

**February 2013
Report from Southern California World Service
Conference Structure Thought Force**

This is our charge:

**Is the current Area structure providing
the spiritual bridge we need to expand
into the future in order to meet the
needs of the Area?**

Participants: Mary M., Past Delegate, Sandie E., Past Delegate, Carol B., Group Rep, Kathy A., San Diego Past District Rep, Collette H., Past District Rep, San Luis Obispo, Bruce G., Los Angeles, District Rep., Charlene A., Diamond Bar, SCWS Archives Coordinator, Pete Bower, Orange County, District Rep.

Our charge is: "Is the current Area structure providing the spiritual bridge we need to expand into the future in order to meet the needs of the Area?"

Thought Force is a temporary unit of people established to brainstorm ideas and to develop strategies on a single defined task or activity. Use the resources available such as members of the Thought Force. Thought Force may lay foundation for the work of a Task Force. A problem is identified, strategies are suggested. Not expected to have all the answers or provide solutions. Thought Force presents its information to the originating body to move forward. They are the thinkers not doers.

Board of Trustees and the Conference spent years trying to come up with a plan that might work for everyone and came up with very little. So it was time for Areas to think out of the box. We were asked to consider three things: freedom, vision and no holds barred. They offered every Area this plan: Formulate and implement a structure in your geographical Area or combination of geographical Areas for a trial period that would enable your groups to have full communication, participation and representation!

Area Structure

- **1963, Delegate Helen W. took California's request to split into two areas to the World Service Conference.**
- **1964 the World Service Conference approved the split into California North and California South**
- **Then: 69 meetings in CA(N) and 149 meetings in CA(S)**
- **Now: 900 meetings in CA(N) and 1,242 meetings in CA(S).**
- **No structure change is off limits provided it does not affect policy on pages 75-121 of the "AI-Anon Alateen Service Manual 2010-2013".**
- **Any changes that affect the WS Conference must be submitted by December 15 of any year. Area pays all additional costs.**

The 1242 Groups include approximately 100 Alateen meetings.

The policy in the Service Manual only allowed one split per Area and California had already split once. In 2005, Vicki H. sent letter to the WSO Handbook Committee requesting they look at allowing an additional split to an Area so both Northern and Southern California could divide once more to allow our groups to be better served.

In 2007, in support of Vicki's letter, Sandi C., Delegate from CA(N) took a package to the WSO Handbook Committee with a color coded map of each section showing the number of groups in CA(N) and CA(S).

In 2008, presentations were made by the Chairperson of the Admissions/Handbook Task Force regarding the impact of areas splitting or consolidating. A discussion ensued on the Conference Floor. At the end of the discussions, CA(S) formally petitioned that they be allowed to divide (see 2008 Conference Summary, pages 40-44).

In 2009 there was extensive conversation on the same topic (see pages 35-38 of the 2009 Conference Summary).

In 2010 a Thought Force presentation was made on the current Conference Structure with three key areas. After brainstorming it was determined that there were six possible strategies as well as pros and cons of those strategies.

In 2012 another presentation was made by the Task Force and the Board offered every Area to formulate and implement a structure for our geographic area that would enable our groups to have full communication, participation, and representation. (See pages 54-57 of the 2012 Conference Summary).

What do we know about our member's needs?

- **More participation and communication in the Area.**
- **Manageable assemblies with more time.**
- **Convenient location and less travel time**
- **Improve members understanding of Assembly function**

What do we know about our resources?

- **Abundance of talent (undetermined amount of participation).**
- **Diverse population and sporadic density**
- **Large population (over 1200 Groups in CA(S))**
- **Transportation benefits and challenges in both metropolitan and rural areas (trains, congestion, gas prices, hotels).**

Of those over 1200 Groups at least 337 of those Groups are Spanish speaking Groups.
Transportation benefits and challenges in both metropolitan and rural areas (trains, congestion, gas prices and hotels)

What do we know about our resources?

- **Financial resources.**
- **A rich history in the form of members.**
- **Technological advancement potential to facilitate the flow of information.**

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Transportation benefits and challenges in both metropolitan and rural areas (trains, congestion, gas prices and hotels)

What do we know about our culture or environment?

- **We are culturally diverse with over 300 Spanish speaking Groups and other non-English speaking Groups**
- **Traffic and long commutes discourages participation .**
- **Area and Group Financial resources cover mileage reimbursement.**

What are the implications of our choices? Pros and Cons?

PROS:

- **Possibly less travel time.**
- **Possibly more manageable Assemblies**
- **Possibly an increase in GR participation.**

CONS:

- **There may be choices we have not explored**
- **“Good leadership cannot function well in a poorly designed structure.” Page 191 of “Al-Anon Alateen Service Manual 2010-2013”.**
- **Difficulty in redesigning the area geographically .**
- **Financial impacts and other challenges are unknown.**

We are looking at the pros and the cons of creating smaller areas. If we were to create a new area, the pros would be these and the cons would be these. . .Remember this is presuming!

What do we not know about this issue that we wish we did?

- **Is six years enough? Too much? What if the project fails after six years?**
- **Will it be worth the time, cost and effort to evaluate?**
- **Does the fellowship want a smaller service Area? Are they dissatisfied now?**
- **Does distance really affect participation?**
- **What are the Groups' wants and needs?**
- **What other Areas would be affected?**
- **What effect would a restructure have on CA(N)?**

A question to ask yourself:

Is your group being served?

End of slide show.

Another question to ask yourself:

**What does a well served group
look like?**

End of slide show.

Finally – Presume Good Will.

Northern California: They have made a presentation to their Assembly in early May. They have encouraged their Group Reps to go back and talk about the two questions: (1) Is your group being served? (2) What does a well served group look like?

They have also requested that their District Reps take the KBDM questions back to their Districts and ask the KBDM questions to their Group Reps. They realize that they need to reach Groups that are not participating and they discussed the different ways to reach those Groups.