

OASEE Intergroup

World Service Business Conference 2014 Delegate Report

I attended the World Service Business Conference in Albuquerque, 28 April – 3 May as a delegate from OA South and East England. The theme of this year's Conference was Our Primary Purpose. I'm very grateful to be able to go for a second time to WSBC, to meet people from all over the world with anything from 2 to over 40 years in OA. It's a fantastic event and I would encourage others to do this service.

If anyone would like me to come to their meeting to talk about WSBC then please email me on worldservice@oasouthandeastengland.org.uk.
Jacqueline, WSBC Delegate, OASEE

This year there were 197 voting delegates in attendance including 12 people from Region 9; from Israel, Iceland, Sweden, Germany, Denmark, Greece, Italy, Ireland and three from Great Britain.

Region news

Each region trustee presented a report on events from this year and there were brief Q&A sessions with each. Many things of interest were mentioned, a few here:

- Sponsorship 'speed dating' – useful for workshops where available sponsors and sponsees each meet in a circle for a few minutes each to discuss possible working relationships.
- Region 3 has a cruise in March 2015, 7 days from Galveston Texas. There will be OA activities and meetings all week.
- Region 6 has a convention coming up in October 2014, just outside Boston.
- Region 7 funds people to go to a variety of different Intergroups so they can see what is and isn't working for other service bodies.
- Region 9 Assembly to be held in Greece, September 17-21, 2014

Finances

WSO have had to make certain cuts this financial year. For instance they made a decision not to participate in any professional tradeshows last year or this.

At the moment 49% of revenue comes from literature sales – both paper and electronic. And 23% is from contributions. WSO hold onto a prudent reserve of 4 months operating costs, which is currently \$672,450. Knowing nothing about finance, this seems somewhat high to me but I have been reassured by those who know more that it is quite normal. The prudent reserve is currently held in a very low risk investment fund.

A chunk of the operating costs go to employees at WSO, there are 13 full time and 1 part time staff. The staff retention there is around 12 years, with the Managing Director just passing her 20 year mark working for OA. A few of the employees were there all week at the Conference and they provide a very solid backbone for the Board of Trustees.

Convention

The next OA convention is on September 1st-4th 2016 in Boston, USA. The theme is Recovery: The Trail to Freedom.

The last one in Cleveland in 2013 attracted over 800 visitors. These conventions are traditionally every 3 years, but because of costs these are gradually being reduced to every 5 years. So after 2016, will be 2020 and then every 5 years after that. One day at a time!

Census

OA conducted a survey of members in 2013. This involved posting a form to each registered group and asking how many people on average attended that group. It's not the easiest job in the world, surveying an anonymous fellowship. Many of the addresses held by WSO are no longer valid so please make sure your meeting secretary address is up to date, as this is the address WSO use to contact groups.

The results of this showed a decline in OA membership since the last census. In 2008 there were 54,000 members worldwide, 41,500 in the USA and 12,500 outside that. In 2013 they showed 34,700 in the USA, 12,600 outside. For the first time they polled virtual meetings and showed 12,900 attending those. So a total of 60,200. Obviously it's not an exact science. The managing director said that the fact that some people go to multiple meetings was offset by so many meetings not responding to the census.

Elections

There were 3 uncontested Region Trustee elections, one uncontested Virtual Services Trustee election, and three candidates nominated for two General Service Trustee positions. The results were:

Region 1 - Margie Garman elected for a second term

Region 4 - Cindy Lenz elected for a first term

Region 7 - Barbara Gere elected for a second term

VST – Stephanie Doran elected for a second term

GST

Lonna Cohen – not elected

Karen Cornacchia elected for a second term

Janice Sullivan elected for a second current term

Consent Agenda

Many items were voted onto the consent agenda, these are voted on en masse and are usually things of a standard and procedural nature. The chair proposed 23 items to go on there, and any one objection removes a motion for it to be discussed separately. Six motions and bylaw amendments were removed from the consent agenda and the ones that remained and were adopted were: F, G, H, I, K, L, M, O, P, R, S, T, U and 7, 8, 9, 12. I have attached a document so you can see what all of these are about, mainly housekeeping to tidy up policy and bylaw paperwork.

New Literature Motions

Motion A-a – Unity with Diversity checklist

This was proposed to be on the www.oa.org website as a download only.

ADOPTED

Motion A-b Overeaters Anonymous Third Edition (Brown Book update)

This book comprises 40 new recovery stories to reflect better the diversity of food issues within OA. OA currently sells 3700 copies of this book a year. The new edition still keeps the original Rozanne's Story. This is where Our Invitation to You is from, and there were some small changes proposed to that.

ADOPTED – will be published around October 2014, an updated Our Invitation to You will also be made available.

Motion A-c Pamphlet – The Promises of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous

This pamphlet was to set out the promises of OA recovery as seen in our current 12 and 12.

FAILED

It was generally felt that this was too misleading and out of context. More OA wishes than Promises. Someone felt it was describing a spiritual experience of an educational variety, prescribing when we should feel what. Also the 12 and 12 is being revised so this pamphlet will be revisited when the new book has been approved. Delegates were asked to fill in forms explaining what they did and didn't like about the pamphlet for the Literature Committee to take into account.

New Business Motions

NBM A – survey on the topic of changing the name of the fellowship

There were four amendments to this motion so it was referred to the Reference Sub Committee*

It came back with the amendment that 75% of groups had to respond in the affirmative for them to go ahead with changing the name of OA

FAILED (only 4 people voted for this motion)

The \$8000 it would cost was thought to be inappropriate to spend at the moment. Especially as it's impossible to get that many respondents to the survey, usually surveys only attract about a 15% response rate. People spoke about how it's time to stop apologising for ourselves and our name and that we are starting to get name recognition. Also the survey is of course only internal so there's no way of knowing whether the name has stopped people coming into the rooms

NBM B Change the name of the Youth in OA committee to OA Young Persons Committee

Amendment proposed to Young people in OA or Young Adults in OA were both defeated.

ADOPTED

The committee wanted a name to reflect that they were concentrating on 18-30 year olds. Feeling that more people in this age range coming into the fellowship would be better equipped to help youths, which includes under 18s.

NBM C – Courtesy listing for OA loops

This was referred to the Reference Sub Committee* to tighten up the definitions.

ADOPTED

There were concerns that this meant that these OA loops were going to have the same status as a group, but is only a courtesy listing. Not compulsory to loops. These loops will happen anyway, so let's welcome them in.

NBM D – WSBC 7th tradition to go to the WSBC delegate fund

FAILED

There were many reasons for this, including if adopted OAs might not contribute individually to this fund as they do now so it might get less money than now. Also most applicants get funded at the moment, and those that don't often get funded by their region.

NBM E – removal of outdated OA 'creed' from the WSBC policy document

ADOPTED

NBM J – Removal of reference to O-anon

WITHDRAWN

Motion N – Removal of reference to Abstinence as a tool in WSBC policy

ADOPTED

NBM Q – Procedure of WSO to challenge WSBC delegate credentials

ADOPTED

Bylaw Amendments

BLA 1 – Remove reference to service bodies bylaws having to be up to date or they would not be allowed to attend WSBC

ADOPTED

BLA 2 – that a GST must have done region service before being a GST

FAILED

BLA 3, 4, 5

WITHDRAWN

BLA 6 - That we change the Steps and Traditions to make them gender neutral by replacing the words He, His and Him with God

Amendment proposed to strike He, His and Him and replace with Higher Power.

This was defeated as it was felt to be outside the scope of the original proposal

FAILED

Around 25% voted for this motion, feeling that it was more inclusive and more in keeping with modern times. More were against though.

BLA 10 – Suggesting that IGs hold annual elections for officers

ADOPTED

Seventh Tradition

This, over the three days of business, was \$4455.36.

***Reference Sub Committee description**

Reference sub committee is made up of 18 delegates who look at motions which need work. Motions can be referred because three or more amendments have been proposed, or if the motion does not have enough information so that the delegates can make an informed decision. They between them, and with the input of any delegates who wish to attend, make a final motion which can not then be amended when it reaches the conference floor. These RSC meetings are often early in the morning, at 7am or late into the night as they have to work around the core hours of the main business meetings, which are 8.30am - 5pm.

Committee

This year I will be serving on the Finance Committee. My task is to, with four other delegates, revise the Seventh Tradition Pamphlet. This was last updated in 2008. We will make our suggestions to the Board of Trustees as this pamphlet is Board approved rather than Conference approved.

When the changes have been agreed upon, we will be updating the Translatable Pamphlet which is one sheet which goes to non English speaking service bodies so they can simply translate the most salient points.

Non Business business...

Other than the Business meetings there are many OA meetings (3 a day) and 4 workshops during the week. These are some things I found inspiring and interesting...

- Several Trustees shared that they still go to 3 or more meetings a week, often after over 30 years in OA.
- One of the tools is not a hammer.
- If I have a problem with you, *that* problem is with me.
- Teresa, the outgoing Region 4 Trustee shared that she puts her OA service history at Region and the BOT on her CV. I found this really inspiring, to not be ashamed and have an 'in OA' life and a separate 'out of OA' life.
- Higher Power connection is like an archer letting go of bow to fire an arrow. I can let go of the arrow and know I've done what I can and leave the results up to my higher power. Or I can let go of the bow and run after the arrow trying to change its direction.
- Don't peer into the wreckage of your future.
- My job is not to worry about how my message is being received, just to carry it to the compulsive overeater who still suffers.
- Say what you mean, mean what you say, just don't say it mean
- Don't confuse anonymity with secrecy.
- What is our primary purpose as opposed to our personal preference?

	Summary of New Business Motions 2014	Proposer
A	Conduct a survey asking whether to change the name of the fellowship?	Region 10
B	Change name of Youth in OA Committee to Young Persons Committee	General Service Trustee
C	Begin formalisation process for email loops, in which members discuss either recovery or OA business, which may mean eventually they become officially part of the WSBC structure- like virtual meetings now have	Virtual Service Trustee
D	Make 7 th trad taken at WSBC go to WSBC delegate assistance fund only	Region 6
E	Remove an outdated policy (about our creed) as what is still pertinent is covered elsewhere	WSBC By laws com
F	Clarifies how procedural policy re WSBC workshop etc topics are handled	WSBC By laws com
G, K L T U	Are all similar- they are to simplify the language and remove reference to each type of service body, calling them instead 'service bodies', rather than naming each type	WSBC By laws com
H	The policy regarding the WSBC delegates –tidying this up - remove some of the procedural language, put one part in another policy (proposal I below) and reduces instructions to the service bodies on how to conduct business at their level.	WSBC By laws com
I	Concerns the activities at the WSBC- made into its own policy, removed from other policy at proposal H above	WSBC By laws com
J	Removes reference to O-anon – which no longer exists	WSBC By laws com
M	Remove policy about January being media awareness month as not applied in practice	WSBC By laws com
N	Removing a policy that has been superseded- ie making a plan of eating a tool rather than abstinence – this is already elsewhere so can be deleted – otherwise preamble contained here would need updating	WSBC By laws com
O	To remove reference to a suggested time in a meeting that a group reads the 12 steps and 12 traditions, and also similar to G K L T and U- removes reference to each type of service body	WSBC By laws com
P	Re encryption on oa.org website – changes policy to reflect what actually happens now.	WSBC By laws com
Q	Re appeals procedure for delegates refused attendance at WSBC - to simplify and clarify policy	WSBC By laws com
R	Re name of PO Committee – remove outdated policy	WSBC By laws com
S	Re adoption of Action Plans – remove outdated policy	WSBC By laws com
	Summary of Bylaw amendments	Proposer
1 3 4 5	All related – about current WSBC policy's re WSBC delegates and their service body's bylaws - what happens if the delegate's service body's bylaws are not WSBC compliant. Propose to remove or change policies– as current ones are either not done or not workable	1 - WSBC By laws com 3 4 5 - two Trustees
2	Add clause for general service trustees, to be elected they must either have been regional trustees prior or served on their Region Board	Region Chairs committee
6	Make our 12 steps and traditions gender neutral by removing 'him' and replacing with 'God' where appropriate	Northern Blue Ridge Intergroup
7 8 9	Relate to same issue as 1 3 4 5 – to soften policy which directs service bodies to review their own bylaws after WSBC change each year	WSBC By laws com
10 11 12	All related - Re instructions to service bodies about holding elections- puts this in bylaws rather than policy manual	WSBC By laws com