

Topic Three
Making the Voice of Each Group Count
March 8, 2025

The theme of the 2025 General Service Conference is: “**Working Together, Increasing Trust**”.

Topic for presentation:

“Closing the Gap: How do we make the voice of every Group count?”

Our A.A. Service Manual gives this definition of what Bill W means by “service”:

“... an A.A. service is anything whatever that helps us to reach a fellow sufferer — ranging all the way from the Twelfth Step itself to a ten-cent phone call and a cup of coffee, and to A.A.’s General Service Office for national and international action. The sum total of all these services is our Third Legacy of Service. “

The First Concept states that “The A.A. groups today hold ultimate responsibility and final authority for our world services. “

The General Service structure ensures that A.A. groups have a say in the affairs of the Fellowship.

Generally speaking, Area officers (including the delegate), G.S.R.s and D.C.M.s have a voice and a vote.

In the “inverted pyramid”, in this structure, do our groups in Area 87 hold the ultimate authority?

At the heart of each area is the assembly meeting, where the democratic voice of our Fellowship is expressed. Although each area has the autonomy to organize its meetings according to its own conscience, one of their aims is to form a local decision-making structure, so that groups can collectively decide on the affairs of their area.

Each area holds meetings throughout the year. G.S.R.s are asked to attend and participate in these meetings. You have the right to speak and vote. Are our G.S.R.s and D.C.M.s voting members at these assemblies?

The area assembly plays a crucial role in the communication process between the group and the Conference. Depending on the Area, assemblies can last anywhere from half a day to an entire weekend.

Assembly and District meetings are the ideal time to discover the problems and solutions that A.A. groups everywhere have in common.

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The G.S.R. is the link between the group and the “whole Fellowship”. This link becomes the means by which news, information, opinions and ideas can flow in both directions. Importantly, this link is also what enables the group to make its voice heard in the affairs of the Movement. The G.S.R. is that voice. The G.S.R. is present at meetings, participates and votes.

In Area 87, these rights (speaking and voting) are exercised by the district.

As pointed out in the first topic, throughout the Conference, all areas take their groups’ opinion to heart in their assembly.

In an Area sharing session, anyone can use their experience, strength and hope to contribute to the discussion on the well-being of A.A.

An active area committee deals with all kinds of service-related challenges. Do groups share their experiences? Does the A.A. message reach hospitals, detention centers and rehabilitation centers? Are the media and professionals working in alcoholic treatment environments well informed about A.A.? Are new groups and isolated members supported and visited?

Finally, the A.A. Service Manual says that if G.S.R.s are negligent, if there is a lack of harmony in a District, if there are difficulties with Public Information or in any other area service committee, a member of the Area committee is often aware and can call on the whole committee to obtain help.

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Just one question: What do you, our Area 87 G.S.R.s, think?

André D.
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