

169	<b>Yes</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>Proposal 2021 – 4</b>	<b>4</b>
35	No	17%		
58	No Opinion			
			Submitted by WEB0393, DC008, IG729, WEB0609, WEB0616	

**Issue:** Change Concepts II & VI to clearly identify the Annual Business Conference (ABC) as seat of the actual voice and effective conscience of our fellowship. Suggested changes will clarify that authority for the maintenance of world services is delegated to the ABC by the fellowship, while Trustee members of the ACA World Service Organization (WSO) are empowered by the ABC to act as legal agents for the fellowship regarding the maintenance of world services.

**Background:** Proposed changes to Concepts II & VI are identified below in square brackets

**Concept II:** Authority for the active maintenance of our world services is hereby delegated to the [insert: *Annual Business Conference as the*] actual voice, the effective conscience for our whole fellowship.

**Concept VI:** On behalf of ACA as a whole, our Annual Business Conference has the principal responsibility for the maintenance of our world services, and it traditionally has the final decision regarding large matters of general policy and finance. [Delete: *But*] The Annual Business Conference [delete: *also*] recognizes that the chief initiative and the active responsibility in most of these matters would be exercised primarily by the Trustee members of the World Service Organization when they act among themselves as the World Service Organization of Adult Children of Alcoholics.

Writers of this proposal posit that current language of ACA Concepts creates confusion about the role of the ACA Annual Business Conference (ABC), with potentially far-reaching consequences for the working relationship between the fellowship of ACA and the WSO. Suggested edits intend to clarify the important role of the ABC within the “upside-down pyramid” of the ACA service structure, by more clearly identifying the ABC as the seat of authority for the maintenance of world services. The WSO, on the other hand, is recognized as a service arm of the conference with active responsibility for business operations.

**Resources/Implementation:** The 12 Concepts of Service evolved as guidelines for service through trial and error, initially within the AA program. In 1997, an adapted version of the AA Concepts was adopted by the ACA fellowship. The 12 Concepts of ACA World Service create a link between the traditional structure of our fellowship and the legal framework governing the business operations of the WSO. They empower the Board of Trustees to act as legal agents of our fellowship in running the day-to-day business of world service.

While final responsibility and ultimate authority for ACA World Services resides with the collective conscience of the fellowship and its member groups (Concept I), a mechanism is needed to make sure the WSO as service arm of the fellowship is adequately informed about and directed by the effective conscience of the fellowship (Concept II). Though not specifically mentioned in Concept II, the ABC is the service body creating this link. In contrast, both AA and Al-Anon specifically name the conference here. Writers of this proposal believe that by clarifying the important role of the ABC through implementing suggested changes to language of the Concepts, an improved and more trusting working relationship can be established between member meetings and the WSO.

There is currently no codified process for adopting changes to the foundational documents of our fellowship, such as the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts, or the Problem, Laundry List, and Solution.

Writers of this proposal are aware of two decisions made at the ABC in recent years to change language of such foundational documents: in 2015, the ABC voted to amend Tradition 11; and in 2017, the ABC voted to amend the Laundry List. We request that WSO analysis on this proposal include reflection on the process followed in each of these cases.

**WSO Analysis:** The Board has no position on the specific Concept changes. Questions have been raised about whether a more rigorous discussion and approval process is needed for measures that affect ACA's core documents, identity, or ACA World Service's relationship with the larger fellowship. As an example, AA requires more than a simple annual meeting vote to change AA's Steps, Traditions and portions of its Conference Charter. Absent such a policy in ACA, revisions to the Concepts by default are currently governed by the Literature Development and Evaluation process. If this measure is approved by the ABC, the new Concept language would undergo an extended review by the fellowship before final enactment by a future ABC. As time permits, delegates at the 2022 ABC will be asked for guidance on whether a new process is needed for measures that affect ACA's core documents, identity, or ACA World Service's relationship with the larger fellowship.

**Comments:** (Those greater than 50 words, per Ballot instructions, were truncated. Comments only referring to the group's voting results were removed.)

- a) We struggled understanding this proposal due to the length of the proposal. Keeping proposals under 500 words, including the WSO response and written more concisely would be preferred.
- b) Any move to bring the fellowship and ABC to more direct control is spiritually correct.
- c) The repercussions of these changes need discussion.
- d) The group feels that this deserves more time and attention after the ABC before any final changes are made.
- e) But we believe the voice of the fellowship can and should be heard in ways others than the ABC.
- f) The concepts need a larger update.
- g) Present language in these and other Concepts is vague and needs to be looked at and possible changed.
- h) We recommend that the groups who put this ballot forward meet with the Board or the Literature Committee to think of creative solutions to make amendments to foundational literature. We agree with the ballot proposal that the ABC as it stands is not well placed in the inverted pyramid structure, and look forward to more discussion on how to remedy this issue.
- i) theoretically is a "yes" for giving the power back to people, but practically it slows down any decision process, so that's a "no". that's why the indecision
- j) Great idea!
- k) Everyone are all good people.
- l) We believe that this should be discussed. That does not indicate our support for the approval of the proposal
- m) Our group conscience felt much more background and information was needed to make an informed decision on this matter
- n) Spelling out the relationship between WSO and ABC would formalize the structure in a consistent way.