



THE
GENERAL
SERVICE
REPRESENTATIVE
HANDBOOK

BC/YUKON AREA 79

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This booklet was the idea of another Area in the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous and originated as a result of an Assembly Action taken by that Area.

With permission, it has been reproduced and distributed by the BC/Yukon Area General Service Committee.. It is in no way meant to replace the Alcoholics Anonymous Service Manual; it should be used only as a guide by the General Service Representative (GSR) or any interested member of Alcoholics Anonymous. It is hoped this booklet will give a more in-depth idea of the duties of the GSR and the Service Structure of AA in Canada and the United States. As well, we hope it will give the GSR or interested AA member an incentive to study and better understand the AA Service Manual and its Twelve Concepts for World Service.

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Welcome to Alcoholics Anonymous General Service!

As an elected General Service Representative (GSR) you now represent the voice of your AA Group's conscience to the AA General Service Conference (Conference) held in New York each April. Through your elected District Committee Member (DCM) and the BC/Yukon Area Delegate (Delegate), you will become the two-way link between your Group and the world of AA as a whole. As such, you and your fellow GSRs all over the world have become the key to Unity in AA.

To further strengthen the two-way link between your Group, The General Service Office (GSO), and the Conference, being an active GSR will help build a strong service structure and you will learn much more about General Service, which is based on:

The Three Legacies

- 1. Recovery** – As outlined in the Twelve Steps.
- 2. Unity** – As outlined in the Twelve Traditions.
- 3. Service** – As outlined in the all-important AA Service Manual and the Twelve Concepts for World Service. Service includes anything to help Alcoholics, e.g. – make coffee, clean up, serve your Home Group, 12th Step calls, etc. “General Service” applies to all kinds of activities within the Conference Structure carried on by Area Committees, Assemblies, Delegates, Trustees and GSO Staff. Usually the Service affects the Fellowship as a whole.

Also, as a GSR:

- a) You will have your name listed in the AA Directory for Canada as your Group's official contact, if you wish to do so.
- b) You will take care to protect the rights of individual AA members to have their opinions acknowledged and heard no matter how much in the minority those opinions may be.
- c) You will have the opportunity to give back to AA a little of what you have so gratefully received from AA; not only your daily sobriety but also the new way of living life and the new circle of friends you have.

- d) By your active presence in General Service you will be helping to insure that AA will still be here for future generations.

Duties Of The GSR

Now, let us focus on the duties of the GSR in a bit more detail. The GSRs has the responsibility of:

- Linking their Group with AA as a whole
- Representing the voice of the Group's Conscience
- Reporting their Group's Conscience to the DCM and the Delegate
- Bringing the Area and District suggestions, as well as the Conference Advisory Actions, back to their Group

In this sense, the Conference can feel it is acting for AA as a whole, only to the extent that the GSR keeps the Group informed and can gather and communicate the Group Conscience.

In general, there are three areas in which the GSRs have their major responsibilities, each of which involves a two-way relationship:

- a) The Group
- b) The District
- c) The General Service Area

Every AA Group has a voice at the Conference if it has an active GSR.

The Group Business Meeting

This meeting is usually held monthly to discuss Group issues and other aspects of AA that may or may not affect AA as a whole. Individual members are encouraged to attend and voice their opinions and vote on Group matters. It is usually conducted by the Group GSR and/or the Group Secretary.

Reports To Those You Serve

When giving reports at your Group, District or Area, it is probably best to be as brief as possible and avoid "trivial outside issues." Topics or issues

you might present to the District are:

- Who the Group Secretary is, who the Alternate GSR is
- What the average attendance is at your Group meetings
- How your Group divides its funds for distribution
- Any problems the Group may be facing – e.g., having to move, court referrals, dual addiction members, etc.
- Announce upcoming events; highlight the business portion of the meeting; try to report on things you think the Group can relate to, be interested or involved in
- If there is an issue coming up that will require your vote, try to explain it as simply, fully, and as fairly as possible so your Group can arrive at an “informed group conscience”
- When reporting to your Group, again, please keep it brief
- With a bit of practice, you can probably work in a piece of information that will provoke a question and get the discussion started

You may not personally agree with your Group’s conscience but if you have done your job correctly and discussed it enough, you will have no problem in abiding by it and can rightly feel good about it.

Probably the most important thing that we can do as GSRs is to become an “informed GSR”. This serves both ourselves and AA as a whole. The more you know, the more you can share from personal experience and the more credible your opinion will become.

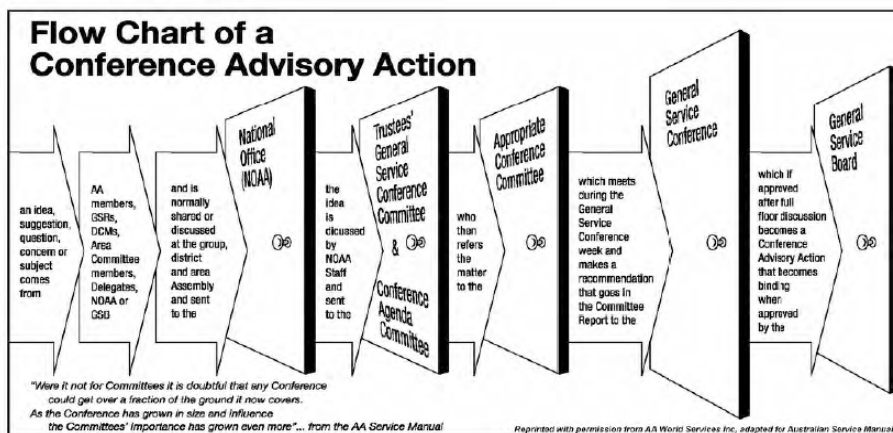
Some Vital Aids

Some of the AA reading material seems tough at first but study it, discuss it, and see how it relates to other parts of the program. It will be a surprise to you when it comes alive and becomes a part of you and your message. All the AA literature is important but the material that is most directly related to Service includes:

- The AA Service Manual and the Twelve Concepts for World Service (Book)
- The AA Group (Pamphlet)
- AA Comes of Age (Book)
- AA Tradition – How it Developed (Pamphlet)
- Self-Support– Where Money and Spirituality Mix (Pamphlet)

- Circles of Love and Service (Pamphlet)
- Inside AA (Pamphlet)
- The GSR (Pamphlet)
- 12 Traditions Illustrated (Pamphlet)
- 12 Concepts Illustrated (Pamphlet)
- Area 79 Web Site – www.bcyukonaa.org , there is a “public site” and a “Trusted Servant Site”. Contact your DCM for login.
- The Area 79 newsletter “Grassroots” is available online on the “public site”. The password is “aagrassroots”.

ADVISORY ACTION FLOW CHART



KEY: GSR = General Service Representative; DCM = District Committee Member; NOAA = National Office of AA Australia; GSB = General Service Board

See also AA Guidelines GL-27: "Process for Changing AA Service Documents" and GL-28 "How a Conference Topic is Developed"

Figure 6 Conference Advisory Action Flow Chart

Videos and audio books are also available through the BC/Yukon Area Committee or direct from GSO.

Using these aids you will get a good overview of the Service picture as well as enough detail to deal with specifics.

Leadership starts with **Informed Group Members** and GSRs who become the DCMs, the Area Officers, the Delegates and Trustees of Alcoholics Anonymous.

In order to fulfill the responsibility that our group has given us, we must become as knowledgeable as possible. If we are willing to learn and keep an open mind, we soon find that we are the ones who benefit.

We find that no one need have difficulty with the three legacies.

Willingness, honesty and open-mindedness are the essentials of recovery, unity and service.

Taking Part In Our Personal And Group Sobriety

You will find it advantageous to attend all sharing sessions, workshops, seminars, etc. to get new ideas, knowledge or clarification of a principle. These include (whenever possible):

- a) Other District and Area workshops, and/or sharing sessions
- b) Local unity or fellowship events
- c) Area and Regional Service Assemblies, i.e. W.R.A.A.S.A., Pre-Conference Service Assembly, Regional Forums, etc.

Also, since rotation is an essential part of Service, it is important to have an Alternate GSR to learn something about the job before they assume the responsibilities that go with it. Having someone in the wings who is prepared will give you the freedom to go into and experience other levels of Service without feeling your job is unfinished because there is no one to take your place.

Again, **participation** is the key that enables us to:

- Become part of, instead of apart from;
- To learn more and feel better about ourselves;
- To take on a job and do it to the best of our ability;
- To become responsible and reliable which is a large part of what recovery is about.

Involvement In General Service

In regards to the relationship of the GSR to General Service, the Service Manual states:

“...General Service grew to fill a need beyond the reach of the individual, Group and Intergroup. Today, the term General Service is applied to all kinds of activities within the Conference Structure, carried on by Area Committees, Delegates, Trustees and GSO Staff. Usually the Services affect the Fellowship as a whole. Almost always, they are a part of AA’s distinctive UNITY, which allows the movement to function so well...” also, *“...originally, the Services were performed by AA’s General Service Office.”* Today, it means the work of anyone in the General Service Structure, the GSR, the DCM, the Delegate, etc.

Putting It All Together

Now, if you start doing all the things indicated above you will be active and find yourself attending many meetings. Some of them may seem boring to you. This is not unusual. The main reason for this is that, in a sense, you are a newcomer. (Remember how strange and confusing some of those first AA meetings you attended seemed.) Keep this in mind and it may make it easier.

You may not know any of the people there, nor understand what is being discussed – possibly just as it was at your first AA meeting. But, similarly, everyone there was once a newcomer and knows what it feels like. Talk to people, ask questions, find out how to get information. You’ll find that people involved in Service are a friendly bunch and love to take time to share and explain this very important part of Recovery with new people. Service work takes every bit as much energy as learning and working the Steps and is probably more difficult to explain and share with the general member until we have told enough people, not currently in Service, what it is really all about. **Participating in an Informed Group Conscience** (the only recognized authority in AA) is a normal part of recovery for all of us.

It will seem frustrating at times because you may think that nobody in the Group is listening or cares about what you have to say. Then, sometime you will find yourself amazed by being asked a question relating to something you thought had been dealt with and finished long ago. Or, your Group asks you to deal with a question in terms of how it relates to the Traditions. These times are a part of what makes it all rewarding

in the end. So, keep coming back, ask questions until you feel you have, or know how and where to get, an answer. Remember, no matter how you feel, there are absolutely NO dumb questions asked in AA – every question deserves a legitimate answer.

Your “Home” Group

The relationships of the GSRs with their Home Groups are probably the most important ones. The best way to start to become effective is to attend the meetings, specifically the business meetings, of your Home Group on a regular basis. This gets you acquainted with the members of the Group and their ideas, and also gives you some credibility when you make suggestions or reports.

People in General Service – particularly GSRs – are generally known as the “Guardians of Our Traditions.”

If your Group has a steering committee, the GSR should be an active part of it, giving regular reports to the Group on service activities and brief reports on important issues discussed at the District or Area meetings.

Just as a personal inventory helps us to maintain a healthy sobriety by revealing our strengths and weaknesses, so an “annual Group inventory” can flag areas that may need some focused Group attention. A good starting format for this may be found in the pamphlet “The AA Group.”

The General Service Office has a publication, Box 459, which is produced bimonthly and contains many articles of general interest to the entire Fellowship. Since the GSR is the listed mail contact for the Group at GSO, they automatically receive a copy. It should be read and then shared with your Group. For a nominal cost, the Group may subscribe to Box 459 as an added resource of information and topics of discussion. It is also available free to all members on the GSO website at: www.aa.org.

Only by attending Group meetings can we “stay informed” of our Group affairs.

Another area in which the GSR can be of service to the Group is to encourage “self-support”. It is suggested that once basic group expenses

have been taken care of (rent, refreshments, A.A. literature, local meeting lists, G.S.R. travel expenses to attend service functions), and a “prudent reserve” has been set aside to cover any emergency contingencies that might arise, the Group may decide to further carry the message by sending contributions to the local District, the Area, the General Service Office, and possibly a local Intergroup or Central Office.

Through your GSR, your Group is strengthened by the shared experience of other Groups in Canada and the U.S., just as your own sobriety is strengthened by the shared experience of other AA members.

“The strength of our whole AA Service Structure starts with the Group and with the General Service Representative (GSR) the Group elects. I cannot emphasize too strongly the GSR’s importance.....” – Bill W.

The Districts

Usually, the Area gatherings (Quarterlies and Assemblies) are too large and have preset agendas so specific Group problems cannot be addressed efficiently. So, the Area is further divided into “Districts”, ideally comprised of six (6) to twenty (20) Groups. Our Area, the BC/Yukon is currently divided into 47 Districts. This organizational structure may seem complicated and overly structured at first. However, it is really in accord with our principle of “least possible organization”. It has been tested over time as providing the most balanced way to arrive at the only recognized authority in AA, expressed in an “informed Group Conscience” which must be communicated to others when they deal with the issues affecting AA as a whole.

District Meetings

These are meetings of the DCM and all GSRs of any given District or Districts in the Area. Usually held monthly, the GSRs discuss those matters that may affect their Groups, District or Area. There are really few completely new and original problems that a Group may encounter so our continuity of experience is extremely valuable. The GSRs can share with their fellow GSRs at the District meetings, how they dealt with such matters and with what success. Their experience may be helpful to

another Group. Also, at the District meetings, agenda items that require action at the next Assembly can be discussed. This is kind of a middle ground where such discussion makes us better informed and able to take back to our Group any business needing a “Group Conscience” decision. We can then take this information back to the Assembly to make our voice heard.

The District Committee Member

Each District elects a District Committee Member (DCM) who conducts the District meetings and represents the conscience of the groups via the GSRs. The DCM is a voting member of the Area Committee at the Quarterlies and Assemblies. The primary purpose of the DCM is to stimulate as many Groups as possible to be an active part of AA as a whole through representation and participation.

The Areas

Most General Service Areas follow the broad geographical division of a province or state. Our Area (79) is made up of primarily made up of British Columbia and the Yukon. Due to geographical barriers, there are Groups in Washington State that are a part of our Area. Also, for the same reason, parts of the Northeast and Southeast B.C. are in the Alberta/NWT/Nunavut (Area 78). Each Area is also identified by a number, e.g. – BC/Yukon – Area 79; Saskatchewan – Area 91; Manitoba – Area 80.

The Area Structure

Each Area acts as a unit at Area Assemblies which are held periodically throughout the year to conduct any business that may affect the entire Area, such as:

1. Informing the Delegate as to the “sense” of the Area (on certain issues);
2. Receiving from the Delegate, the Advisory Actions of the General Service Conference;
3. Conducting workshops that deal with various aspects of the “Service Message”.

Area Meetings

Area Business (An Overview)

Currently the BC/Yukon Area 79 holds four meetings per year. The first one held in January is a Quarterly, the second in April is a Pre-Conference Service Assembly, the third held in July is another Quarterly and the fourth held in October is a Voting Assembly for motions. The last Assembly of the second year term a Voting and Election Assembly.

The Area Officers meet monthly for their General Service Committee monthly meetings. Four times a year the Area Officers and the DCMs meet at the Quarterlies and Assemblies as an Area Committee. At Quarterlies, Area Officers and DCM's have a vote but all are encouraged to attend and all have a voice. At the Assemblies all AA members are encouraged to attend as well with a voice and become familiar with the issues to be discussed. The GSRs or alternates, DCMs or alternates and Area Officers are eligible to vote and present a motion. The main activities at the Assemblies usually center around the Delegate and the Area concerns, the Conference, sharing sessions and/or workshops.

Remember, if a Group has an active GSR, it is connected to the rest of the Fellowship and is able to participate in the Group Conscience of AA as a whole.

The GSR's Voice And Vote At Area Meetings

At the Assemblies, the GSRs are voting members and collectively form a majority. They should make every effort to attend the Assemblies on behalf of their Group and it is the responsibility of the Group to pay the GSRs expenses to attend each Assembly. All Area matters that either have an effect on the Area itself or a direct impact on all the Groups, whether raised on the floor of an Assembly or coming out of the Area Committee process, are presented and ratified, rejected or revised by the Assembly.

We become informed about what is going on by attending these meetings and discussing issues with others who are in a good position to have experience and information to share on most issues. In this way, the Assemblies meet their purpose in strengthening AA as a whole by carrying

our message in the best way possible for our Area.

Again, participation by the GSR is the key link in the vital chain in the necessary two-way communication between the members of their Group and the larger structure of AA.

Remember, at the Quarterlies, only the DCMs and Area Officers have a vote but the GSRs are welcome to attend and are strongly encouraged to do so. At the Area Assembly, the GSRs do have a vote and are encouraged to participate as much as possible.

Quarterlies

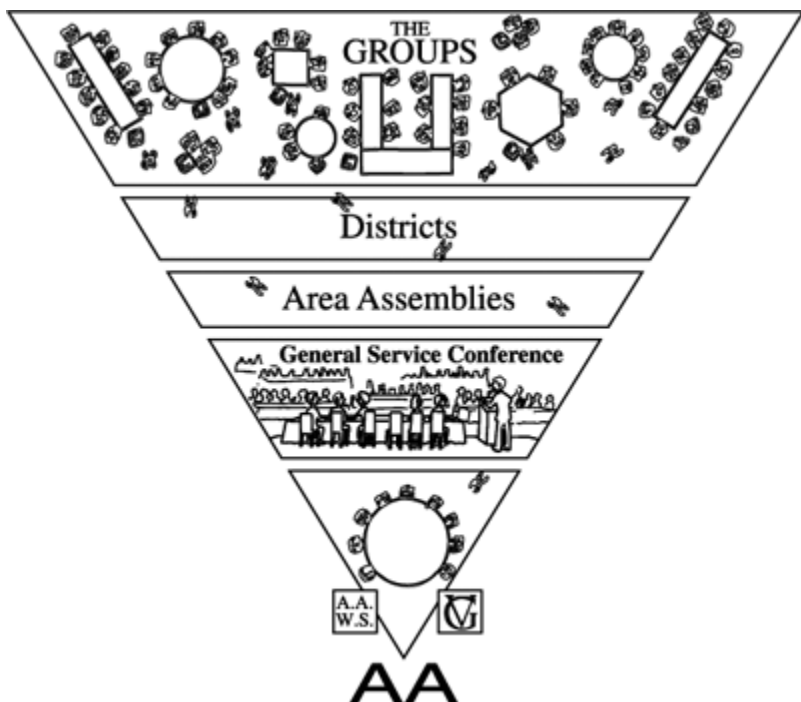
These meetings are held twice per year, throughout the Area in various locations, and are open to all GSRs, DCMs, Area Officers, and any interested AA members who wish to attend.

Pre-Conference Service Assembly

This is a meeting of all GSRs, DCMs, Area Officers and any interested AA members. At this meeting the Delegate can receive an “informed conscience” based on discussion with those present regarding the Agenda items for the General Service Conference.

Area Assembly (Voting Assembly)

These meetings are attended by all GSRs, DCMs and Area Officers, and any interested AA members and are held annually in October to discuss and vote on all Area issues on the Agenda. Every second year the Assembly elects a new Area Delegate and new Area Officers.



The Area Delegate

Each General Service Area elects a Delegate to represent them at the annual General Service Conference in New York where the broad issues of A.A. as a whole are addressed. There is a total of 93 Delegates (Areas) throughout Canada and the U.S. They are elected for a two (2) year term with about half of them elected each year to provide both continuity and a smooth flow of rotation (*see AA Service Manual for the Election Schedule for Delegates*). Remember that the General Service Conference only deals in issues affecting A.A. in Canada and the U.S. and like **GSRs, DCMs and Trustees, Area Delegates are never paid for AA Service.**

By attending Area Quarterly and Area Assembly meetings, we become more familiar with things happening in the larger world of AA – in our Area, through reports given by our Area Officers and through the various DCM District reports. It is quite likely that we will hear some ideas that can be used to better our own District or Group.

It is a good idea to always take a notepad or notebook to these meetings (Group, District, Area) and use it. It seems our memories become more

selective but less vivid than our imaginations so we need to take notes from a more reliable source. Also, the discipline involved in taking notes makes us pay more attention to what is going on. This is a skill that takes some practice to develop.

Serving on committees at all levels of AA will teach you a great deal more about the workings of AA. All phases of AA are based on years of experience, which we have found to be our best teacher.

The General Service Conference

The culmination of much of this activity occurs in April of each year when the Delegate we elect to represent our Area attends the week-long General Service Conference in New York. The Conference represents a vast pool of AA experience gathered for decades from AA's all over the world. Every AA Group can share its experience with other Groups through its Area Delegate to the Conference.

All parts of our Fellowship, Group meetings, committees, offices, Conferences, and Group jobs have one joint purpose: to help that one newcomer who has a drinking problem. But, in order for AA to run itself, we have to have a system for finding out how AA as a whole feels about its world affairs, and how it wants to operate. We need constant, honest communications from one part of AA to every other, furnishing a wide cross-section of AA experience. The General Service Conference makes that possible.

The Election Assembly

In October of each even numbered-year, we hold an Election Assembly to choose our "Trusted Servants" in the BC/Yukon Area who serve a two year term starting the following January 1st. This is possibly one of the most important things that you will participate in as A GSR and one of the reasons to take your own two year commitment very seriously.

If you have been actively participating as outlined above during your term, you will develop some perspective to enable you to make decisions about who of those standing for a given office would best serve the Area with sound AA spiritual principle in mind.

Our Area uses the basic format of “**The Third Legacy Procedure**” as suggested in the Service Manual for the election process.

Election Of Officers (7)

Elections take place every second year at a Voting and Election Assembly, also known as The Fall Assembly, it is usually held in October. At the Election Assembly we choose the “trusted Servants” for the Area, who serve a two year term. The following Officers are elected at this time, with their duties briefly described:

Delegate: The Delegate is mainly concerned with maintaining the vital two-way communication between the Area and the General Service Conference, as well as other duties such as participating in workshops or working with Public Information (P.I.) and other special activity committees (Corrections, Grapevine, etc.). At the Conference, the delegates consider and vote on all questions, not as representatives of particular Areas, but as members of the Conference whose duty it is to act in the best interests of AA as a whole.

Alternate Delegate: The Alternate serves as an assistant to the Delegate and will often give the “Delegate’s Report” when the Delegate is unable to attend a certain function. In Area 79, the Literature Committee is usually chaired by the Alternate Delegate.

Chairperson: The Chair is responsible for scheduling the Agenda for the Quarterlies, Assemblies and Area Committee meetings and to preside over these meetings. The Area Chairperson is sometimes referred to as the “stay-at-home” Delegate.

Alternate Chairperson: The Alternate works with the Chairperson; assumes the duties of the Chairperson as needed or when they are unable to serve. In Area 79 the Grapevine Committee is usually chaired by the Alternate Chair.

Treasurer: The Treasurer records and reports all group contributions and other sources of revenue as well as disbursements of funds. He or she

participates heavily in the preparation of the annual budget for the Area. In Area 79 the Finance Committee is usually chaired by the Treasurer.

Secretary: The Secretary's responsibilities are to record the minutes of the Quarterlies, Assemblies and Area Committee meetings and to see that the minutes are distributed to the DCMs and Area Officers; and are printed in the Area Newsletter (Grassroots Forum) for interested members of Area 79.

Registrar: Compiles and records all registered Groups and their respective contacts (GSRs). Keeps such list up to date and provides current contact lists to the Area Chair, Area Secretary and the Area Grassroots Chair.

There are other Committee Officers on the Area Committee who are appointed by the Area Chairperson who asks for interested members to submit a service resume following the election assembly, and determines the appointments with the assistance of a subcommittee that is formed for this purpose. The appointed committee officers are responsible to the Committee and the Area for special activities and are ratified by the voting members at the first Quarterly meeting of the new Committee's rotation.

Here is a brief description of their responsibilities:

Public Information (P.I.) Chairperson: Heads up Area P.I. Functions keeping in mind the Area P.I. Committee's purpose is to assist and suggest to the District P.I. Committees, not replace them. The PI Chair also oversees the Area website with the support of an appointed volunteer **Web Master** and other volunteers.

Cooperation With The Professional Community (C.P.C.) Chairperson: Similar to P.I. responsibilities with purpose of carrying the AA message to the professional (i.e. doctors, lawyers, etc.) who may be dealing with the alcoholic who still suffers.

Grapevine Chairperson: Is responsible for increasing the awareness and availability of the Grapevine magazine and materials to individuals, Groups and Districts throughout the Area and upon request will give a "Grapevine Display" at any AA function.

Literature Chairperson: Has the responsibility of having an “AA Literature Display” at AA functions when required and of informing individuals, Groups and Districts what literature is available to them from GSO.

Archives Chairperson: Is responsible for the AA memorabilia collected from individual AA members, Groups and Districts throughout the Area. The duties may include the indexing, preserving and sorting, and exhibiting of original and reproduced local, national and international AA material. It may include magazine and newspaper articles, tape recordings, oral histories of older AA members, Group and District histories, etc. A volunteer **Archivist** is also appointed to help with the day to day running of the Archives office.

Corrections Chairperson: Heads up the Corrections Committee whose responsibilities are to work with Districts, Groups, and members to carry the AA message to alcoholics inside Correctional Facilities. Including assisting with that arrangement of local AA contacts for members on the “inside” who are being released.

Treatment /Special Needs/ Accessibilities Committee Chairperson: Heads up the whose purpose is to coordinate the work of individual AA members and Groups who are interested in carrying our message of recovery to alcoholics in treatment facilities, and to set up means of “bridging the gap” from the facility to the AA Community. In Area 79 this committee is also responsible for the work related to serving members with Special Needs and/or Accessibility concerns.

Remote Communities Chairperson: Heads up the Remote Communities Committee whose purpose is to address the needs of Area 79’s Remote Communities, including communicating on a regular basis with remote communities and members. Concerns, challenges and ideas are brought to the standing Committee who recommend actions pertaining to better serving remote communities and framing policy regarding the Remote Communities Committee.

Grassroots Chairperson: Is responsible for the Area Newsletter. Heads up the committee responsible for the format, content and distribution of the Grassroots Forum newsletter.

The Regions

The map in the Service Manual shows Canada and the U.S. divided into eight (8) Regions.

Two Regions in Canada

1. Western Canada – BC/Yukon, Alberta/NWT/Nunavut, Saskatchewan, Manitoba;
2. Eastern Canada – Ontario, Quebec, Nunavut, Maritimes, Newfoundland and Labrador.

Six Regions in the U.S.

1. Pacific (includes Alaska and Hawaii)
2. Southwest
3. West Central
4. East Central
5. Northeast
6. Southeast (includes Bahamas, Bermuda, etc.)



Regional Trustee

Each Region nominates a group of qualified candidates from which a “Regional Trustee” is elected (*see AA Service Manual*) who serves a four year term on the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous. Thus, the Western Canada Region (covering four Provinces and 3 Territories) has one Trustee. The terms of the Trustees are staggered and balanced geographically so that two Trustees are elected each year which provides both continuity and a smooth flow of rotation (*see AA Service Manual for rotation schedule*).

Regional Forums

These Service Assemblies are held on every even-numbered year in the Western Canada Region (i.e. every two years) and are rotated each time among the four Areas in the Region. This means that the BC/Yukon Area would host a Regional Forum every eight years. They are usually attended by service-minded or interested members of AA in order that they may meet and ask questions of GSO Staff members, Trustees, Grapevine Directors and Staff, etc.

Pacific Northwest Conference (P.N.W.C.)

This Conference is usually referred to as the “Granddaddy of All Conferences” in Canada and the U.S. It is an annual event and is usually held on the first weekend of July. It is hosted on a rotational basis by one of the four (4) Areas in the U.S. Northwest: Washington East, Western Washington, Oregon or Idaho. Area 79 has participated in, and even hosted this Conference.

A.A. Worldwide

Alcoholics Anonymous is a worldwide organization. There are General Service Offices in many countries, each of which is autonomous. No attempt is made to have the General Service Office (Canada & U.S.) in New York be the “world capital” of A.A. The New York office is available to share experience, strength and hope with offices in other countries, mainly because it has been in existence for a much longer period of time. Every two years a World

Service Conference is held with one Delegate from Canada and one Delegate from the U.S. attending. This Conference serves as the way that Alcoholics Anonymous establishes and maintains its worldwide communications links.

THE 7th TRADITION

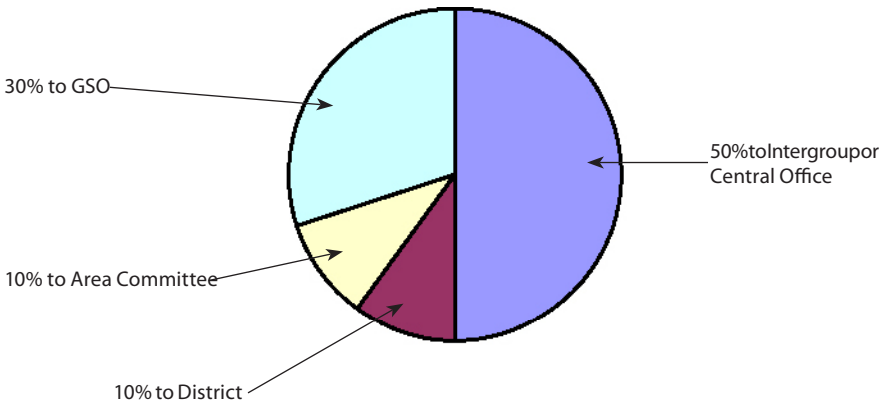
“Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix”

To be “fully self-supporting” requires a commitment on the part of each member to support, through his or her “Home group”, the services provided by the local Intergroup or Central Office, by the District, by the Area and by G.S.O., so that these “entities” might continue to carry out their invaluable Twelfth Step work beyond the Group level. To support A.A.’s essential Services, the General Service Conference suggests individual Groups adopt a specific contribution plan suitable to their particular situation. Such a plan may work like this:

- **First**, take care of the basic Group expenses (rent, coffee, A.A. Literature, GSR travel to service events, a prudent reserve)
- **Then**, divide the remaining funds according to whatever “percentage plan” suits your local needs.

As with all decisions in AA, the best answer will come from the informed Group Conscious of the members. Following please find some examples that you may want to use during your discussion to determine what is most appropriate for your Group, and a blank graph for you to use.

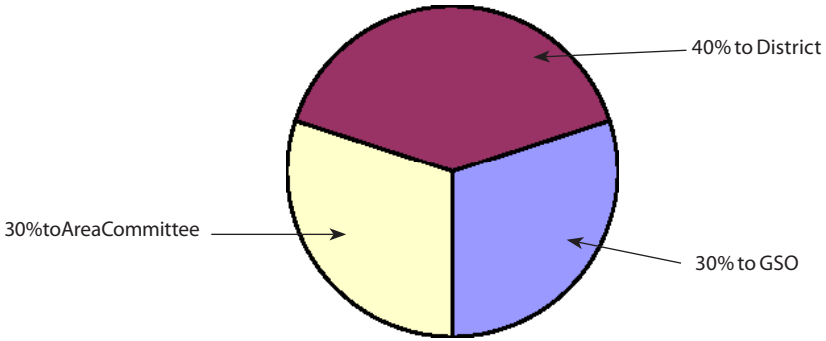
Examples of Group Contributions to A.A. Four Service Entities



Some communities in Area 79 have an Intergroup or Central Office and others do not. The example above could be an option for Groups that do.

If your Group is not served by an Intergroup or Central Office the example below could be an option for your Group.

Examples of Group Contributions to A.A. Three Service Entities



Whatever percentages are in accordance with your Group Conscience.

Remember, the above percentage plans are suggested as guidelines only; it is up to the Group Conscience of each individual Group what “percentage plan” they will use to distribute “Group Funds” to each of the Service “entities”.

What is your Groups’ Conscience?

District	_____ %
Area Committee	_____ %
G.S.O.	_____ %
Intergroup/Central Office	_____ %
Other A.A. Service Entities	_____ %

It is also extremely important to remember that Group contributions must be sent to each “service entity”. Do not send all of your Group’s contributions to the local Central Office or Intergroup and expect them to distribute your Group’s monies to G.S.O., the Area or the District. It is up to the individual Group to distribute their own “funds”. The amount of your contribution is secondary to the spiritual connection that unites AA Groups around the world. The amount of the contributions collected to be disbursed is not as important as it is for your Group to contribute on a regular basis (monthly, bimonthly, quarterly etc.).

Please see below for information regarding how and where to send your contributions, and share this information with your Group Treasurer and Group Secretary.

INTERGROUP/CENTRAL OFFICE: To send contributions to your local Central Office or Intergroup, see your DCM (District Committee Member) or your Group’s IGR (Intergroup Representative) for the correct mailing address.

DISTRICT: Contact your DCM for information regarding how and where to contribute to your District.

G.S.O. (General Service Office) and General Service Board:

Make cheque payable to: General Service Board and mail to:

General Service Office

P.O. Box 459

Grand Central Station

New York, N.Y. 10163

OR try the new “contributions online” option available at www.aa.org

BC/Yukon Area 79:

Make cheque payable to: BC/Yukon Area 79 and mail to

BC/Yukon Area 79

PO Box 42114

Vancouver, BC, V5S 4R5

Please include your Group Number on the cheque so it can be correctly allocated.

A GLOSSARY OF COMMON AA TERMS

ALTERNATE: A General Service worker who, according to local autonomy and needs, is elected at the Group, District or Area level to participate with, assist in, and in appropriate circumstances, assume the duties of a principle office holder (i.e. Alternate GSR, Alternate DCM, Alternate Delegate).

ARCHIVES: A collection of AA memorabilia, usually maintained under the direction of the Archives Chairperson.

AREA: A geographical division within a province or state. Normally there is one Area for each province or state, except where there may be a highly populated province or state, which may then have more than one Area. The province of Ontario has four Areas, the state of California has six Areas. In Canada and the U.S. there are a total of 93 Areas. Canada has 14 Areas and the U.S. has 78 Areas.

AREA COMMITTEE: A Committee within an Area that is made up of the District Committee Members (DCMs) from each District within the Area and the Area Officers. The Area Committee is a vital AA Service link in that through its members it is close to District and local affairs. It may also function as a research, study and advisory group to the Area Assembly.

AREA ASSEMBLY: A periodic meeting of the Group General Service Representatives (GSRs), the District Committee Members (DCMs) and the Area Officers. The Assembly is a basic unit of the General Service Structure and conducts or helps coordinate most of the AA business for the Area.

BOX 459: A bimonthly publication from GSO which contains “News and Notes from the General Service Office of AA.” It includes such items of interest as : a calendar of important local, national, and international events; questions and problems of GSO about AA; vignettes and anecdotes

from AA people; and other information of interest to the dedicated AA member.

GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE: The meeting held each April in New York of the elected Area Delegates, the Board of Trustees, the Directors and Staff of A.A.W.S. Inc. and the Directors and Staff of the Grapevine Inc. This meeting keeps the individual AA member and GSO in close supportive contact with each other through the General Service chain. This “chain” is made up of several links: the AA Group, the GSR, the DCM, the Delegate to the Conference; and then back to the membership.

DELEGATE: An AA member of an Area Assembly who is elected by the GSRs, DCMs and Officers of an Area to represent them at the General Service Conference. It is through the Delegate that the AA Group passes along its informed Group Conscience to the Conference and receives back the results (advisory actions) of the Conference. Each Area is designated as either an “even panel” or an “odd panel”. The BC/Yukon Area is an “odd panel” which means that: the Delegate who has been elected in October of an even year, to begin serving a two (2) year term (2001-02), January 1, 2001, will be referred to as a “Panel 51 Delegate”. The Delegate serving previously for the 1999-2000 term was referred to as a “Panel 49 Delegate”.

DISTRICT: A geographic sub-division within a General Service Area created in order to come closer to the individual AA Groups. It is usually comprised of six (6) to twenty (20) Groups in terms of the ability of the DCMs to communicate meaningfully with all of the groups.

DISTRICT COMMITTEE MEMBER (DCM): A Group GSR who has been elected by his fellow GSRs within a District to represent them on the Area Committee. The DCM is also responsible for coordinating and assisting the efforts of the other GSRs in their District.

GENERAL SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE: (GSR): An AA member who is elected by the Group to present that Group's opinion in discussions at the District and Area levels. They keep the Group as fully informed as possible of important decision, discussions and events occurring within AA at the District, Area, Regional, National and International levels. They are further responsible for choosing the best possible AA representatives to serve the whole Fellowship, by voting for the DCMs, Area Officers and the Delegate to the General Service Conference.

REGION: A grouping of several provinces or states from which a "Regional Trustee" comes to the Board of Trustees. There are eight (8) Regions represented in the Conference. Two (2) in Canada, six (6) in the U.S. The Western Canada Region is comprised of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta/NWT and BC/Yukon.

THIRD LEGACY: Recovery and Unity are our first two legacies, handed down to us by the founder of Alcoholics Anonymous. Our Third Legacy is Service - the sum total of all AA Services from the Twelfth Step Call to AA's coast-to-coast and worldwide activities.

THIRD LEGACY PROCEDURE: A voting procedure unique to AA and designed to help some of the negative aspects of elections such as personality clashes, ego battles, dissatisfied minorities. (*See "What is the Conference?" AA Service Manual*)

TRUSTEE: The usual term for a member of AA's General Service Board of Trustees. Currently the Board is made up of twenty-one (21) Trustees, including the Regional Trustees. Seven (7) are "Class A Trustees" (non-alcoholic) and fourteen (14) are "Class B Trustees" (alcoholic).

TWELVE CONCEPTS: As the Twelve Steps are to personal Recovery and the Twelve Traditions are to the preservation of Unity of Alcoholics Anonymous, so are the Twelve Concepts to General Service. They are a set of principles and practices intended to preserve Service to AA and the still suffering alcoholic. They also protect the structure by which such service is made possible, (See *“The Twelve Concepts for World Service”* in the back portion of the *AA Service Manual*) and are introduced as follows:

“The Concepts carefully delineate those important Traditions, customs, relationships and legal arrangements that weld the General Service Board into a working harmony with the primary committees and with its corporate arms of active Service -- AA World Services Inc. (A.A.W.S. Inc) and the Grapevine Inc. This is the substance of the structural framework that governs the internal working situation of AA’s World Headquarters...”

ADDRESSES

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PO Box 42114
Vancouver, BC, V5S 4R5
www.bcyukonaa.org
Phone: 604-435-2181**

**General Service Office
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Grand Central Station
New York, N.Y. 10163
www.aa.org**

List of Revisions

DECEMBER 2004:

- 1) PAGE 18 - ADDED EMAIL ADDRESS
- 2) PAGE 19
 - A) NAME - NORTHERN REMOTE LIAISON CHANGED TO REMOTE COMMUNITIES.
 - B) ALT. NORTHERN REMOTE LIAISON DELETED

March 2005:

- 3) Page 13 - Examples of Group Contributions to A.A. Service Entities revised to reflect examples in current pamphlet "Self Support: Where money and Spirituality Mix."

October 2005:

- 4) Page 6 - Added description for appointed committee - Remote Communities

April 2006:

- 5) Page numbering revisions

September 2008:

- 6) Complete revision on format.

November 2008:

- 7) Page 9. Number of Districts changed from 46 to 47 to reflect addition of District 37, South Surrey and White Rock

July 2011:

- 8) Some Vital Aids section updated to reflect current materials
- 9) Your Home Group section info on GSR travel updated to include language from the Self Support pamphlet.
- 10) Area Meetings section reorganized and info updated to reflect current Quarterly and Assembly meetings.
- 11) Self Support section updated to reflect current materials
- 12) Info on sending contributions updates with current Area address, GSO contributions online added.

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NOTES