

# Quarterly Report from the Board



## AN UPDATE FROM THE GENERAL SERVICE BOARD TO AREA DELEGATES

*This is a confidential bulletin, for use only within AA*

November 2019

### Trustees' Message

There was vigorous feedback that the Board needed to do more to communicate with the fellowship. One initiative that the Board had on its 'Plan on a Page' was a quarterly Newsletter. Well, here it is.

This is not to do away with the role of the delegate to liaise with and communicate between the fellowship and the Board - but to enhance it. There are only three Board meetings per year and it can be some time before the fellowship knows what the Board has been doing.

### Finances

The 2019 audited financial statements have been approved by the Board and circulated to Conference. They show that there was a modest surplus for the past year of \$10,248. There is a prudent reserve equivalent to 7 months of operations. Our accountant, Fabian Ianniello presented at Conference and answered all questions.

An abbreviated presentation by our accountant was well received, and has been forwarded to all delegates.

### Our 'Plan on a Page'

Here is a copy of the Board's 'Plan on a Page'. This is meant to be a simple one page plan where at a glance our fellowship can see the work that the Board has on its plate.

1. Class A Trustees – fill vacancies;
2. Ensure the preservation of licence and copyright;
3. Support preservation of membership;
4. Support public information;
5. Raise the profile of AA;
6. Engage and excite members;
7. Understand our audience;
8. Have regular and clear communication;

9. Embrace technology;
10. Don't forget to share;
11. Have a presence at all National Conventions to give members an opportunity to meet their Board members;
12. Have a regular Board newsletter;
13. Use professionally designed surveys to gather information;
14. Consider appointing a professional communications expert to craft a message.

### Statement of Purpose

Here is a copy of our Statement of Purpose - one of the guiding principles of the Board.

*We, the General Service Board, are a group of alcoholics and non-alcoholics who have been elected as Trustees. We are but trusted servants, we do not govern.*

*The Board's primary responsibilities are to:*

- *Act as the service arm of the Australian General Service Conference and provide structural continuity between Conferences*
- *Be the principal planners and administrators with respect to the larger matters of overall policy and finance*
- *Protect the intellectual property of Alcoholics Anonymous including the 12 Steps, 12 Traditions and Trademarks*
- *Ensure the solvency of Alcoholics Anonymous Limited and the National Office*
- *Provide leadership to facilitate the development of the Australian Fellowship*

*In its decision making, the Board is guided by the intentions of Conference, as reflected in Conference Advisory actions and the relevant voting majorities, being ever mindful of the words and spirit of the 12 Traditions and 12 Concepts. However, it reserves the right to decide when to act on its own responsibility and when to ask Conference for guidance, direction, approval or a decision.*

## Class A Trustee Vacancies

We currently have three vacancies and the Board has undertaken a process to fill some or all of them. Steps taken to date include:

- Asking the fellowship for applications
- Assessing applications
- Interviewing applicants
- Undertaking a Board skills survey to see what skills we may be missing on the Board
- Assessing and updating the criteria

We are now asking the fellowship for help to widen the net to get suitable applications in some of the areas where we are deficient - such as IT/Technology; Marketing/Public Relations; experience with Special Needs; Mental Health Services, etc.

The current applicants will be asked to update their applications to address if they possess any of these identified skills.

The Board is also mindful that the term of a Class A trustee is 5 years and it is difficult to have applicants commit to such a long period of time. At the same time, some recent Class A trustees have left after one or two years. A change in length of term would require changes to our Constitution and so the current feeling is to leave the term as is.

We are hopeful of making an appointment of one to three trustees at the February Board meeting.

Ruby Jones, our sole Class A trustee needs some company!

## General Service Conference

We have just completed Conference where many Topics were discussed. Some delegates rotated off, some had rotated on and an energetic, enthusiastic robust discussion ensued over the four days. We thanked those rotating off and we welcomed those to their first conference. A hard copy Conference Report will be made available to Conference members. The Report will also be available via our service website [www.aaservice.org.au](http://www.aaservice.org.au).

One of the outcomes of Conference was the Advisory action for Conference to 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 at least a two-thirds majority of the voting members at the Australian General Service Conference.

## Some Interesting Statistics

A report from our AA National webmaster that was presented to Conference showed some interesting statistics that the fellowship will be interested in. Over the past 7 or 8 years, there has been a big shift in the starting times of evening meetings from an 8pm start to either 7.30pm or 7pm starts. There is some evidence that this is a wide-ranging trend which affects other industries with cinemas and concerts also starting earlier.

## Bids

Thank you to North Eastern Region Area C for its successful bid to host the combined National T & CF and PI/CPC Forum in 2021.

Thank you to North Eastern Region Area A for its successful bid to hold a 2021 Regional Forum.

Thank you to Eastern Region Area B for its bid to host the 2020 Regional Forum (to be confirmed).

Thank you to Western Region for its bid to host the 2023 National Convention.

## National Convention 2020

Please get in early and register for the 2020 National Convention in Toowoomba. Go to the Convention website at [www.aanatcon2020.com.au](http://www.aanatcon2020.com.au) for more information.

This will be AA's 75th year in Australia – our Diamond Jubilee year.



## Joke of the Day

This came courtesy of Gabrielle (at Conference):

*Q. An alcoholic, an addict and an Al-anon were all in one car. Who was driving?*

*A. The police.*

## Thank you

The next GSB Meeting is on Saturday 15 February 2020 in Melbourne. Invitations will be sent out to local members via their Area Delegates to meet the GSB. We will endeavour to update you after this meeting

Yours in service,

*Andy P.*

**Incoming Chairman, General Service Board**