

1. When AA “came of age” in 1955 the General Service Conference of AA became the group conscience of our fellowship.
2. Bill Wilson designed the General Service Structure so that the Board would have the authority to carry out the day to day business of AA, but would ultimately be accountable to the Groups as the final authority. He did this by stipulating in the original Conference Charter that Area Delegates would make up at least two thirds of Conference members. Specifying a minimum of two thirds delegates was deliberate and fundamental to the operation of an AA service structure in which the Groups are the final authority. (See AA Service Manual written by Bill W page S58 https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/en_bm-31.pdf)
3. The Reason a two thirds majority is necessary is that a two thirds majority vote is needed to direct the board. Anything less is simply a suggestion.
4. Bill Wilson foresaw that there might come a time when the views of delegates differed from those of other Conference members. If that were to happen Bill expected the delegates to be able to break the deadlock with their two thirds majority.
5. In Australia we are an autonomous region and adapted our Charter from the original charter written by Bill W. The requirement in the original conference charter that at least two thirds of Conference members should be Delegates was watered down and expressed as an “ideal”. This removed the important check that Bill W had built into our structure and effectively denied Australian Groups final authority over their own structure.
6. In Australia we are currently well short of delegates making up two thirds of Conference members. There are currently up to 21 Delegates, but there would need to be at least 30 to have a two thirds majority at Conference.
7. This means AA Groups in Australia are not the final authority in AA and cannot issue directions to the Board if necessary, but can only make suggestions, unless the vote is also supported by board members.

Suggested Process for Implementing this Topic

- a. Establish a committee
- b. Establish a process and a timetable for reviewing options and making recommendations
- c. Establish a process for ensuring the fellowship as a whole is consulted and can have input
- d. Take the final recommendations to Conference to be voted on