Should Southern California World Service (SCWS) Accept Permanent Electronic Groups Into Our Geographic Area?

Thought Force Review
Assembly, May 21, 2022

Let's Start With a Review!

➢ A small **Thought Force** (ThF) was formed in 2021 to review the latest information from the **World Service Conference** (WSC) and the **World Service Office** (WSO) regarding **Permanent Electronic Groups**.

➢ The **Thought Force** presented their initial information at the November 2021 Assembly; further discussion was tabled until the May, 2022 Assembly.

➢ The November presentation and documents can be found here: https://www.scws-al-anon.org/area-world-service-assembly-meeting-information/ **Please see:** "Permanent Electronic Meetings and Our SCWS Area"; "Electronic Meetings, Al-Anon Family Groups & the WSC Structure"; "Draft Minutes of the November Assembly".

What do we know so far?

➢ **April 2021:** WSC voted to recognize Electronic Meetings as **Al-Anon Family Groups**, and for these Groups to be included in the Al-Anon service structure.

➢ **January 22, 2022**: Group Representatives (GRs) representing Permanent Electronic Groups attended the Electronic Area Assembly, and elected their first World Service Delegate.

➢ **April 2022:** The new Virtual Area Delegate attended the WSC and the "**Global Electronic Area**" was admitted to the WSC.

➢ All "permanent" Electronic Al-Anon Family Groups (AFG) are now placed into the **Global Electronic Area** (GEA).

Additional Information from April 2022 World Service Conference:

➢ There are now two types of Al-Anon groups:

- **Physical Groups:** belong to a geographic Area and meet at a physical location. These groups may have an electronic "window" into their physical meeting (via Zoom or other virtual platform) so members can join the meeting virtually (aka "Hybrid" meetings).

- **Electronic Groups:** are not attached to a physical location. They do not have an "in-person" component. They may want to attract a global audience, or prefer to belong to a particular geographic area and keep their attendance more local.

Additional Information from April's WSC, continued:

➢ **Electronic groups** will be able to choose the Area they wish to belong to:

- ○ The **Global Electronic Area**
- ○ A **geographic Area** that has developed a procedure for admitting Electronic Groups in their Area.

➢ The Board of Trustees and the World Service Office hope that all Geographic Areas will welcome all Al-Anon Groups--Physical and Electronic--into their Areas. Each Area has the autonomy to decide how this will work in their Area.

Why might we consider admitting PEGs into our SCWS Area structure?

Example:

➢ Many groups in our Area created **Temporary Electronic Meetings** to take the place of their face-to-face meetings when COVID hit.

➢ A number of these "temporary" groups are still meeting virtually with the majority of their members residing in CA-South. Their GR currently represents their Group at SCWS Area meetings.

➢ If SCWS decides to accept Electronic Groups into our Area structure, the **Temporary Electronic Groups** that do not wish to return "in person" would have two choices:

1. Become a Permanent Electronic Group and join the new Global Electronic Area (with voice/vote in the GEA),

2. Join the SCWS Area as a Permanent Electronic Group and continue to have a voice and vote in the SCWS Area.

What are our next steps?

➢ Add members to the ThF to complete the ThF's **K**nowledge-**B**ased **D**ecision-**M**aking (KBDM) questions, _**or**_ move forward with forming a Task Force(TF).

➢ Include "members-at-large" and members in Area service beyond the group level (GR, DR, etc.), especially those who have experience with Electronic Meetings.

➢ The ThF **or** TF would present their findings and/or recommendations to a future Assembly.

➢ _NOTE:_ The **Task Force** would be responsible for researching the details and KBDM questions regarding how an Electronic Group could join our geographic Area. They would draft a process as to how this might be possible.

And For Your Information…

➢ Many Geographic Areas have formed a Thought Force/Task Force to research these questions. A few Areas have already voted to accept Electronic Groups into their Geographic Areas.

➢ Geographic Areas have the autonomy…

  ○ to accept/not accept Permanent Electronic Groups

  ○ to take as much time as they need before deciding if and when to begin registering groups which meet electronically.

➢ There is currently **no cutoff date for "Temporary" Electronic Groups** to continue to meet virtually. These Groups are still identified by WSO and SCWS by their original WSO ID number connected to their Physical Group.

Let's start with Questions, then Comments.

Reminder:

➢ Only "members" of the Assembly have "voice"

➢ Raise your Zoom hand (click on "reactions", "raise hand")

➢ 1-2 Minutes at the "mic"

➢ Please lower your hand if another member asks your question or makes your comment.