

Quarterly Report from the Board



AN UPDATE FROM THE GENERAL SERVICE BOARD TO AREA DELEGATES

This is a confidential bulletin, for use only within A.A.

August 2020

Trustees' Message

Our last newsletter was in May and since that time COVID-19 continues to have an impact on AA around the country. As laws are changing frequently and from State to State (and Territory to Territory), now is a time to be mindful not only of our home groups' compliance with our respective requirements but also to be mindful of the welfare of our fellow members - some of whom are doing it particularly tough. In true AA spirit, we continue to be amazed at the resilience of the Fellowship and our capacity to continue to carry the message.

General Service Conference

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, it will not be possible to hold a physical General Service Conference this year. The Conference Agenda Committee has met to discuss alternatives and have come up with a range of options and circulated to Delegates to indicate their preferred option by 19th August 2020. A decision is expected to be made shortly thereafter.

Online Literature

This month we have successfully launched the new AA Australia online literature store:
<https://literature.aa.org.au>.

The effects and disruptions due to the COVID-19 crisis made it clear to us that we needed a better and more efficient way of supporting literature distribution in the fellowship and, in line with General Service Offices in other countries, it was clear that we needed an online way of making literature available.

The main aim of the new literature store is twofold. Firstly, to make it easier for our Central Service Offices to order their wholesale literature supplies. Secondly, to facilitate literature supply to members who are not covered by an existing Central Service Office.

The National Literature store is in no way intended to "compete" with existing CSO's and we encourage all members to continue to support their local CSOs

by purchasing literature directly from them if possible.

The store carries all of the currently available Conference approved literature. We also have literature available in a wide range of foreign languages. Should you be looking for literature in a particular language please email gso@aa.org.au.

We hope you'll all take the opportunity to browse the wide range of literature available.

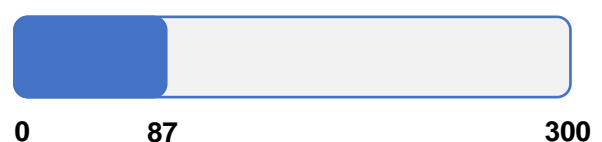
Finances

The following table summarises our asset and liability position as at the end of July 2020:

	31 July 2020	31 July 2019
Assets		
Bank	\$494,164	\$333,482
Current Assets	\$188,917	\$261,301
Non-Current Assets	(\$5,434)	(\$6,602)
Total Assets:	\$677,647	\$588,182
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities	\$80,436	\$134,181
Non-Current Liabilities	\$28,841	\$27,727
Total Liabilities:	\$109,277	\$161,908
Net Assets	\$568,369	\$426,273

In the past 12 months, our net asset position has improved by just over \$140,000. The Government's financial assistance provided to all Australian not-for-profits impacted by COVID-19 crisis has helped us to stay operational and keep us spreading the message. We also have received donations from the 300 Club - a big thank you to everyone who has contributed. We have also reduced expenses where we can. In the near term we have some major reprints (including the Big Book) that will be a significant cost.

300 Club Donations



Public Liability Insurance

You will be aware that there has been some correspondence to members advising that our Insurer had informed us that in our public liability policy renewal, there is now a clear exemption to our insurance for any COVID-19 claims. We deemed it necessary to inform the Fellowship of this and what the unlikely but potential ramifications could be.

Just to be clear, there is one master policy that the GSB has that covers all AA groups in Australia. This insurance cover is to cover us in the event of a public liability claim for negligence leading to injury. Our overall policy is still in place; however, the insurance companies have now issued an exclusion if the claim is COVID related. What does this mean? In the unlikely event that someone attends an AA meeting and subsequently catches COVID and wishes to make a claim (if they believe they can prove the group was negligent in preventing the spread of COVID) against AA and the groups' office bearers, our insurance company will not provide any coverage for legal costs or damages in the event of the claim going to court.

World Services

It was recently decided to produce a World Service Newsletter. Please find **attached** the first edition. Enjoy. And thanks to Greg B, Brian S and Ruby Jones.

National Convention

Toowoomba welcomes you to the 2020 National Virtual Convention. The Host Planning Committee really encourages you to get behind the Convention that was interrupted by COVID. Now more than ever the Fellowship needs to connect, and we invite you to register.

We have kept the registration fee at \$100 and this will include a complimentary copy of our Special Edition Souvenir Book celebrating 75 years of AA in Australia. It will be a different experience, and we hope it will be a lot of fun. See you there.

Our registrations are trickling in but as we offered a full refund to those who had registered for the physical Convention and around half of those registered availed themselves of the refund, we are now starting late to get registrations back up to where they were.



So please, if you can, Register Now and tell your friends: www.aanatcon2020.com.au – and join the closed Facebook page.

2020 National Treatment and Corrections Online Forum of Alcoholics Anonymous Australia - 28 & 29 August 2020

Theme: Ways to improve our presence and work in corrections and treatment facilities. If you would like to attend, please check out the closed Facebook group by the same name for further details

Joke of the Day

Q. Why did the accountant do so well in AA?

A. He was already a friend of bills!

Chairman's Report

2020 has been a topsy turvy year. Our GSO continues to function. Meetings are still occurring either face to face or online. Committees are still meeting to plan Conventions and Forums and Workshops around the country. Recovery and Service is happening despite difficulties being experienced by our members.

It is great to see the Program for the National Treatment and Corrections Online Forum and I encourage you to support the Forum as a lot of our twelfth step work comes from these two sources. I am also excited to see what Toowoomba offers by way of its Virtual Convention and I am looking forward to being a part of it. A decision on the General Service Conference is imminent and may be known before you read this.

Now more than ever is a time to come together and so I pose the question - how are we doing on the 3rd legacy – Unity? In some communication I see there is sometimes the 'us' and 'them' or 'we' and 'they' and just to remind ourselves that we are all part of the Fellowship. There is no them and us. As Tradition 1 says, 'Our common welfare should come first, personal recovery depends upon AA. unity.'

A Declaration of Unity: This we owe to A. A's future: to place our common welfare first; to keep our Fellowship united. For on A.A. unity, depend our lives, and the lives of those to come.

Yours in service,
Andy P. Chairman, General Service Board

OUR UNIVERSAL FELLOWSHIP



A Newsletter from the World Service Committee

Number 1

Welcome to our newsletter and to the international world of Alcoholics Anonymous. In our local Groups and even nationally we're all aware how well the AA Program works for Australian alcoholics, but we may wonder how efficiently it can be applied to other cultures in the world. In these articles we hope to inform you of the successes and struggles of carrying the AA message in other countries around the globe.

As well as reports from other nations our newsletter will contain details of overseas Rallies, Conventions, etc and details of the duties and activities of our World Service Delegates. We begin with some quotes from a document "World Service Meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous" outlining a history of World Service.

In 1967, following approval from the General Service Board in USA, Bill W. wrote to representatives of 13 countries, including Australia, proposing the formation of a world service conference. In part his letter read:

"Beyond doubt, we are approaching the time when there will be an ever-mounting need for general service setups in a great many parts of the world - offices and boards similar to those that exist today in some countries, and are in the process of developing in others.

There are many problems of growth and relations that call for an international exchange of experiences.

As a beginning I propose a World Service Meeting - not a Conference, since it would not be representative of world A.A., - to be held in the fall of 1969, and to run for three days. This meeting could be held in New York so that delegates would have access to the experience of staff members and board members, and delegates would have the opportunity of seeing a 30-year-old service office at work. To the meeting would come delegates from countries where the A.A. population was already considerable and where the problems of growth were already present. Probably less than 15 countries and/or zones would be involved in the First World Service Meeting."

This courageous and forward-thinking initiative illustrates Bill W.'s wisdom and his vision for the future of A.A. worldwide.

The first World Service Meeting was held in 1969, the second held in 1972 and subsequent meetings have been held every two years.

The foreword to the publication "World Service Meeting of Alcoholic Anonymous" reads: -

"Since its inauguration in 1969, the World Service Meeting has provided a continuing international forum for shared experience and ideas on carrying the message of recovery from alcoholism. Over the past four decades, the WSM has succeeded in bringing together far-flung A.A. service centres and reflects a final vision of Bill W., who believed there could be "one world of A.A." to assure that help would always be available wherever they might be or whatever language they might speak."

In carrying on Bill W.'s vision we are challenged to look beyond our local Group and not only support our own General Service Structure but to take up the responsibility and the challenge to spread the message to countries beyond our shores.

Chairman's Report – Trustee's International Committee

Hi all,

AA in the international space has been impacted by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. We have all been across communications where appropriate regarding the happenings of AA around the world. There are many Zoom meetings that have been created in an effort to keep members connected and positively, there has been the attendance of those from all around the world to meetings so the ability for AA members to connect to others has been greatly advanced.

Unfortunately, the 26th World Service Meeting which was to be held in October in New York has been cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Official confirmation is yet to be received, however. Brian has advised that the US and Canadian Conference was held virtually but yet to receive any reports. Likewise, the Convention which was to be held in Detroit this year has also been cancelled. Valerie provided communication from the International Convention committee, however, to advise that for the month of July, the Convention will go ahead in a virtual format. Guest speakers will be available, AA Grapevine in a virtual format and a presentation of the 40-millionth Big Book will be some of the items to keep a look out for. This will be made available on the 1st of July via aa.org.

AOSM next year will, at this stage, be hosted by India. I suppose this may depend on any residual impact of the current pandemic. It is hoped there will be as much attendance as Hong Kong's AOSM meeting, especially with the meeting being held in a central location to many countries.

Brian has been active in communicating with delegates in the AOSM since Hong Kong meet. Recent discussions have been about PI initiatives as well as proposed women's meetings in parts of Asia and Africa. Those in emerging Fellowships seek guidance from Australia of what their emerging Fellowships should look like.

The official report from AOSM in Hong Kong has been completed and was dispersed among attendees on the 6th of June. This may be made available to those interested within the guidelines of distribution of AA documents.

The March edition of AA Around Australia featured an article by the Fiji Delegate, Phillis. This was in an effort to provide education to those in Australia of the responsibility we have to our island neighbours in carrying the message. I have heard from members that Fiji has seen a greater increase in attendees to meetings, credited to the ability for Zoom meetings becoming more commonplace due to the virus. It is hoped this may have a positive impact on this emerging Fellowship.

Ruby Jones