Previously we met & held PI talks with the Area Commanders, Police Officers & staff

### **Attorney General & Justice Dept**

AA literature is left in both the Wyong & Gosford Offices and Court display stands

### **Hospital, Institutions & Treatment Facilities**

AA literature is displayed at Nth Wyong, Gosford & Woy Woy Hospitals, Brisbane Waters Clinic (Woy Woy). These stands are refilled every 6 - 8 weeks.

\*(1) hour AA Information Meeting was held each week at Nth Wyong Public Hospital Detox pre Covid is now in recess. We have a Roster of AA members willing to attend. \*We have recently agreed to provide A.A. Information Packs at Brisbane Waters Clinic. These are to be handed to new clients who present with an alcohol problem on admission. There has been no access by AA members since Covid-19 lockdown

### **The Glen Womens Rehab Unit Tuggerah**

A (20) bed Women's Unit was opened in 2022 helping those who have a drinking problem. These clients attend the local AA Meetings.

**The Glen Mens Rehab Unit** is located at Chittaway. Their clients also attend the local AA Meetings held on the Central Coast each week

### **Medical Centres**

AA literature is placed in Medical Centres across the Central Coast in the Northlakes, Wyong, Gosford & Peninsula Districts. Access has been difficult during the Covid-19 pandemic. We are optimistic that all the Health outlets will be able to return to normal in 2023/2024. There is nothing better to visit doctor's surgeries and see our AA literature displayed. We now have a new University Training College for medical students to attend located at Gosford Public Hospital

### **Schools**

On the Central Coast we have (24) Public & Private Schools plus (3) Secondary Public High Schools. \*We contact the Schools each year, sending a covering letter along with AA literature to the Deputy Principal of the school & the year (11) Coordinator to arrange talks to there students. 2022/ 2023 has been limited due to Covid. \*All schools have been provided with AA Big Books for their libraries, each student is handed a copy of the "Message To Teenagers" pamphlet, plus PI packs are provided for the teaching staff "We mention that Al-Anon is available to families who may know a problem drinker who needs help

### **Tafe/University**

We visit & provide literature & Big Books to our Tafe Colleges located at both Wyong & Gosford along with the Ourimbah University Campus for their libraries to display

### **Council Libraries**

With the amalgamation of the Wyong & Gosford Councils in May 2016 it became known as the Central Coast Council. There are now (11) libraries located in our Area i. They all have Big Books and 12 Steps & 12 Traditions books. They have been documented & distributed from their Kariong centre

### **Agencies**

We distribute AA literature around all of our four Districts. Agencies vary from Aboriginal, Mental Health, Centrelink, Lifeline, Community Housing, Youth & Neighbourhood Centres, Employment Agencies, just to name a few

**PROBLEM DRINKERS IN THE WORKPLACE**

In a follow up to our 2021 Report about the Family Fresh Farm located at Peats Ridge NSW the former CEO Craig Owen advised us on the 15<sup>th</sup> September 2023 that he has now retired from the family business to enjoy life with his grandchildren & improve his golf handicap.

The Farm Manager M/s Nicky Mann advised Craig Owen that her company doesn't want to present the Peats Ridge Farm as a problem site to our local Federal Minister. A meeting held at Robina Qld in June 2022 AA members from the various states advised that they were willing to cooperate with the company in ongoing help for their seasonal workers, this is despite Pacific Island workers from Vanuatu facing drink driving matters leading to court hearings held earlier this year

Until such time the companies involved in their Farm sites around Australia seek help for the problem drinkers among the Pacific Island workers, we will wait until we receive a request from them.

John S  
Area I Delegate ER

## **SOUTHERN REGION**

### **AREA A**

Hi my name is Anthony and I have been in the position of delegate for southern area A for just a bit over three and a half months, in which time I was grateful to celebrate my 12 year anniversary.

Originally a member of a larger regional city's ID meet , I with another member decided to keep the doors open on a smaller towns just started meet which floundered after the organisers moved on .

We renamed it a topic group with emphasis on steps and literature and the connection to AAA , and we now have a strong recovery of both women and men in great numbers nearly 8 years on . Some members have gone on to open their own meetings in their own towns.

Through the other member who helped me in this new meet I learnt and developed an interest in service and the structure and previous happenings in AA in this area. Area A has not had a delegate for a very long time. It is geographically very large. Unity amongst groups in my time has not been cohesive but this is changing. To help this my home group through a GC decided to get the ball rolling so to speak. After nominees and vote I have gratefully accepted this service position.

So far, I have gained an understanding of this position and received an up-to-date AA service manual. I have talked to as many groups as possible and to establish a path of accessibility of both information and understanding for groups is a next step.

The groups spoken to thus far have generally being receptive and through their own GC have helped in the costs of attending conference. One group is even putting on a movie night to help in this.

It is very early days but the general feel thus far is members have a desire to have representation after a long period of nothing. A website, flyers, and communication for inclusiveness is some of the great discussions with members and to understand better what initiatives are available through AA.

In gaining this knowledge I with the help of others who are interested hope to have a sustainable structure for Area A going forward.

Thank you Anthony

### **AREA B**

No attendee

### **AREA C AIt**

I am pleased to serve and give my first report for the Southern regional reformed Area C to conference.

I have taken the position to stand in for our Area C Delegate Lindsey M (She is not able go to conference this year).

There was a meeting on the 29th of May 2023 for an Election to re-establish Area C because of the confusion with the Area mapping amongst members in the Area/Districts, especially with the newly established Outer Eastern District (Dec 2021). It was suggested to reform Area C and close Area F because Area F was becoming dysfunctional due to the confusion of the members and lack of support from the fellowship.

Area C went dormant around 10 years ago. So, a few years later Area F was set up to give a voice for the Groups in the Area for conference and be a part of the General Service Structure of AA Australia.

This was the best solution at the time as to not step on the toes of others.

Area F served its purpose and with hope may reform again very soon within the Peninsular District.

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Our Area serves mainly the east side of Melbourne, Victoria.

We have 2 districts operating in Area C: Outer Eastern District (OED) and Inner-City District (ICD).

They are both running very efficiently and seem to be gaining more GSR's every month that I turn up.

I have been going to district meetings for over 12 years, on and off and never seen them running so well. It's fantastic to have so many more getting involved with service.

Outer Eastern District meet online once every month with 8 regular groups.

They have just set up 6 months' worth of advertising on billboards and they had the district meet and distribute literature to many local GPs with 12 questions regarding.

They have an Election for rotation of commitments in December.

Inner City District has a hybrid meeting once a month with about 20 participants.

They have just had their PI Committee hold an online Doctors forum with a presentation from a friend of AA from the medical profession Dr S Jurd speaking on the Cochrane report of AA's effectiveness using the 12-step program. The medical professionals were able to ask questions at the end. They had 34 register for the event but 14 Doctors turned up. There is a recording which is in the process of being edited.

They were going to hold the same presentation of the forum face to face at a venue but not much attraction came so they cancelled the event.

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Area C had an online Assembly for the conference topics on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> September. I had to chair the meeting due to the chair not having access to the topics. We had 20 GSR turn up with their group votes on the topics. It went very well being online.

Our Area has \$1284.69 in the account after paying the conference levy.

We also have \$1790.01 for a New Years Eve event which we hold every year at the Powerhouse in Albert Park, Melbourne for a safe place for the Alcoholics to party on the special night of the year.

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Now the boring part about me

I was a controlled daily drinker who could not stop. I am a carpenter who would come home from work (after going to bottle shop for some traveler's) and isolate myself in the garage and drink. It would tear me apart not being able to share my time with my wife and 2 children (3 and 5 yrs old at the time). I would always make up excuses to be drinking.

Fortunately I found AA and now changed to be a loving husband and father of 3 children now with the help of the program, sponsor, higher power and regular meetings . I have been sober 13 years and service has been a big part of my sobriety. From washing and drying dishes, establishing, and becoming Secretary of a new Group, literature officer, treasurer, alt GSR and GSR. Then for last 2 years rehab coordinator for Inner City District, Victoria. I have learned so much and gained many incredible skills which has totally transformed my career path too.

I am extremely passionate about helping to get the sick and suffering Alcoholics to our doors. I alone can't do this. I need the fellowship behind me to get into the service structure of AA and come up with the ideas and the actions required to help others, themselves, and fast track a life beyond their wildest dreams.

I am excited to be a part of what can be gained over the next few years with the online meetings for more convenient connection in service, digital PI literature, the scientific research of AA with the Cochrane report and the many other creative members in AA.

I will do my utmost to work with the committee and to raise any points required by my Area and speak for and against and join in the discussion on the topics our area voted on, at the conference. Will report back to them at our December assembly after the conference.

Yours in Recovery, Unity and Service

Alan B

Alternate Delegate – Area C – Southern Region.

## AREA D

### Overview

Area D in the Southern Region is bordered by the Yarra River and includes the Western and Northern suburbs of Melbourne, major regional cities Geelong and Ballarat and extends west to Beaufort and north to Mangalore. Area D SR is one of 3 functioning Areas in the Southern Region out of a potential 6.

At time of writing, there are an estimated 168 AA meetings (meetings, not groups) in Area D. This is 10 more than I reported last year. We currently have contact details for 106 groups. 22 of these are not actual group contacts but want to stay on the mailing list. Area D SR has always been very welcoming of members or groups who do have a GSR, a Delegate or are not in an active Area but wish to be connected to AA as a whole. We had a new registrar rotate in earlier in the year who is doing a great job trying to get contact details up to date.

GSR attendance at Assemblies is an average of 13-14 per Assembly. That equates to about 8% (no change from the last two years) of the groups/meetings in the Area. Area D Assemblies are held 4 times per year. We continue to hold three of them online, with our last Assembly of the year, the election assembly, face to face, hosted by a group or District.

Over this last 12 months, numbers have steadily increased each Assembly (6,12,16,21). 12 was our yearly face to face Assembly in December. Holding Assemblies online continues to be a far more popular option for maximising participation. Area D is self-supporting and has a healthy prudent to send the Area Delegate to Conference. We currently have some PI initiatives that have been agreed to but are on hold until we accumulate some more available funds.

**Committee.** We have been without an Area PI coordinator for a few months. This hasn't stopped PI activities, but it has slowed them down. We are currently executing initiatives that were started by the previous PI coordinator.

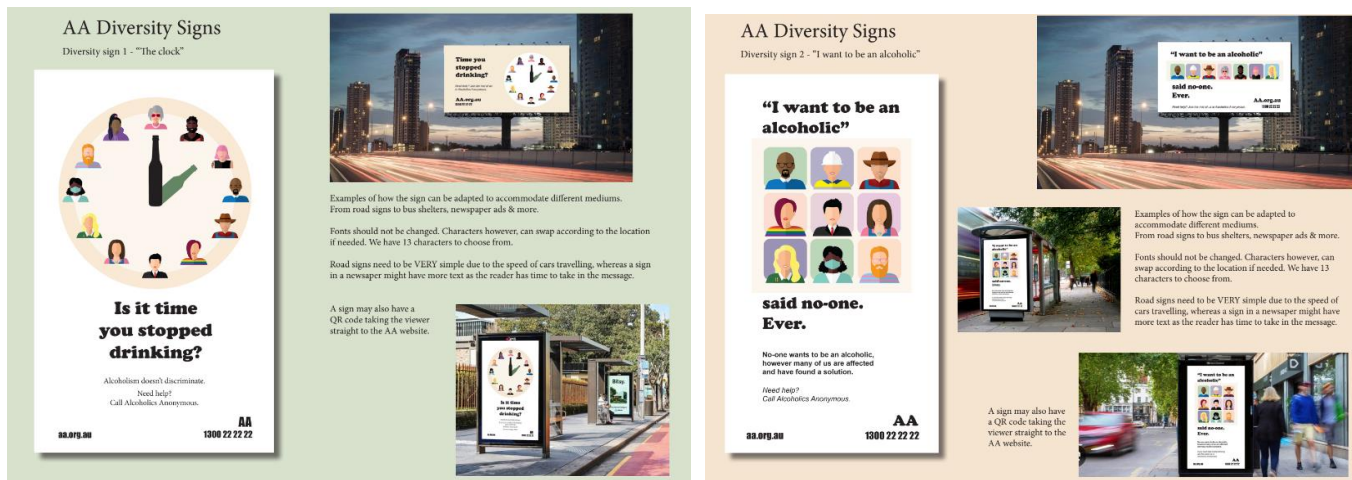
We are taking nominations at our September 2023 Assembly for PI coordinator and Chair. We are currently seeking expressions of interest for the rotating roles we hope to hold elections for in December 2023 for Delegate, Alternate Delegate, Secretary, Treasurer and Chair. A previous Area D Chairperson rotated back in for 12 months mid-year. They will rotate out in June 2024, giving us a few months to find a new Chairperson. We have two sitting DCMs from our regional Districts. We also have an informal (non-voting) position of webmaster to maintain, update and make improvements to the [Area D website](#), which is currently vacant.

**Public information activities** within the Area include providing literature and PI packs for groups on request, as well as:

- Diverse designs public information materials – the Area engaged the same artist who produced this now very popular design for Area D:



to help us come up with some new images to better reflect diversity. These are draft examples of the two designs to receive final approval in September 2023. Once approved the designs will be made available in a range of formats to suit different purposes.



Previously approved campaigns we are going to run again as soon as funds are available are:

- a Plakkit poster in cafes and bars in metropolitan areas, and
- a CIVIC Guide poster campaign in regional parts of the Area.

The billboard style sign that Area D originally had produced for a campaign at Newport Train Station went to Bendigo in Area B for a time where it was located on a school fence on a main road. The sign has now returned to Area D, in the care of the Western Unity group, who will find a new home for it in the inner West of Melbourne.

### Districts & Intergroups

There are currently two active Districts in Area D. These are in regional centres Geelong and Ballarat. There are no other active Districts in Area D. The **NWIG (North West Intergroup)** which was initially set up to support a phone line for the north west of Melbourne, and then later moved into creating a Facebook page

and ads, sadly closed this year after several years due to struggles with finding enough volunteers to keep the phone line going. NWIG have amalgamated their phone number and roster of volunteers with the Richmond CSO. This way volunteers only need to be found for one phone line, not two.

**Ballarat District** meets monthly face to face with hybrid option on request at 5pm on a Saturday afternoon.

During the year Ballarat District held a workshop for members and groups on 'The AA Home Group'. Great to see this years' General Service Conference theme supported in this way.

At the time of writing this report, they are planning their annual AFL Grand Final Day event for September 30, 2023.

The District started liaising with their local council earlier this year when they noticed the AA road signs they established were not being displayed much. They were advised that council guidelines had been updated and these signs are primarily for events, not community information in general. Part of the solution is that stickers are going to be produced with a from and to date to help satisfy the guidelines.

The District phone line is active, receiving calls regularly each month – anywhere between 5-55.

**Geelong District** meets monthly, online, on a Monday evening.

They have an active, long established local AA answering service and roadside signs through the local council region.

They have a continuing AA speaker roster with the Geelong Withdrawal Unit (Tuesdays); Geelong Clinic (Wednesdays) and Haider Clinic (Saturdays). One issue raised – a member departed from the format of sharing "experience, strength and hope" and treated a session at a rehab like an instructional talk. It was not well received and nearly resulted in a suspension of AA visitation to the facility. A good reminder to "stay in our lane" and the tried-and-true format of carrying the message.

A new PI committee was established during the year.

### **Conference 2023**

I was again invited by the Darwin *In All Our Affairs* service-focused online meeting to facilitate an overview of this year's topics over 2 weeks to help GSRs and interested members understand the topics prior to talking about them with their groups.

We have our Area D SR topics assembly coming up online on September 24<sup>th</sup> before our usual Assembly. At time of writing this report I have received written input on the topics from 3 groups in the Area who have already met to discuss them.

This year has been an exciting time to serve AA as a Conference Delegate. As I am in my 3<sup>rd</sup> and final year, I have had the privilege of being a member of the new Conference Steering Committee established as part of the new Conference committee structure. It is truly a joy to meet regularly (weekly at time of writing this report!) with such passionate and dedicated members as we work through the changes and to ensure we have a truly memorable Conference this November – this will be the first face to face Conference any current Delegates have attended.

The other working groups I have been part of this year – Message Stick, the anniversary reprint of the Australian Big Book and the policy and admissions voting structure working group continue to remind me the importance of participating in the service structure of AA Australia and how it assists in fulfilling our primary purpose, one day at a time.

I cannot end this report without acknowledging the departure of the General Service Office Manager, Valerie Martin, after 27 years of being in this role. Truly an amazing milestone and example of dedication to AA.

In service and gratitude,

Lisa Rowe, 3<sup>nd</sup> Year Delegate, Area D Southern Region.

# CENTRAL REGION

## AREA A

My name is Avril, my home group is Kadina Recovery on the Yorke Peninsula, SA. I am the delegate for Area A of SA. This is my 2<sup>nd</sup> year as delegate, I feel privileged and honoured to be of service for the Area A. I look forward to the General Service Conference held this year in Sydney.

The Area consists of meetings from the city to far and wide in the country from Two Wells, Kapunda, Riverton to Coober Pedy, Ceduna and Pt. Lincoln, just to name a few. Our districts in Area A are Para Districts (Central Districts), Northern Districts. Western District is inactive at the moment. The Area holds zoom meetings on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month at 7.00pm.

Area A has been active this year on the social front and fundraisers for CSO and the Adelaide Convention 2024. There has been a few camps this year with great attendances. A lot of new faces (this has been great to see) and the usual camp attendees. There has been 2 camps in Pt. Lincoln, 1 being a step study. There has been a camp on the river which was held by area B. There is also a few camps on the horizon, Napperby on the October long weekend and Pt. Hughes in early December. The Area Assembly will be held at the Pt. Hughes camp. There will also be another Pt. Lincoln camp at Tharuna in January 2024, with proceeds going to the Adelaide Convention 2024. The auction at the camps have also been well received with the donations going to CSO and the Adelaide convention in 2024.

The Area was in a position to send donations to various group for literature, pamphlets and Big Books for Corrections including men's and women's prisons in the city as well as country prisons from Pt. Lincoln and Pt Augusta.

### **PI report**

Para Districts has been holding a public information stall at a major shopping centre, this has been successful with some members or the public showing interest. Members of Para Districts were manning the stall on a roster basis and gave out information, literature and pens to members of the public.

Dennis F and Chris W have started up a radio show on PBAFM; a small local radio station in Salisbury, where members of AA share their stories. Sober Talk SA has reached people from overseas as well as all over Australia. Sober Talk SA can be found on AA SA website and Spotify, A new speaker, speaks on the third Thursday of the month. If anyone would like to share their story on Sober Talk SA you can contact Dennis on 0421 223 149. Dennis is always looking for new speakers. Dennis informs me new cards are being made with the QR code.

Pt. Lincoln group have been doing a PI drive to various locations where they are accepted to put AA literature; Police Stations, Hospitals, Women's and Men's shelters etc. They also have a stall at the R U OK day for mental health week held in Pt. Lincoln. Pt. Pirie Group is in the process for PI drive in Pt. Pirie and surrounding areas.

### **Corrections**

Members from the Area attends the Cadell Prison and holds a meeting every week. There is about 3 or 4 inmates that attend this meeting, sometimes none as it is a low security, inmates have short term sentences and move on. It is a transient community, and members of AA that attend Cadell have a good rapport with Staff. Ritchie from Area B is the main contact for this Prison, as it is closer for members from Area A to attend every week, it has been arranged for members from Area A to attend. We have received valuable feedback and the Staff are glad AA are in the prison.

Avril B

Delegate Area A, Central Region

## **AREA B**

Hi everyone, my name is Anna Leditschke, my homegroup is Adelaide Big Book Study, and my sobriety date is 10 March 2014. This is my first year as a Delegate for Area B Central Region, and I look forward to meeting with and learning from you all.

Area B covers everything south of the River Torrens and covers a mass of land in South Australia that extends to the News South Wales and Victorian borders. We currently have two active districts, the Riverland and the Central and Eastern Adelaide District. The Southern and Lower South East districts are currently not operational. There are 67 groups listed in our spreadsheet, and we have contacts for 42 groups. However, this needs updating as these numbers and contacts constantly change.

Our Area committee is very active, with all service positions filled. Regular business meetings are held on the first Saturday of each month. The annual Area B Assembly was held in February 2023, where guest speakers presented, elections were held, and all service positions were filled, including a new Chair, Delegate and PI&CPC Coordinator.

The Riverland district meets on the first Sunday of every month, has an active DCM and members attend the Cadell Prison and Mobilong Prison regularly, with support from the Area B Treatment and Corrections Facilities Coordinator, Ritchie.

The Central and Eastern Adelaide District has 11 active groups that regularly attend monthly meetings. The focus of each meeting is to discuss opportunities and current/planned initiatives to serve the still-suffering alcoholic. Their DCM attends Area B meetings, and communication is strong between Area and CAED. The district supported a 12-Steps Workshop recently and is currently working with Area and SAYPAA to plan a joint initiative, the Homegroup Olympics, to promote service and unity.

Financial update: Our Area is in a sound position and has been fortunate to be able to support Area service activities as well as contribute funds to support the AA 2024 National Convention, the 2024 National Public Awareness Forum and the first SAYPAA Convention – all to be held in Adelaide, SA next year.

Public Information and Cooperation with the Professional Community (PI & CPC) coordinator is Connor, who has established a subcommittee to assist him in promoting AA across our Area. They regularly do poster runs, promoting AA and disseminating literature in hospitals & other health facilities, local businesses and police stations. In addition, he coordinated a roster of volunteers attendance at a national Mental Health Services Conference (TheMHS) in August 2023, securing a free booth so that hundreds of mental health professionals and other attendees were exposed to the message of AA's program of recovery. He has also spoken anonymously on a local radio show.

The Treatment & Correctional Facilities (T&CF) Coordinator is Ritchie. He coordinates a solid roster of groups to attend: weekly presentations at a detox facility; weekly presentations at the Woolshed rehab; regular attendance at Mobilong and Cadel prisons; Aboriginal Sobriety Group homelessness program; and Tumbelin Farm, a youth rehab facility.

In my role, I am also part of the Host Planning Committee for the 2024 AA National Convention, to be held in Adelaide. We hope you can all attend.

Yours in Service Anna Leditschke Area B Delegate, AA Central Region

# WESTERN REGION

## AREA A

My name is Marjo, and I am an alcoholic. Thank you for the privilege of serving as the Delegate for Area A Western Region. This is my second year attending conference.

Area A in the Western Region covers a vast area that includes areas north of the Swan River in the city of Perth to the top of the Northwest region of the state and out to the eastern border area between Western Australia and South Australia. There are two active districts within the area; the Midwest District based in Geraldton and Northwest District in Eighty Mile Beach, Pilbara. We currently have 99 meetings and 63 Groups in the Area. Included in this total are 15 country meetings and 2 meetings held in correctional facilities.

The Area Assemblies area held every quarter, with the first being held this year at the beginning of February. There are 10 GSR's on average attending the assemblies. The GSR attendance has remained low for the last couple of years and the committee has discussed methods to get the groups involved. Some committee positions, including PICPC Coordinator, Alternate Delegate and Registrar, have remained vacant for most of the current term, since early 2022. However, all the roles have now been filled in the May and August assemblies.

### Public Information

Whilst the PICPC role was vacant, the Facebook ad campaign was kept running. In July, the ad reached 12,480 people in the Perth metropolitan area, with 5604 users viewing the 3-second video and 246 clicks to fill out the 20 questions on the AA website – the highest numbers reached since the campaign started in 2021. The newly appointed PICPC will focus on local library displays, building a PI committee, getting groups in the area involved, and holding a public information night.

### Treatment and Correctional Facilities

#### **Treatment Facilities**

There are currently 9 meetings held at treatment facilities in the area, from withdrawal units to therapeutic communities and mental health units. Each facility has its own AA coordinator along with a roster for visiting members.

#### **Correctional Facilities**

There have been some challenges with gaining access to attend regularly the Bandyup Women's Prison and Wooroloo Men's Prison this year. Both facilities have experienced lengthy delays with AA members clearance applications, limiting the rostered members availability to attend. Whilst the Bandyup meeting has now been up and running since July, the Wooroloo meeting has been suspended since May. Casuarina, another male prison in Area A, is not supportive of AA visits at this stage. The coordinators are continuing to liaise with the prison contacts and other coordinators to find solutions to overcome the access issues.

#### **OTHER EVENTS:**

#### **NATIONAL CONVENTION 2023**

Perth successfully hosted the 58th national convention over the Easter long weekend at the Rendezvous Hotel in Scarborough.

#### **GERALDTON ROUNDUP**

The Midwest District held a roundup in Geraldton 22-24<sup>th</sup> September 2023 with meetings and fellowship over the weekend.

#### **WAYPAA**

Western Australian Young People in AA (WAYPAA) is a service committee of AA members who have less than 10 years of sobriety, with currently 18 members in the committee. WAYPAA's aim is to hold an annual

convention to the whole of AA and to show how service can be fun and fulfilling. WAYPAA organises fundraising events throughout the year to raise funds to host an end of year convention. Some of the events held this year include a BBQ, Quiz Night, AA's Got Talent, and a Fun Run. This year's WAYPAA convention "Look No Further For Utopia" is being held at the DoubleTree by Hilton in Northbridge on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> to Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December. For more details visit [www.waypaa.org.au](http://www.waypaa.org.au).

Thank you for letting me be of service,  
Marjo Nissinen  
Delegate of Area A, Western Region, Panel 63

## **AREA B**

### **Meetings and Groups**

Area B WR currently has 45 Metropolitan meetings and 26 Regional meetings registered with CSO. There is 1 online meeting and 1 phone link meeting that runs 7 mornings a week.

Several meetings that closed over COVID have been reopened.

Area B meetings are supported by approximately 53 groups, and efforts are ongoing to engage these groups in the Service structure. 2022 saw 15 groups participate in voting on Conference topics.

### **Districts**

Three active districts continue to function in Area B. Port District, Peel District and South-West District continue to actively engage in their community and particularly in the areas of PI and CPC for local Rehabs, Hospitals, District Courts and radio stations.

### **Area**

Efforts to increase Area participation with contact with groups and GSR's and through social media has seen up to 25 people attending in the online meeting.

We have welcomed Tom D. as our Prisons Coordinator, Domenic H. as Trustee for Western Region and Tuija K. as Alternate Delegate.

Unfortunately not all vacant positions and alternate positions are being filled. Area Chair, PI&CPC are currently vacant.

### **Prisons**

Regional Prisons have had ongoing AA visits at Bunbury and Pardelup. Outreach to Albany has been received with enthusiasm and local member support as well as online options being explored. Meetings are being taken in to Karnet, Wandoo and Hakea facilities with literature and outreach to Melaluca and Boronia pre-release.

### **Hospitals**

Regular visits continue to Bentley Hospital continue, and a relationship with Bethesda Hospital in Cockburn has been established this year. A staff talk and with time a weekly meeting is planned at this new clinic.

### **Events**

2022 New Years Eve was celebrated with the help of Port District.

Esperance Roundup in January was a hit as usual with numbers well up this year.

The National Convention was enjoyed over Easter 2023 and injected a great deal of enthusiasm into our AA fellowship. The Emotional Sobriety workshop that was hosted by Peel district members was so popular that it has been followed by a repeat workshop since. Peel district has also hosted a Sponsoring into Service day, and will be holding their annual Old Timers celebration in October.

Busselton Roundup was held after the convention and was also well supported.

Overall we are seeing increased engagement in AA meetings and Group structure in Area B Western Region.

## **NORTHERN REGION**

### **AREA A**

My name is Doug Wade and I am an Alcoholic. I am a member of the Rapid Creek Monday Night Daily Reflections group in Darwin and have recently been selected as Delegate for Northern Area A and this will be my first conference.

In A Nutshell

Northern Area A covers the entire Northern Territory which has a population of 250,000 people, around 31% are Aboriginal people and it is over 1.42 million square kilometres. The main population centres are Alice Springs (pop. 33,000), Tennant Creek (pop. 3,800), Katherine (pop. 6,300), Gove/Nhulunbuy (pop. 3000), Palmerston (pop. 33,000) and Darwin (pop. 132,000). The rest of the population is in smaller remote towns and Aboriginal communities. The Northern Territory also has a high number of FIFO workers and tourists both domestic and international.

AA Meetings are regularly held in three centres Alice Springs (6 meetings a week), Gove/Nhulunbuy (1 meeting a week) and Darwin (18 meetings a week). Until recently meetings were also held in Katherine. There is a member in the East Arnhem region who is contactable and telephone support is offered to FIFO workers through members and Darwin District Office. It has been reported that there is an AA Meeting on the Tiwi Island however it is understood the meeting is run by non-members and it has not engaged with local AA.

The Area Committee was inactive for a while due to lack of office bearers and has recently been re-established through hard work of a few committed people to generate interest. Some members have taken on "Acting" positions they have previously held, or in addition to other service roles so the Committee can function in accordance to guidelines. Most groups within the Area follow the 60:30:10 recommendation and the Area has sufficient funds to operate.

The Area is also seeking to become engaged in brokering access for AA into correctional facilities across the NT. Both the major correctional facilities in the NT are located several kilometres outside Alice and Darwin and access has been problematic to the extent that efforts to hold meetings or other engagement has not been successful.

The current Area Committee is also working towards building cohesive working assistance across all the meetings in the Area.

The greater Darwin area is also supported by the Darwin District Office (DDO). They maintain a website, 24 hour phone line, monthly magazine, literature sales and office which is open to the public. They also have an active committee and handle P & I and .....

Also groups and members with the Area work towards the staging of several AA events including The Bill W Camp and The Darwin Unity Weekend.

# NORTH EASTERN REGION

## Area A

I'm Dann I'm an alcoholic, my home group is the Mackay Recovery Group, I've been a Delegate for weeks now and have learned how to spell Delegate.

As Delegate I have set myself 5 goals. Goal 1 is to stay sober.

Goal 2 is to generate interest in Service. Currently in Area A the positions of Chair and Delegate and Treasurer are filled and all other positions are vacant. When the Area elected me I was the only candidate, so generating interest in service is on the list.

Goal 3 is to communicate with all the Groups. The Northeastern Region is basically from Yeppoon northwards, roughly half of Queensland and where I'm living, Mackay, is near the bottom end of it. If I were to drive north it would take me 25 hours to get to near the top of the Area. Apart from Mackay District, the next District of Townsville is 4 hours drive and Cairns District is 9 hours drive. Despite this vast Area there are only 58 Groups listed. Of those 58 Groups, 31 of them identify with a District. My focus as far as communication is on those other 27 and I can do that by phone. The rest I can communicate with by Zooming into District Committee meetings. The listings I'm working from are the meetings list provided by 'Your Pathfinder', a monthly magazine published by Brisbane CSO. It's not entirely accurate, a couple of phone numbers up north that I tried, the fellow that answered advised me that the number hadn't been associated with AA for around 15 years. But it's what we have to work with.

Goal 4 is the alcoholic that hasn't made it into the rooms yet. Our Area is large and sparsely populated, I'm sure there are a lot of alcoholics but not enough of us in AA.

Goal 5 is to get responses from the Groups to the Conference topics. It's a work in progress, so far I've got 3, including my own Group. Early days though.

Dann

Area A Delegate, Northeastern Region

0417 519 728

## AREA B

Hi! My name is Ric and I'm an Alcoholic. Area B has 4 active districts: Far Western, District 9 (Sunshine Coast) Brisbane North and as of September 9th 2023 Moreton North District. I've had the opportunity to attend all the district meetings this year and have travelled in excess of 6000 kms to achieve this. The response has been welcoming and positive, places like Morvern where Ron has been hosting an AA weekend for 27 years (with the help of his wife Linda, member Peter from Cooloola Cove and his wife Rhonda).

Roma, although fewer in numbers are very active, hosting the Area Assembly weekend in August which was a success, I also had the privilege of being part of the P.I luncheon in Roma hosted by Brian F (World Service Delegate) over 30 people from the community: Mayor , counsellors , social workers etc were in attendance. This was a huge success with a positive outcome. Hats off to Brian for a very professional presentation.

On P.I., we have a very active Area P.I co-ordinator Stephen who has travelled as far as North Rockhampton visiting groups along the way promoting P.I. Work. His repost is as follows:

Public Information & Co-operation with the Professional Community. I'm Stephen – I'm an Alcoholic I am not able to personally attend our Roma based assembly this weekend. Here is the Area B round up of Regional & local initiatives:

- ZOOM and FACE to FACE PI/CPC presentations: Face to face I attended the Sunshine coast District committee meeting, and my small presentation on PI was well received I also attended Redcliffe Monday Sober Living meeting, with around 15 people staying on after their general meeting for a half hour presentation and Q&A Both presentations generated interest in carrying the message to the still suffering alcoholic Zoom Another successful talk was held with the Rockhampton group, with one member keen to start some initiatives in the CQ region. Bundaberg have a small team of 5 keen people that continue to thrive with keen members walking into Bundaberg Radio stations to promote AA and asking to get radio air play for 30 second AA adverts. If you need the radio files, please ask me. Would you like a PI presentation for your group? Ask me!

- LOCALLY All groups continue to get PI materials out to the community – however, Redcliffe Monday Night Sober Living deserve a special mention! Every week for the last 4 weeks (New) PI co-ordinator Mick along with Jody, Joe and others have visited 80 premises on the Redcliffe peninsular distributing PI cards and posters to: Redcliffe Police Station, Magistrates, Hospitals including ED Local Shopping Centres, Employment Agencies, Centre Link, Library, numerous Medical Centres Indigenous Aboriginal Medical Centres, Notice board, Youth Centre, After Hours Youth Centre The dynamic team engaged with both the youth centre and indigenous centre and the interest was more than what they anticipated. They were very receptive to the PI materials. The Highlight for AA as a whole - is the recognition of our Posters actively displayed on the front counters of business eg; AA cards are displaying at the local Moreton Bay Boat Club. "This has been extremely liberating considering Moreton Bay Boat Club occupied by the still suffering" one member said. 1 Continued:

- MEDIA STORIES The Coal Face magazine • I was able to organise 2 FIFO Coalminers to participate in an interview for The Coal Face magazine and their stories were published in June edition, shining a positive light on AA. Link to story here: <https://thecoalface.net.au/2023/06/08/if-you-think-you-have-a-problemthen-maybe-you-do/> Publication has an audience of over 100,000 monthly (Qld and NSW) Big Rigs magazine

- I contacted Big Rigs trucking magazine a couple of times this year, and they finally agreed to publish a short AA story with an anonymous AA member who is associated with the trucking industry and that truckie has been interviewed recently by another AA member. I will let you know details once the article has been published.

- Big Rigs national road transport newspaper targets the road transport sector with a circulation more than 26,000 copies every fortnight nationally (to every state and territory) It is the largest circulated fortnightly truck publication in Australia. Let me know - what service work has your group been doing with PI/CPC? What initiatives have your group undertaken this year to get the word out to the still suffering alcoholic?

In conclusion, I see a lot of hard work being carried out in Area B North East Region (NER) some work on a small scale, some work being on a large scale, but it doesn't matter what you do, it all adds up to getting the message out there!

I am hoping for more individual groups to elect their own PI co-ordinator for their groups to carry out more PI initiatives in their own area this year. The feedback I am getting - once you start this amazing service work, you will become addicted to PI/CPC service work. Give it a go. The rewards and gift of sobriety are massive for everyone.

Yours in service Stephen C - Area B NER - Public Information Co-ordinator

District 9 are active on the coast and talks of starting the May Weekend back up are underway, which ceased due to COVID. David D Woodford corrections Co-ordinator has the system running smoothly, his report follows:

Woodford Coordinator's Report 25th August 2023

The success of the drive to encourage more members to participate in 12 step work within a Correctional facility, has had some success with a total of ten members in the roster system. There are an additional three members that can participate, depending on their work/personal commitments. We thank Area, District and all those members that have promoted this area of service, and ask that they continue.

Our new members are accompanied by our more experienced members during their initial introduction into this service, and hopefully form their own approach. Meetings are conducted similar to our ID meeting format and Guideline 22, although each visit can be quite different depending on our visitors.

Attendance has been a bit spasmodic, although the corrective services staff work hard to ensure participation, however it still comes down to the individual want/need on the day.

Pamphlets and little big books supply seems adequate ATM, and there have been no additional purchases.

Our budget balance of \$191.50 should be sufficient for this next period. Finances = \$250.00 Approved 18/2/23 Area meeting, Minus \$58.50 expenditure for pamphlets. Balance \$191.50.

I ask that you accept my report.

Yours in service David Dickinson Woodford AA Coordinator Area B.

Sadly, Gary H who was co-ordinating the Maryborough correctional facilities is not well and had to pull out of the responsibility which left Cheryl alone. So, for a while we had nobody attending. But I'm glad to say it's up and running again as Adam from Howard has got his clearance and is now attending with Cheryl. His report is as follows:

#### MARYBOROUGH DETENTION FACILITY

Of recent, Alcoholics Anonymous has re-engaged with Maryborough Detention Centre for the purpose of carrying the message to detainees. At present, there are two members attending on a weekly basis; that being Mondays from 830am to 2pm. As most would appreciate, two rostered members is not ideal; therefore, our intention has been to build a sustainable roster. After clearing the facilities checkpoints, both Cheryl and I liaise with administrative staff before commencing our first meeting of the day. We facilitate two meetings prior to lunch and one after lunch. The three meetings we facilitate are pertinent to detainees from three different wings. Over the lunch period, the facilities management generously allow us to attend the officers mess which we are more than grateful for. In relation to the meetings, we are allocated a one hour window for each respective group. Attendance varies; however, we are seeing the same people returning on a regular basis. Our rapport with the detainees is building week by week and is evident by good open two communication. Both Cheryl and I are mindful of the AA guideline and we apply it as best as appropriate on any given day. We have started one particular group on a steps journey (BB study) and would like to see the others commence sometime in the near future.

Literature is being generously donated by local groups within the local area. We provide miniature BB's and other literature to the detainees as required.

Kind Regards

YIS Cheryl F & Adam F

Brisbane North are active, having another weekend coming up in November. This is their annual event which is always a success.

As I said there is a new district which has started up and I attended there first official district meeting on the 9th of September. For me this is the start of something I'd like to achieve in my term as Delegate. I'd like to think that over my term that with God's help places such as Gympie, Maryborough, Harvey Bay, Bundaberg and Rockhampton, who all had active districts 25 years ago can be reactivated.

In closing, I'd like to say it's a privilege to serve my Area. I love the travelling and talking to members face to face some who have never seen a Delegate in the outback. Finally, I'd like it to be known I dislike writing reports.

Yours in Service

Ric Cottrell

North East Queensland Area B Delegate.

## AREA C

The area has x 6 active districts -

- Northern Gold Coast
- Southern Gold Coast
- Bayside
- Toowoomba - Celebrating 75years of AA in the district this October with the Toowoomba Rally.
- Brisbane
- Ipswich

## QYPAA

- The committee have held fundraising events throughout the year and recently held their 2023 convention "Rocketed into a Fourth Dimension" in Brisbane on the 9<sup>th</sup> of September. The committee is to be commended on their efforts in organising such a great event.

## Corrections and Facilities

- Covid interrupted visits to centres within the Area, however things are improving with the majority of facilities now allowing visiting AA members. The committee remains committed to providing resources, information, and assistance wherever and whenever possible. Currently there are **6 prisons** in the area being actively visited.
- The Committee have also recently established relationships with local Gold Coast Parole Offices, allowing information and resources to be placed in the offices and referral links to be made. This is a fantastic initiative on behalf of the Committee and their dedication and service in bringing a solution into the path of those who may not yet have an answer for their alcoholism is to be applauded. Currently there are **7 Parole Offices** being serviced, with plans to expand.

## PI/CPC

- Although the PI/CPC Coordinator position is currently vacant the area remains engaged in PI/CPC on many levels, including researching web-based projects, and grassroots engagement by individual

districts with police liaison units, medical centres, universities, hospitals, treatment facilities and Services Australia.

### **Workshops/Activities**

- Individual Districts continue to hold activities, rallies, workshops, and conventions, including the GC Rally, Toowoomba Rally, Ipswich Oktoberfest, Service Workshops, Fun Days, and Information Sessions to name a few.
- The Area held a Topics for Conference Review Session in early August and the delegate will be hosting a Topic Assembly on the Sunday the 24<sup>th</sup> of September. These activities are aimed at lifting the profile of the topics within the area with participants having the opportunity to review, discuss and provide feedback to the delegate regarding this year's topics.

### **Finances**

- Our Area remains financially viable with additional funds (when available) being distributed to the GSO.
- The Area finances a ZOOM account for all district / subcommittees to utilise free of charge for any general service event or district/area related business.

YIS

Terresa

NER Area C Delegate

## **VIRTUAL**

### **AREA A**

#### **Overview**

The Virtual Area came about after a topic submitted for consideration at the 2020 Australian General Service Conference led to Advisory Action #009/2020 "that the creation of a virtual Area be included as part of the review of the General Service Structure by the Conference Policies & Admissions Committee".

The committee created a Virtual Area Guideline, which enabled a sub-committee of interested Australian AAs to apply to the conference delegates to form a virtual area aligned with the Remote Trustee. The delegates voted in favour of the application, and in August 2022 an inaugural Election Assembly of the Australian Virtual Area was held. The first delegate of the Australian VA attended Conference in November the same year.

The Virtual Area holds quarterly Assemblies which are announced on the area website:

<https://aavirtualarea.org.au/>; alongside Virtual Area bank details for 7th Tradition contributions, a registration portal for GSRs of Australian virtual groups, announcements for upcoming Virtual Area events, and minutes of previous assemblies.

Still in its infancy, the Virtual Area is cognizant of avoiding duplication of other Australian AA online services, and accordingly provides links to other relevant pre-existing general services.

#### **Committee Activity / Voting Structure**

The Virtual Area Committee currently comprises the Delegate, Alternate Delegate, Chair, Treasurer and Secretary as perennial voting positions. The Virtual Area Webmaster sits on the Committee in an advisory capacity.

In addition to the Committee, the virtual group GSRs, numbering 8 at the last assembly, are also eligible to vote. As there are currently no virtual Districts aligned with the Virtual Area, no DCMs sit on the committee.

The Committee conducts its business between scheduled assemblies using a dedicated WhatsApp group.

At the time of this report, the position of Alternate Delegate is vacant due to the resignation of the sitting Delegate earlier this year, and the election of the Alternate Delegate into the position. Accordingly, the position has been advertised for nominations at the upcoming assembly in November.

### **Virtual Area Events**

Since the 2022 General Service Conference, the Virtual Area has run quarterly Assemblies in November 2022, February, May and August 2023. Each Assembly has been hosted on Zoom and minutes are available on the Virtual Area website.

At the most recent Assembly held in August, the Virtual Area hosted a service workshop whereby AAs Chris & Dave covered elements of the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts to illustrate the structure AA. Two more service workshops covering aspects of the Australian General Service Structure have been planned for the next two assemblies scheduled for November this year, and February 2024.

### **Delegate Activities**

In preparation for upcoming Conference Committee meetings and the General Service Conference in November, I distributed the 2023 topics along with a voting sheet to virtual group GSRs to take to their Group Conscience. As a follow up, I am hosting a Conference Topics Assembly with the GSRs on September 24th to ascertain the wider Group Conscience of the Virtual Area.

To supplement this, in my capacity as Delegate, I have continued to attend a new online meeting listed on [aa.org.au](http://aa.org.au) at a frequency of approximately one every second day. I use these opportunities to inform the attendees of the Virtual Area, encourage groups to elect a GSR and register with the Virtual Area, and provide contact and website details for them to utilise and distribute.

Finally, I was recently invited to sit in on the Technology and Social Media Working Group to provide my opinion about the problem of non-Australian virtual meetings listing on [aa.org.au](http://aa.org.au), and I continue to work with members of this group to build on some potential solutions to the issue.

As I have only recently been voted into the position of Delegate, I am learning the new role and responsibilities quickly before this year's Conference. So far I have found it a valuable and rewarding experience. This role has already given me a large increase in service opportunities which has already paid dividends in my personal recovery program. I look forward to continually learning how to be an effective contributor to the fellowship that has saved my life.

Yours in grateful service,

Andrew McNee, 1st year Delegate – Australian Virtual Area

# GENERAL SERVICE BOARD REPORTS

## CHAIR REPORT

Welcome to our first face-to-face conference since 2019. My name is Cheryn Porter and I am an alcoholic, my home groups, I have 2 are Sunday Curl Curl 4pm and Living the Solutions Women on a Monday 7.30pm at Curl Curl. A lot has changed since the last time we met in person. I started my job as General Service Trustee in April 2020 just as we went into lockdown for Covid, this is my first and last Conference face to face. What a privilege to do that as Chair. Welcome to the new delegates, it is ok, you won't know what is going on for another couple of years, you will finally feel like you are getting the hang of it and then it will be time to leave. Hopefully as I have done, you will grow in experience and in your commitment and understanding of our fellowship. Your job will be then to pass that on.

I would like to thank the inaugural Conference Steering Committee, what a task you have had to start with an outline of a new system in May this year and be able to bring this together today for the fellowship. You have met weekly to do this and your commitment to this is inspiring. Thank you to both Geoff Smith, Deputy Chair/Southern Regional Trustee and John O'Leary North Eastern Regional Trustee for being there with the Committee through this process.

Welcome to the new Trustees rotating in in 2023 Andrew Taylor – General Service Trustee, Garry Scott – Eastern Regional Trustee, John O'Leary – North Eastern Regional Trustee, Dominic Hyde – Western Regional Trustee and our new Class A Trustee Matthew Church. Matthew brings to the AA Board invaluable experience on not-for-profit boards as well as his experience in communications. He has hit the ground running and already added value to our decision making on the Board.

The year started with the General Service Office moving to Rockdale from Arncliffe. The lease on the Arncliffe premises had come up for renewal and the premises did not fit our purposes anymore so the decision was made by the Management Group to move. We eventually found a new premise at 1/1 Garnet St Rockdale which had warehouse facilities as well as office space and where the Archives would also have a home. This was a big move as the office had been in the Arncliffe location for close to 25 years. Chris and Patrick did a great job with little disturbance to the services.

The Board year started with a Board meeting in Hobart. Tasmania has not been represented at Conference for a few years. There are 2 Areas that are part of the Southern Region and neither had a Delegate. Our aim was to encourage general service and see if we could help in any way. Approximately 10 people turned up for the meet the Board session and at the end were swapping numbers and email addresses as they were all keen to get the services resurrected.

The Perth Convention at Easter was attended by a number of Trustees and the Office Staff who manned tables through the weekend alongside the World Service Delegates. I had the privilege of opening the convention. Brian Smith, past World Service Delegate organised a meeting of past Delegates and Trustees where it was decided to create an AA Alumni. Paul J and Penny (past Trustees) have taken on the task of collecting names and organising communications and a get-together at the Adelaide Convention. This will be a great resource for getting help and specific skill sets with Board working groups or projects.

The Board met face to face at the Convention to go through a draft plan developed by Andrew Taylor, Geoff Smith and myself for a new Committee structure that Board had been tasked with by Conference in 2022. The Board agreed that this plan be presented to Conference in May via Zoom. The draft plan also included a new Board structure. Conference met via Zoom in the May, and it was unanimously decided to accept the plan and

to implement it for this year's Conference. The Board is in the process of implementing the new Board structure.

A Board Safeguarding Committee was established in 2022 to develop Safeguarding documents for fellowship as part of our compliance with the ACNC. The group which included both Judy W and Lachlan B continued on in 2023 to provide the documents as guidelines for the fellowship. After much research and legal advice, the Safeguarding Committee presented the documents to Conference via Zoom and are in the process of creating a safeguarding information page on the National website with an online complaints form.

The July Board meeting was held in Brighton Le Sands Sydney. With the Conference Structure changing and the draft of a new Board structure to complement this the decision was made by the Board to undertake a Board and General Service Office Inventory. This inventory started in September via Zoom and the Board has met quite a number of times since then to go through different aspects of the Inventory and General Service Office services. Our aim is to create systems so that each job, Trustee, Delegate or General Service Office Staff has the 'Right of Participation' with the information and tools they need to provide the best service possible for the fellowship.

In July Valerie Martin resigned from the position of Office Manager. Valerie had 27 years in the role in which she provided services to our Australian Fellowship, the general public and professionals as well as to the General Service Board and Conference. During her time, she initiated many projects including the History Book – One to Another, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition Australian Big Book, the change to Board committee system, the setup of an Old Timers meeting in Sydney July 2007, the women's trip to India 2013, and the Fiji Convention 2016. Valerie also wrote the General Service Conference structure role play, which has been performed all over the country. We thank Valerie for her contributions, and we wish her the very best for retirement.

In the background we have been busy on various committees and working groups with the Message Stick, new Website, Chat Now and the production of a new suite of corrections pamphlets all well underway with some being presented at this Conference. A project that I have been involved in this year is the Archives. With the Office move from Arncliffe to Rockdale we had the opportunity to get started on this project. The majority of the GSB Archives being held in a storage container out the back of the old office. We sourced a professional Archivist to help with this job and Ruth O'Hea has been working 1 day a week to clean up the documents for preservation and cataloguing. This has been completed and we are now investigating a digital platform for these documents to be available for fellowship. A National Archives Working Committee was started with archive enthusiast members who are responsible for different collections around Australia coming together once a quarter to share information and discuss how we are going to digitalise these collections so they will be available to the fellowship. The Committee consists of Brad H from Perth, Louise G from Richmond Victoria, Robyn M from Area A Eastern Region, David M from Adelaide, Stephen R (past Trustee) from Toowoomba and Judy W (Past Trustee) from Area A and myself. Watch this space!

AA turns 80 in 2 years, and we are already underway with different committees to celebrate this great milestone. We have the AA80 Committee established to encourage groups, members and areas to put on events throughout the 2025 year to celebrate our 80 years. A calendar of events will be available for members on the website. The Board is also producing an 80 year medallion and a Big Book cover in commemoration.

The Board was awarded the 2025 Convention at the 2022 Conference, to be held in Sydney. A Host Planning Committee has been established and are meeting monthly to get this event underway. The Convention will be held in the Sydney Town Hall and the Hilton and include both Alanon and YPAA events.

It has been a busy year and there is still more to come. Our finances are still in good shape with us holding a 16 month Prudent Reserve for the 12 month period. Expenses have increased due to the cost associated with travel as this is the first year that all events attended are face to face. The Management Group will look at 2024 Prudent Reserve figures once the Audit report has been approved. The Management Group and General Service Board are committed to monitor and manage these expenses to ensure the fellowship receive the best value of services for the contributions received. Our aim continues to be for the Office to be self-supporting through our contributions, with Literature and convention a bonus and use for projects.

Thank you to the Board for the support and the unity. It has been a privilege to lead this Board in 2024. I know it is in good hands and will continue on with the work we have started. Yours in Service Cheryn Porter

## **COMMITTEE AND WORKING GROUP REPORTS CONFERENCE STEERING COMMITTEE**

I am John O’Leary, North Eastern Region Trustee and privileged to Chair this Committee.

With the acceptance by Conference of Topic #001/2023 – Advisory Action #001/2023, the newly elected Conference Committee rolled their sleeves up and have continued through weekly ZOOM Meetings and phone calls to outline, map and document that resolution.

Full credit needs to be given to that Committee – truly AA in action and we trust that the experience of the new Conference Structure will reflect the quality of their efforts.

The Board of Alcoholics Anonymous Australia is in the process of managing the requirements to meet the requirements of Advisory Action #001/2023. We appreciate the workload and skill set of the Board Members.

Advisory Actions: Majority are noted and/or related to the new General Service Conference Structure.

#013/2022: Conference Inventory – set for 2024: awaiting a Report from Working Group.

Yours in Service

John

## **TRUSTEES’S TREATMENT FACILITIES AND ACCESSIBILITY REPORT**

It is a privilege to be Chair of the Treatment Facilities and Accessibility Committee.

The name alteration was approved to better reflect the matters with which this Committee now oversees. With the term ‘Accessibility’ to reflect “any issues which may distract an AA Member, current, new, or future from having access to the Program of Alcoholics Anonymous.”

There are several Advisory Actions in place, and they are being actioned.

#003/2022: Thanks to our Trustee Geoff Smith for his managing of the Advisory Action re: Auslan Meeting in Melbourne. A great result and positive reflection of AA in Action. ‘To be monitored’.

#32/2021 – Board Chair and World Service Trustees have raised issue with AA USA National Office – in pipe – delays due to back up after COVID. ‘To be monitored’.

#1-7/2022 – Complete, the position as National Coordinator to be advertised.

#029/2018 – Completed – noted as a calendar action.

A National Treatment Facilities and Accessibility Coordinator has been appointed. We welcome Simon K from Area C, NER. A request for details on any matters to do with Treatment Facilities – particularly at Area/District level, is sort by Simon. Issues of Accessibility also. His contact details will be published on the AA Service Website and AA Around Australia.

In 2014 Board Trustee Tom Grigg reported re: Treatment Facilities - that we as a fellowship had a substantial task in carrying the message of Alcoholics Anonymous to Treatment Centres.

From feedback gathered and, in this post-COVID/Social Media Environment the task has become complex, with many Treatment Facilities moving away from being supportive of Alcoholics Anonymous to clients and focusing on other programs for Treatment or aids to Treatment.

As always there are many AA groups and individual members attending Treatment Facilities, sharing our message to clients however the Management of the Treatment Facility may not support regular attendance of clients to local AA Meetings or support AA as an aid to Treatment in the facility. An example of this is the Salvation Army Rehabs who were strong advocates of AA.

Alcoholics Anonymous through our Treatment Facilities and Accessibility National Coordinator and members involved in the General Service Structure carrying the message into Treatment Centres may need to focus on the Facility Management as well as the clients.

How we do this without being seen to suggest the program of AA is a treatment, is open for discussion and we look forward to feedback to the National Coordinator.

The appointment of a National Coordinator for Treatment Facilities and Accessibility will provide further strength to our carrying the message into Treatment Facilities.

I also support Topics to Conference to create discussion and action.

There is much to be done.

Yours in Service

John O'Leary NER Trustee

Chair Treatment Facilities and Accessibility Committee

## AUSLAN REPORT

From the AUSLAN Committee of Progress Not Perfection Meeting, South Yarra, Melbourne.

The GSB has funded Auslan Interpreter once a month from April to October. (Last Sunday of the Month, 10.00am).

Spend so far is months7 x \$308 = \$2,156

There were a couple of Deaf/Hard of Hearing attendees who attended in person initially but we haven't seen them for a number of months. There have been no obviously Deaf/HoH attendees *in person* over the last 4-5 months.

We broadcast the Auslan translator on Zoom and there are often more than 50 remote attendees to the meeting but we haven't asked if any of them are from the Deaf/HoH community so we could not tell you how many/if any at all, are attending.

We have not been actively soliciting donations in the last few months but have been receiving sporadic donations from different groups as well as individual members who attend the South Yarra meeting.

There were a few members who were very active in the initial development of the initiative that have no longer been attending the meeting and it would be fair to say that there has been very limited recent activity to attract Deaf/HoH members. Susan and I are the last remaining sub-committee members but have not had the bandwidth to drive the initiative in recent months.

The balance of donations that we still have in a separate bank account is \$3,990.22.

Given we feel we have an obligation to the membership to spend the money on Auslan focused initiatives, we would welcome any related activity. Susan and I did consult with a Deaf/HoH specialised mental health professional and a few of her contacts. There was some agreement that an Auslan translated video series might be an effective form of outreach. Neither of us has been able to drive this further due to personal circumstances. If there were willing members from this Advisory Action, we would welcome their involvement. The Group Conscience of the meeting empowered the Auslan sub-committee to spend the money as it sees fit.

I understand that the initial contribution that the GSB was expecting to make was 6 months of an interpreter which it seems has already been exceeded. In the absence of any other activity to drive the initiative, I would suggest we continue funding an interpreter once a month until the money has gone.

## TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIAL MEDIA WORKING GROUP REPORT

**Advisory Action 6/22.** *That the National AA website, needs to be improved for those in search of a meeting. Currently the search function needs to be more accurate for finding meetings by location.*

Digging into the specific problem which spurred the conference topic, the issue is around distance listed from start location to meeting location. In the first instance any search will show the direct distance (as the crow flies) then directions will show the actual route and travel distance. In some cases where bridges and roads are not direct, the initial distance listed can be misleading, however current mapping technology does not have a solution for this. The mapping plugins work this way. The Technology & Social Media Working Group recommend leaving this as is. When new apps and plugins are available the website functionality can be upgraded.

**Advisory Action 7/22.** *A search for meetings with wheelchair access on AA.org.au returns only x 4 nationally.*

Functionality to list wheelchair access is available on the current <https://meetings.aa.org.au> website. Undertakings such as newsletter & AAAA articles, plus concerted effort by word of mouth, to encourage groups to update group listings with all pertinent and current information is underway. A guide to updating information is also available online at <https://meetings.aa.org.au/how-to-add-a-new-meeting-to-aatimes-and-meetings-aa/>

Currently there are 112 meetings listed in Australia with wheelchair access. Please check your homegroup listing and encourage others to update their group listings.

**Advisory Action 2/21.** *Conference resolved that the proposal to create a dedicated first response page on the national website be accepted.*

This topic was referred to the Technology & Social Media Working Group for implementation. As the working group has grown and evolved, its membership has welcomed some experienced and qualified individuals who have brought a professional and comprehensive overview to this action. Although the advisory actions asks just for a front page, the list of issues and improvements needed to address current issues of functionality and effectiveness of websites became exhaustive.

The larger issue of the suite of AA websites was deemed to be of critical importance to deliver a dynamic, user specific experience for all stakeholders. New Members or candidates for AA, Professionals looking for specific clear information, Members looking for information, products & services and Members looking for service detail and interface.

Of note is that much of the current AA web presence has been built at different stages by different individuals, mainly volunteer members. To bring it all together and address all areas of concern and improvement, creating a system that will improve the look & feel of the sites, simplify & reorganise the websites' content and that ultimately increase effectiveness & usability for users is critical.

Through conversations and meetings with our current I.T. provider and a series of consultations with other web development professionals and companies a proposal and quotation(s) to rebuild the sites were submitted to the General Service Management Group. Work is underway to redevelop and improve the websites and indeed the "brand style" and design attributes will be reproducible across all AA media and literature materials. It is expected that design phase will occur this year and build & implementation to be completed by March 2024.

## **CONFERENCE CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES WORKING GROUP COMMITTEE REPORT**

**Advisory Action #004/2022** Conference resolved to accept the Conference Correctional Facilities Committee's recommendation that a Working Group be formed to develop less formal and easy to read and use materials that improves a person's engagement with AA both whilst they are in, and after they have left a Correctional Facility. The new materials should be submitted to Conference 2023 for approval.

It was noted that the material supplied with the topic was not consistent with current published literature and the content included suggestions based on AA lore rather than the AA programme.

As per Advisory Action above, a working group was formed for consultation, ideas, implementation and feedback. This consisted of a past Trustee, a copywriter, the topic originator, a graphic designer, the National Coordinator Corrections Facilities and current Trustee chair.

As the working group was from disparate geographical locations, the work was carried out individually and drafts and inputs sent by email, zoom meetings and phone calls.

The 'AA\_DL leaflet' was produced by a process of reviewing all relevant current published literature, such as the existing Bridging the Gap pamphlets, Living Sober, This is AA (& other newcomer pamphlets) Questions & Answers on Sponsorship etc. Next task was removing the material which was most "inconsistent with current published literature". Some items such as H.A.L.T.S. are not published using this acronym, however all the principals and suggestions are listed in the Living Sober book which is of course AA approved literature. Copywriter focussed on factual and grammar, Graphic Designer put together the snippets into a cohesive and readable format. All versions have been circulated for comment and correction. Although a version with much more "cut & paste" from existing AA literature was also produced, this was criticised for being too much of a reproduction of existing AA literature and not meeting the intention of the advisory action.

This 'AA\_DL leaflet' version has received the most positive feedback and is the version recommended to be submitted to conference 2023.

(A4 flyer & business card template also produced)

All PDF, InDesign files and attributes for printing or further development are available.

Regards,

Grant Tucker

Conference Correctional Facilities Committee Chair

## **CLASS A TRUSTEE WORKING GROUP REPORT**

The Class A Trustee Working Group was tasked with sourcing and recruiting new Class A Trustees. The Working Group consisted of Geoff S (Southern Region Trustee), Cheryn P (General Service Trustee), Narelle Buchanan (Class A Trustee) and Jane M (Northern Region Trustee). We started with a gap analysis, looking at the current skills we had on the Board and what skills would be useful to move the Board forward and to assist with up-and-coming projects. A list was produced of prospects, and we then investigated the list to get a short list. Meanwhile we also ran ads on Seek Volunteer and Institute of Community Directors, free advertising for Not-for-profit organisations. We received a number of enquiries and interviewed 2 people who were presented to the Board and offered roles. Matthew Church attended the July Board meeting. Kumi Tugachi accepted the role, but her work commitments changed and has asked to hold the role until December 2023. We also interviewed and offered the role to Cas Mastroni but again due to her work commitments she declined. Matthew has been a great addition to our Board and hit the ground running, assisting with the Inventory.

The Working Group also developed the processes and procedures for recruitment of Class A Trustees which was accepted by the Board. This working group will continue under the Trustee's Nomination Committee.

## **NATIONAL ARCHIVES WORKING COMMITTEE REPORT**

The National Archives Working Group had its first meeting December 7, 2022, and decided to meet quarterly. The Group consists of Brad H from Perth, Lousie G from Richmond, David T from Adelaide, Robyn M from Area A Eastern Region, Stephen Roche, Toowoomba (Ex North Eastern Region Trustee), Judy W, Area A (Ex Eastern Region Trustee) and Cheryn P (General Service Trustee).

The National Archive Working Committee is concerned with the collection, management of and access to the National Archives to preserve the message of Alcoholics Anonymous in line with its primary purpose. It establishes ways to share AA's history in Australia with the fellowship. AA's history is scattered around the country and the Committee is an important part of being able to bring this all together.

The General Service Office moved in December 2022 to its new location in Rockdale and the Archives that were stored in the container out the back were fumigated when they were moved to the new offices, sorted and stored by the Archivist we employed for the project.

The National Archives Working Committee has been investigating platforms to catalogue and display the collections. This will be a project that will continue for the foreseeable future under the Trustee's Documentation Review Committee.

## **CHAT NOW START-UP COMMITTEE REPORT**

The ChatNow Start-up Committee was formed as a result of Advisory Action 004/2021. It comprises 4 members of the 2020 PI&CPC Committee, who proposed this initiative as a Floor Action, and 2 members of the 2021 Committee.

We began the process with several meetings with the UK ChatNow Team, garnering much experience, advice, and documentation which we adapted to suit our needs here in Australia.

The Tech team, headed by Lachlan B, were keen to help us begin trialing the LiveChat platform on a dummy version of the national website homepage. Unfortunately, we were delayed by the necessity to include this

new service in the recently released Safeguarding Policy, and we thank the Board for persisting with the creation and implementation of the document and keeping us updated throughout the process.

In June 2023 we began the process of establishing a training process and protocol, a set of guidelines and response flow charts, and familiarising ourselves with the LiveChat response platform.

In July, we began the process of carefully recruiting potential responders. To date, we have gathered 24 fully trained and enthusiastic Responders, comprising approximately 48 hours of one-on-one and small group training on top of around 16 hours of Committee planning, training and document creation. Responders are required to have a minimum of 2 years of continuous sobriety and be recommended by their Area or District Committee or an Admin member of the ChatNow Committee. Responders are required to make a 2-year commitment to serving, which may be extended if they progress to becoming an admin, trainer, or both.

The ChatNow Response Service will be launched live on [aa.org.au](http://aa.org.au) on Wednesday November 1 between the hours of 10am-10pm on a 2-hour rotating roster (6 shifts per day, 7 days a week). We are currently trialling an online scheduling platform to manage the roster, costing US\$59 per month in unison with 20 free non-profit agent accounts on the LiveChat platform (valued at US\$59 per agent). Overnight hours and anticipated initial roster deficits will be supplemented by an email response service monitored by admins daily with the potential to automate responses to general questions in the future.

The ChatNow Start-Up Committee plans to request a landing page be created by the Tech Team on [aa.org.au](http://aa.org.au) where interested members can access our Guidelines, general information and an application form to assist in streamlining the recruitment and training process involved.

All live chats will be archived and reviewed by an admin, and a permanent record kept. GSO will maintain a list of all past and current responders and have access to the schedule should there be any complaints or negative feedback as a direct result of responder behaviour or misconduct. Each responder is aware of this and has agreed to comply with our Guidelines.

I would like to thank our Start-Up Committee, former Delegates Rangi P and Janet M, former Trustee and Chair of the Board Andy P and current 3rd year Delegate Mike B for their patience, persistence, and commitment to this exciting new service opportunity. Behind the scenes support from former General Service Trustee Lachlan B and current GSO Coordinator for ChatNow Chris S has been invaluable. -

**Damien G.**

## **“MESSAGE STICK’ WORKING GROUP.**

Firstly, I would like to thank Jane the previous NRT for all her efforts in getting this project off the ground, my involvement in this committee commenced six months ago and by then all the stories had been collected. We have met on a monthly basis and recently have been joined by three First Nations People who have been very helpful with the design of the cover, welcome to country, and the forward for this booklet.

We have decided as a group to present to conference 15 stories for print in English.

Hopefully you will all have had the opportunity to read the draft copy.

All permission slips to print have been received from the authors. The booklet would cost about \$10 each to print which can be recouped when sold. We are hoping to print 3000 Copies. There was a suggestion going forward that we look at an audio book and maybe translation to native language. We are having ongoing enquiries about costs for this project.

Again, I would like to thank Jane and all the hard-working committee for their efforts in getting this project to where we are. I am sure no one can deny that this booklet by first Nations people for First Nations People is a worthwhile project. I look forward to seeing it in print and distributed around the country.

# NATIONAL COORDINATOR REPORTS

## NATIONAL CORRECTIONS COORDINATOR REPORT

A lot has been happening in NSW. Since we last communicated, AA has started doing 12th Step work in several gaols we were previously not in, and restarted 12th Step work in several we were in prior to Covid. An effort is being made to iterate over each Area and each gaol within that Area. The work has gathered pace and the ERCC (Eastern Region Corrections Committee) have been making consistent, regular progress.

Contact has been made with the NT Corrections Commissioner and Attorney General's Department. We have requested an audience to propose opening a Teleconference meeting in Darwin and Alice Springs Correctional Centres. We are waiting for them to assess our request.

I am in touch with the Area Delegate from Area B WA about starting Teleconference meetings in WA gaols.

Work is also being done with Forensic Hospitals, Community Corrections Offices, Prison Chaplains, electronics and other finely grained means of help for alcoholics in the system.

Thanks,

Tim O

## NATIONAL PI&CPC COORDINATOR REPORT

Hi all

### NATIONAL WHATTSAPP NOTICEBOARD

I never realized when I was asked by a couple of members at the Brisbane National Forum in Feb.2022 to start a PI/CPC WhatsApp group for new PI/CPC coordinators to see what other Area, District and Regions were doing to get some ideas of what they could do, we would now have 135 members, we have been able to Establish the PI/CPC Patter and so much PI has been initiated in Australia, Stephen from Area B NER has been inspirational from the time he was at Brisbane North District and from when I first met him at the Forum just starting out – I would like him to share his Journey at the National Public Awareness Forum next November, The Districts in Victoria – the Signs, Facebook, all the other posts from Area PI/CPC coordinators and Group members have been fantastic and all the members now adding others.

Lachie our former GSO Trustee is doing great work and always helping many members.

The description in the chat is what we decided at the forum to be the guidelines.

### PI/CPC PATTERN

The Pattern is a culmination of all the PI/CPC happening and I have loved getting it going, it would not be possible without posts on the whatsapp PI/CPC noticeboard and emails from our Fellowship, there are over 100 contacts now including the Brisbane, Perth, Adelaide CSO's and the Vic AA times, The Pattern went out with AA around Australia this month and it was probably the most enjoyable because of the CPC starting to happen. I will continue to put together every 3 months.

### NATIONAL PUBLIC AWARENESS FORUM

Dates 22-24 Nov.2024, Grand Chancellor Hotel, Hindley street, Adelaide CBD.

The Event will start Friday at 5pm and conclude Sunday at 1pm, prior to the Forum we will access the Torrens room for a Friday Professional Luncheon 12 -1.30pm with food at 28-33\$ per person, we will be inviting people

we are meeting on the Journey, we started organizing at the Recent Mental Health Conference collecting emails and names, it will continue at the upcoming APSAD conference in November.

We have a registration site set up to register for the Forum and a Link for 207\$ for King or Executive rooms. Code ALCONN when booking online, room link is on the registration site.

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/alcoholics-anonymous-2024-national-awareness-forum-tickets-698958201797?aff=oddtcreator>

Registration is \$120 including a buffet dinner with Billy N to be our guest speaker, I am trying to organize our coffee within that price. Can we encourage all PI/CPC/TCF Area/District coordinators to attend please.

The National Convention PI/CPC table in Perth was great to get new contacts and meet new members and see members I know, I will be organizing the table again for the 2023 Convention in Adelaide, a lot of literature and Posters was given away.

It was great to attend the 2 Regional forums in Tasmania and Newcastle by zoom and put some PI/CPC out there.

I spoke at the University here to all the Psychology and Chaplain students organized by one of our members, they knew of the Cochrane report.

It seems all the Professional Conferences are returning, Area B here organized a Booth at the Mental health Conference held at the Convention center , APSAD is here again November next month – 54% will be doctors attending , GPCE is in Melbourne from the 17-19 of November, 1200 GPs will be in attendance and ISBRA is in Melbourne September 23-26, happy to say both the APSAD(The Australasian Professional society on Alcohol and Drugs) and the GPCE(General Practice conference and Exhibition) are confirmed and we will have members at both Booths, Area B in Adelaide will be helping me and the Inner City District in Melbourne have paid the \$4400 reduced price, ISBRA(International Society for Biomedical research on Alcoholism) has also come back with a figure of \$1800 reduced from \$4500 – Inner City District is looking at doing both and they fall in there district at the Melbourne Exhibition center , could we help them in any way with funding? ISBRA is a world event held in a different country every 2 years.

Coming up is the Put up a Poster week the week of Bill W birthday Monday the 11<sup>th</sup> of December, it is an Advisory action from Last year's Conference voted by our groups, can we all encourage our regions to put a poster up, on a noticeboard - Doctors Surgery/Medical Center/ Police station/Public Hospital/Facebook/Newspaper.

In Unity and Service,

Rob C

National PA/CPC coordinator

0428482496

## **NATIONAL REMOTE COMMUNITIES' COORDINATOR REPORT**

This is my last report as the National Remote Communities Coordinator and I thank you for the opportunity to be of service. Once again the Remote Communities supported the Tag-A-Long 2 Public Awareness Luncheons, there was a good cross section of the community organisations in attendance and they were presented with a

Big Book. I sent a follow up email to the participants providing them with information about AA, meetings and links to the website.

Apart from trying to escalate Remote Communities awareness in the fellowship I have not done much else this year. I have heard that two people are interested in the role for 2024 and I am prepared to hand over the email and be available as a resource to whoever is chosen.

YIS

Diane Creagh

National Remote Communities Coordinator

# GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE REPORT

## STAFF

Valerie resigned in July after 27 years of service. The General Service Board has taken this opportunity to relook at the services provided by the General Service Office as part of their Inventory. This includes updating job descriptions and introducing Contracts of employment, taking into account.

Chris Surplice and Patrick Scherf continue in their current roles.

## GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE

The General Service Office moved in December 2022 and is now located at 1/1 Garnet St Rockdale. The premises were sourced due to the lease on the Arncliffe property expiring and it was no longer fit for purpose. The new premises has a warehouse to store the literature and space for the Archives.

## LITERATURE SUPPLIES

The demand for AA Literature has remained strong over the last year, with the GSO selling about \$ 30,000 worth of Books, Banners and Pamphlets every month. We estimate that this amount will increase as Corrective Services across the country have opened their doors to AA Groups again, and some large orders have been received from Corrective Services NSW. Additionally, The Grapevine is publishing one or two new titles each year, and the General Services Board is hopeful that we will be able to publish a new Australian title in 2024, plus the Commemorative Edition of the Australian Big Book in 2025.

While we don't have any problems obtaining Literature from our local suppliers, the situation with all publications imported from AA World Services and The Grapevine remains more difficult. A combination of supply chain issues, plus staff and paper shortages in the US all have meant that we sometimes run out of stock on some popular items. The GSO is working hard to do everything that is in our power to overcome these issues, such as sourcing more books and pamphlets locally in the future, rather than relying on the long and expensive importation of materials from North America.

In closing, I would like to thank the Fellowship for its patience and trust in dealing with these delays, and we look forward to serving you better in the days to come.

Patrick S – GSO Staff

## CONVENTIONS AND OTHER FUNCTIONS TO ATTEND

All staff attended the Perth Conventions and had a literature table available to the fellowship. Patrick also attended the NEWYPAA Convention and Chris the Eastern Region Forum. Chris also attended a Remote Communities Forum in Cairns.

## EQUIPMENT PURCHASED

Forklift for the warehouse. A flat bed scanner and overhead scanner for the archives.

## BOARD MEETINGS ATTENDED

All staff attended the February Board meeting held in Hobart and the July Board meeting held in Sydney. Both Board meetings were held face to face.

## INSURANCE POLICIES

All insurance policies for the office and the groups are up to date.

### **MANAGEMENT GROUP**

All staff attended the Management Group meetings, which were also attended by the General Service Trustees and 2 observers as part of their application for General Service Trustee.

### **COORDINATION AND REVIEW COMMITTEE**

All staff attended the Management Group meetings, which were also attended by the General Service Trustees and 2 observers as part of their application for General Service Trustee.

### **FINANCES**

A copy of the end of year audited financial reports and the forecast for projects July 2023-June 2024 have been distributed to all Conference members.

### **RENT**

Rent has increased slightly due to the move from Arncliffe to Rockdale.

### **TRADEMARKS**

All Trademarks are current.

### **AA AROUND AUSTRALIA**

Chris has been producing and distributing this publication by email throughout the year and has also been made available on the website.

# WORLD SERVICE DELEGATE REPORTS 2023

My name is Greg Byrne and I am an alcoholic. I am a member of the Forster (NSW) Steps and Traditions Group that meets on Saturday morning at 9.30am. At present I am the World Service Delegate Second Term. My sobriety date is 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1976.

I am coming to the end of my four year term as World Service Delegate and, thanks to Covid, for three of those four years my attendance at World Service and AOSM Meetings have all been held virtually. Although face to face contact with Delegates wasn't achieved nevertheless the meetings brought together Country Reports and Presentations which highlighted the situation of A.A. in the world.

## WORLD SERVICE MEETING

The World Service Meeting (WSM), established in 1969, serves as a biennial forum for sharing the experience, strength, and hope of the assembled delegates in carrying the message of A.A. and can represent an expression of the worldwide group conscience. In 2022, with record high participation, 75 delegates from 49 countries and regional service structures met virtually for the 27th World Service Meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous.

In one of the presentations regarding the International Literature Fund, it was explained that *“over the years the activity levels of assisting other countries with the cost of translating, producing and distributing literature has been very robust. To illustrate this point, when the idea of the fund was born in 1990, the Big Book was translated into 17 languages and Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions into three languages. Today they are translated into 72 and 51 respectively. And that's only the translation of two books!”*

In 2024, delegates will come together in person in New York, October 27-31, with the theme: “The Three Legacies in the Digital Era: Our Great Responsibility to the Alcoholic Being Born Today.”

Most Australian members take their access to AA for granted. It is confronting to hear the lengths that some members in other countries have to take to participate in our life saving program. In our often divided world it is heartening to experience the Unity in our International Fellowship.

The full 2022 World Service Report was circulated and is available again on request.

## ASIA OCEANIA SERVICE MEETING (AOSM)

Australia is located in the AOSM Zone. The population of the AOSM zone makes up two-thirds of the earth. It is located among countries in the Middle East, India, Oceania, South Asia, and East Asia including East Russia. There are 72 countries in this zone although the number participating in AOSM is relatively small

When the travel restrictions due to Covid had eased, the 2023 AOSM was held face-to-face in Fiji from 6<sup>th</sup>- 9<sup>th</sup> July. It was a tremendous success and the three and a half days were packed with Country Reports, Presentations, Workshops and Recommendations from the four AOSM Committees. Brian F. will cover more about this year's AOSM in his report.

## NATIONAL CONVENTIONS

The other World Service Delegate, Brian F. and I have been stationed at a World Service table at the National Conventions in Melbourne and Perth and received many enquiries about the availability of literature in different languages and particularly the 72 translations of the Big Book. It is always an emotional experience

when a member recognizes the Big Book printed in their native language. We also have copies of the Serenity Prayer in 20 languages.

A reunion of Former World Service Delegates is being planned for the National Convention in Adelaide next year.

### **PRESENTATIONS**

Brian and I are always available to speak at Service Meetings when invited. I recently attended a Service Weekend, "Carrying the Message", in Area C, Eastern Region, (Newcastle).

### **CONCLUSION**

My term as World Service Delegate in this age of worldwide epidemic disruption and changing technology has been challenging but very worthwhile. It has strengthened my sobriety, widened my understanding of alcoholism as a universal disease, increased my gratefulness for the program that saved my life and strengthened my commitment to the Fellowship that supports me in living a spiritual life.

Greg Byrne

Second Term World Service Delegate.

My name is Brian Ferguson, currently the "First Term World Service Delegate" for Australia. I am a member of the Bulcock Beach Breakfast Group at Caloundra on the Sunshine Coast Queensland. The group meets Wednesday morning at 7.00am in the Coffee Club on the Esplanade Caloundra. My noted sobriety date is 18<sup>th</sup> August 1985 after a taking a mouth full of alcohol on that date at a Vietnam Veterans Reunion. I first attended AA on Easter Monday 1971 at Auburn where regular attendees were Dr. Sylvester Minogue, Arch Mckinnon and Frank Sturge Harty all true pioneers of Australian AA.

Greg has provided information about the World Service meetings but I would just like to add that it was very moving at the virtual sessions over six nights (10.00 pm to 4.00 am our time) to witness the co-operation between the Delegates from Russia, Ukraine and Iran always putting AA first and never a mention of other issues involving their countries.

One of the responsibilities for the first term delegate is the "Brown Paper Bag Appeal" which evolved in Australia as the result of a suggestion by a group in Forster NSW after a letter was circulated through the Manning District by "Tom the Finn" who was a World Service Delegate at that time. Tom was so embarrassed that Australia had contributed only \$60.40 over the four years period since the inception of the "Foreign Literature Fund" in 1990 which then changed name to the "World Literature Fund". Because of successful contributions around the world to the Literature fund it was determined that for Australia seventy percent be given to the "International Sponsorship Fund" and thirty percent to the "World literature Fund. After very poor response in Australia during Covid times (also lack of information) the last two years has seen better contributions namely \$17,789 and almost \$10,000 (money still trickling in).

### **THE ASIA OCEANIA REGION**

The last Asia Oceania Service Meeting known as the AOSM was held in Fiji from 6<sup>th</sup> July to 9<sup>th</sup> July with a Public Information Meeting and Luncheon held on the 10<sup>th</sup> July which delegates remained in Fiji so as to attend this event.

The concept of holding the AOSM in Fiji began with a conversation between Australia's World Service Delegates (Greg and Brian) after a host country couldn't be found for the AOSM in 2023. We suggested financially supporting Fiji to be the host country using funds from our International Sponsorship Fund. New Zealand also became part of a joint initiative to fund the 2023 AOSM and cost were shared between the two Counties to enable Fiji to host the event. Australia's co-payment was \$4002.00 with money coming via the "Brown Paper Bag Appeal" to the International Sponsorship Fund. As a side note it was announced the both Japan and New Zealand have adopted the symbol of using a brown paper bag to conduct their own countries appeal to the International Sponsorship and Literature Funds.

The Fijian Fellowship were extremely grateful for the support of Australia and New Zealand for without this assistance the 2023 AOSM would not have happened. Because we were the second country in the world to receive the lifesaving message of alcoholics anonymous Australia is now seen as the "Older Sober Country" in this region so hence has a great responsibility in helping the countries residing in the Asia Oceania Region to develop and grow the fellowship in the individual countries that ask for help. Many times over the four days Fiji publicly thanked us for that support.

Our support of Fiji, as many of you would know, significantly began with the holding of our 2016 National Convention in Fiji. Although AA was present in Fiji before this event, their Fellowship acknowledges the impact that this event had on the growth of AA in Fiji. The hosting of this year's AOSM and the PI Luncheon that followed has further strengthened the Fiji Fellowship and created a much better relationship with the Professional Community in a nation being crippled by Alcoholism and drug abuse. All of the delegates stayed on for the extra day to participate in the PI Luncheon which was a huge success for the Fijian Fellowship.

The Asia Oceania Zone makes up approximately two thirds of the planet's population. Many of these located in this zone are third world countries, so finances are an ongoing problem, and this is where the sponsorship and literature funds come to the fore.

Apart from direct financial assistance Greg and myself took six "Australian Big Books", fourteen "Twelve and Twelve" and other pamphlets in different languages in our luggage. A local member, Phylis, known to many in Australia told of how an Indigenous Fijian member burst into tears when reading the Twelve Steps in her own language. Many at the meetings were also impressed that Australia has used its own members stories in the Big Book and were taking this concept back to their homelands.

On a personal note my time in this role has made me very aware how fortunate we in Australia are in regards to AA. It is virtually on tap, we can go to any state, city or even (mostly) towns and find meetings whereas most in the Asia Oceania Zone have very limited access to meetings and literature. Barriers such as culture, language and lack of structure are huge obstacles for many of these people seeking answers to their struggle with their alcoholism. The Brown Paper Bag Appeal is a great aid to assisting these folk.

Participants for the OASM were 14 delegates from 9 Countries along with the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. The Manager of GSO New York and the International desk Secretary. There was also an interpreter from Japan and eleven very keen observers.

Finally, I once again participated in the Far Western AA District's annual Tag-A-long, I was honored to be the MC for the two very successful "Professional Awareness Luncheons" held in Roma and Emerald. There were thirty-two allied health guests at the Roma event which has a small population of only 6500 (includes surrounding districts) and twenty-four at Emerald. Twenty AA members were also in attendance at both these events. The use of the "Cochrane Video" was a great resource in these events.

Yours in Service  
Brian Ferguson

First Term World service Delegate

(See Attached map of the Asia Oceania Zone showing size of the Region we assist)

