



REGION NINE'S VITAL LINK:
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR REPRESENTATIVES
ATTENDING REGION NINE'S ANNUAL ASSEMBLY

Updated June 2014

The Representative is a vital link in the chain of OA's Service Structure – You have been elected by your Intergroup or National/Language Service Board to attend the Region 9 Assembly – Congratulations!

If you are lucky, your predecessor has briefed you on the job or given you a file with information in it. If not, you may need to find out a lot, very quickly. We hope this booklet helps you.

Here are some of the questions that experienced members in OA are frequently asked about Region 9 service matters. These answers may give you a clearer idea of what the role of a Representative is in relation to the Region 9 Assembly.

It must be emphasized that there are no “right answers”, only shared experience of what has worked well for others. All the suggested answers are to be found either in the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts of OA, the Bylaws or the Policy Manual of Region 9. Other sources of information are Groups, Intergroups and National/Language Service Boards and previous year's Region 9 Assembly Minutes, which should be handed to you. When in doubt, don't hesitate to ask the advice of more experienced OAs.

Glossary

OA	Overeaters Anonymous
IG	Intergroup
BOT	Board of Trustees
WSBC	World Service Business Conference (also known as the Conference)
NSB/LSB	National/Language Service Board
R9	Region 9
WSO	World Service Office
RCC	Region Chairs Committee

REGION NINE'S STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Our statement of purpose reads: “Our primary purpose is to carry the OA message to the still suffering compulsive overeater, wherever they may live and whatever language they may speak. In fulfilling our purpose we should ever strive to achieve worldwide unity and common policies among all countries. With love and tolerance as our code, together we can do what we could never do alone”.



WHERE AND WHEN DO WE MEET?

Every year we hold an Assembly in which the officers of R9 meet with representatives from Intergroups and National/Language Service Boards from all over R9. Non-affiliated groups (groups which are not part of an Intergroup) may also be represented.

We meet within Region 9. Intergroups and National/Language Service boards who feel able to host the event put in a bid, with the selection usually taking place 1-2 years in advance.

WHY SHOULD MY INTERGROUP SEND A REPRESENTATIVE?

Because this is the only way to get your Intergroup or NSB/LSB's views heard by the group conscience of Region 9 as a whole. If your representative isn't there you cannot contribute or change anything or indeed listen and take home to your IG or NSB/LSB news and views of what's going on elsewhere. *Your absence weakens the group conscience.*

WHAT QUALIFICATIONS ARE REQUIRED TO BE A REPRESENTATIVE?

Your local IG or NSB/LSB decides. Successful representatives are OAers who have previously had some active experience of service at group, Intergroup or NSB/LSB level and are familiar with the 12 Traditions, 12 Concepts of OA Service and the OA Service structure. This service is not appropriate for a newcomer. Qualifications are set by the local IG or NSB/LSBs in their bylaws.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE REPRESENTATIVE?

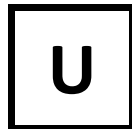
In a word – communication. The representative's role is to make sure that their Intergroup understands Region 9 matters, and that the Assemblies which they attend are informed of the needs and wishes of their Intergroup or NSB/LSB. You should be aware that some service commitment may be required during the year after the Assembly. The representative's length of service depends on their own IG Bylaws. But it is suggested that some continuity is beneficial to both R9 and to the representative her/himself as the first year is often a learning year. Should you wish to submit amendments to the Region 9 Bylaws, please refer to Region 9 Bylaws, Article XII, Section 1.

WHAT IS THE REGION ASSEMBLY COMPOSED OF?

The Assembly is composed of a Board and Intergroup and NSB/LSB representatives. The board members are elected at the Assembly for a period of 2 years and a further two year term if re-elected. The board members are: Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. In addition, committees are formed (from the representatives present) and committee chairs are elected or nominated. The Region 9 Trustee attends the Assembly and has a voice but no vote. Visitors are welcome as observers.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE ASSEMBLY?

- To carry the OA message of recovery within Region 9
- To re-affirm OA unity within Region 9
- To report and discuss the different activities in the Region since the last Assembly
- To vote on bylaw changes, if any proposals are on the floor
- To elect new officers and Committee chairs (every two years)
- To serve as a place where delegates from throughout the Region can get together to share their common experiences, problems and solutions
- To receive input from the BOT through the Trustee and more information and news about the WSO



WHAT SERVICES DOES REGION 9 PROVIDE?

Through several committees that operate year round, R9 offers the following services to its members, NSB/LSBs, Intergroups and groups:

Budget and Finance

The Treasurer heads this committee, whose function is to project expenditure for the upcoming year, produce a budget and promote contributions throughout the Region. Details of our expenses are listed further in this document.

Bylaws

The Assembly operates in accordance with bylaws that were first laid down in the second Assembly (Munich 1985). This committee evaluates the bylaws and proposes changes/additions to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the Assembly and the Region as a whole and are in accordance with OA Bylaws Subpart B.

Translation

This committee encourages countries to translate and print literature in their own language. Region 9 Translation guidelines are available on the website of R9. A hard copy can be ordered from the R9 Secretary.

Electronic Communications

This committee is responsible for the maintenance of the R9 website. The website "www.oaregion9.org" will carry news and information to R9 members. The second phase will be to translate as much material as possible to languages other than English. The R9 Newsletter will be published on the website.

This committee will encourage countries to set up websites in different languages, to facilitate communications and to provide prompt information about OA in their own language.

Twelfth Step Within

The Twelfth-Step-Within Committee was created to reach out to those in the Fellowship who still suffer and to address the relapse and recovery of our members. The committee's purpose is to strengthen Overeaters Anonymous by sharing information and ideas that generate recovery within the Fellowship. Those who give Twelfth-Step-Within service encourage existing OA members to become or remain abstinent, to work the Twelve Steps and to give service to the best of their ability. Doing this service increases the quantity and quality of recovery in our Fellowship, thereby assisting our own spiritual journey. Twelfth Step Within does not focus on attracting new members; it explicitly supports the ones we already have. We can all help carry the message of recovery through abstinence and working the Steps by (1) being well ourselves; (2) giving service, sponsorship and friendship; (3) encouraging membership retention; and (4) attending meetings and OA events.

Public Information

The purpose of this committee is to help ensure that OA and our programme of recovery becomes better known by the public and more accessible through methods such as press releases; community and health fairs, press and advertising, posters, billboards, community notices, telephone lines, professional outreach and public speaking.

HOW DOES THE REGION CO-ORDINATE WITH OTHER SERVICE BODIES?

World Service Business Conference (WSBC)

The WSBC (the Conference) is an annual meeting of delegates from NSB/LSBs and Intergroups worldwide, held in April/May in Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA. The conference lasts 4 days with discussions, debates and decisions relating to OA as a whole, and represents the Group Conscience of OA as a whole.

The WSBC discusses and provides guidelines for all aspects of OA group, Intergroup and NSB/LSB activities – literature, budget, group handbook, committee guidelines, public information etc. All literature that is approved at the WSBC carries the “conference seal of approval” which means that it represents the group conscience of OA as a whole.

The WSBC also supports a Delegate fund aimed at assisting NSB/LSB and Intergroups to attend WSBC. Contributions are received from service bodies throughout the Fellowship and are distributed to NSB/LSB and Intergroups who apply for assistance. Details can be received from WSO.

Board of Trustees

The BOT is elected by the Conference comprising of Trustees from the different Regions and General Service Trustees. Candidates are put forward to the Conference by the Regions. The main functions of the BOT are to represent OA as a whole, to act as guardians of the 12 Steps, 12 Traditions and 12 Concepts of Overeaters Anonymous and to promote education within the Fellowship worldwide.

Region 9 Trustee

The WSBC elects a Trustee from Region 9 every 3 years. This Trustee is a member of the BOT. In addition to the Trustees duties as a member of the BOT, the Trustee carries the message of the BOT in the Region, by visiting and communicating with the NSB/LSB, Intergroups and groups within the Region and by holding service and traditions workshops in different locations in the Region. The Trustee attends BOT meetings, WSBC and WSO convention. The Trustee also attends the Region 9 Assembly as the representative of the BOT and has a voice but not a vote.

World Service Office

The WSO located in Albuquerque New Mexico, USA, provides a variety of services for the BOT, WSBC, Regions, National-/Language Service Boards, Intergroups and Groups, including:

- Clearing house for worldwide inquiries
- Providing information about OA to the still suffering compulsive overeaters, to media representatives and health professionals interested in OA’s Twelve-Step approach to recovery from compulsive overeating
- Supporting individual members and OA groups worldwide
- Registration of all OA groups, Intergroups and NSB/LSBs (available online)
- Providing everything new groups need to get started in the Group Starter Kit
- Providing office services to the BOT, WSBC and the World Service Convention, including printing and distribution of material
- Producing all the Conference and BOT approved literature
- Selling over 100 literature and recovery-related items which can be ordered from the Catalog
- Producing and printing *Lifeline* the monthly OA recovery magazine and mailing it to subscribers (available online)
- Producing and distributing of the quarterly newsletter *A Step Ahead*, and the annual *Courier* (newsletter for professionals) to all NSB/LSBs, Intergroups (available online)
- Website – maintaining the OA Website
(www.oa.org or www.overeatersanonymous.org)



Region 9 Chair

The R9 Chair is elected by the R9 Assembly for a period of 2 years and fills a variety of duties; reelection for another two-year term is possible.

- Represents R9 at WSBC and is involved in different Conference Committees and activities
- Is invited with other Region Chairs to attend one BOT meeting per year
- Attends additional Region Chairs Committee meeting held in conjunction with an assembly of one of the other regions
- Is a member of the WSBC's Region Chairs Committee (RCC), working in cooperation with the Chairs of the other 9 regions, meeting and communicating about the services and needs of all the regions
- Chairs the annual R9 Assembly
- Attends different functions within the Region and may hold Service and Traditions workshops where budget allows.

HOW IS REGION 9 FUNDED?

Region 9 is self-supporting, receiving contributions from its member NSB/LSBs, Intergroups, groups and non-affiliated groups. The surplus from our conventions/assemblies is an important source of funding of activities.

WHAT ARE OUR EXPENSES?

Due to the vast geographic range of our Region, our expenses for travel and postage are much higher than other Regions and they are:

- Funding of R9 Officers to R9 Assemblies.
- Funding R9 Chair to WSBC, partly funding to a BOT meeting, and funding the travel to a Region Chairs Committee meeting if funds are available.
- Printing of Assembly minutes, Notebook, reports, etc.
- Postage
- Holding a fund, when possible, to subsidize NSB/LSB and Intergroup representatives to attend R9 Assembly.
- Assistance to IGs, NSB/LSBs for Translation/Projects Fund.

WHAT AREA DOES REGION 9 COVER?

Region 9 is composed of OA groups and Intergroups and NSB/LSBs in Africa, Europe, Middle East and Western Asia.

WORLD SERVICE OFFICE ADDRESS

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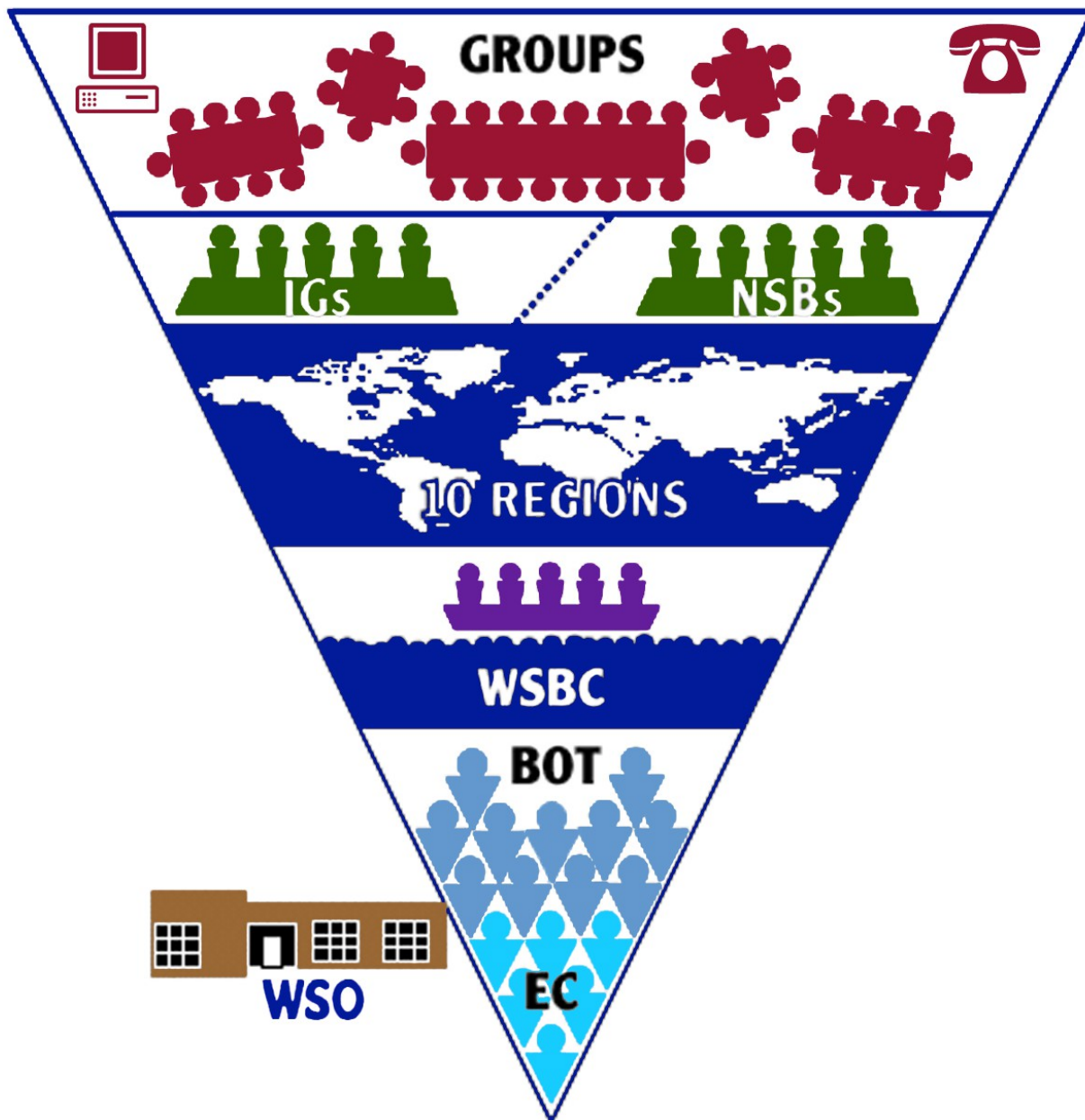
Fax: +1-505-891-4320

Website: www.oa.org

Email: info@oa.org

Region 9 Website: www.oaregion9.org

Service Structure of OA in the Countries that make up Region 9



Overall Service Structure

This chart shows the overall flow of service within the OA Fellowship.

The most important point that I can make is that WE dictate policy, and OUR VIEWS ARE IMPORTANT. For example, WSO doesn't tell us that we can't distribute food plans at our meetings. Members of our meetings are sent to intergroup, and intergroup sends delegates to Region where perspectives can be heard from other members within in our region. Then, at the World Service Business Conference, the GROUP CONSCIENCE of the body as a whole decides that we have no right to distribute food plans because we are not professional nutritionists.

OA is OUR PROGRAM, but it works only if you work it! If your meeting isn't sending a delegate to intergroup, then your meeting does not have input into the process.

We can give service at all levels, and service of all kinds is essential to our continuing recovery as a Fellowship. We would not exist if people were not willing to extend their hands.

All of us can do some kind of service every day—let's all try to incorporate service into our daily lives by using this valuable tool of recovery