

Area 23 Inventory

2025

Question #1

Based on our Area 23 Structure, our purpose of our area committee is:

The Area Committee, Southern Indiana, Area 23, of A.A. is the custodian of our A.A. tradition and the receivers of voluntary A.A. contributions, by which we provide our area services. The Area Committee serves the A.A. groups of Area 23. Providing guardianship of the voluntary contributions, and ensuring the continuity of our life-giving message, are the Area Committees primary purposes. The Area Committee shall encourage all area groups to participate in the business of the Area Committee and to support the Area Committee in its efforts to cooperate with the A.A. General Service Office and A.A. World Services.

How are we fulfilling this purpose and what can we do better?

1/3 the respondents either did not answer the question, or did not know, or had no GSR so they were not informed about the area.

1/3 of the respondents gave brief statements including the words good, well, great, excellent, and need more. One indicated "improving".

Specific Thoughts, Questions, and Suggestions:

- A. Encourage or insist that DCM'S facilitate registration of GSR'S with GSO.
- B. Continue to encourage participation and event flyers.
- C. Communication is great in this District.
- D. It would be nice to see people from Area Service show up in different groups more regularly.
- E. What is meant by Area Committee? The Area has more than one committee.
- F. Provide email verification for money being sent in. Our group donations to Area are not being acknowledged. We don't get receipts.
- G. It is too expensive for most to attend Area Assemblies.
- H. Expand communication to include and encourage more participation.

Observations:

- A. There is a lack of clarity regarding the role and relationship between the Area and Districts. And Intergroups' role in A.A.

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- B. Do the Area Officers and Area Committee communicate clearly when speaking and writing reports? Such as using full titles rather than GSR or DCM or “the committee”. Area Committee or Standing Committees?
- C. Do all DCM’s and GSR’s know the roles of the Area Committee, and how to communicate with them? Such as the Area Registrar and Treasurer. How to access the Area Website to connect with Officers? How is this information disseminated?
- D. Are groups and districts encouraged to be self-supporting by contributing financially so their trusted servants can fulfill their duties? (Travel to Area Meetings and attendance at Area service functions and the service weekend.)

Question #2

Based on our Area 23 Structure, our purpose of our area assemblies are to:

The Area Assembly is specifically charged with the duty of the election of the Delegate every two years (odd years) to the General Service Conference and to give the Delegate financial support to assist them in the course of duties of the office. The Area Assembly is further charged with the election of an Alternate Delegate to assist and replace the Delegate if the Delegate is unable to continue to function in their elected capacity. Area Assembly members also serve as members of the Permanent Standing Committees, serve on ad hoc committees formed to address specific issues brought before the Committee or Assembly, and participate in service workshops and other service activities sponsored by the Area’s Permanent Standing Committees.

How are we fulfilling this purpose and what can we do better?

8 the respondents either did not answer the question, or did not know, or had no experience with the Area

11 of the respondents gave brief positive statements, some gave additional feedback, shown below.

Specific Thoughts, Questions, and Suggestions:

- A. Area Committee Members make themselves available for our District. They suit up and show up when asked to speak or do a workshop.
- B. Area standing committees and Ad Hoc committees to address special issues.
- C. Suggest more service workshops.
- D. Suggest improvement of accessibility for minorities.
- E. We have an Intergroup Rep, but no contact with Area 23 or our District.

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- F. Strive to communicate via all media options.
- G. Two respondents mentioned that an Alternate Delegate is an excellent idea. (As this was a reference to a district, this may have meant "Alternate District Committee Member".)
- H. We have never had a service meeting in our city. We don't know anything about the people or services.
- I. Really enjoy and appreciate the Delegate's engagement, sessions, reports, and visits.
- J. I would like a summary of what happened at the assembly to take back to the group.
- K. Need for clearer information about what committees we are assigned to and more defined roles. Better communication about the expectations of these committees. Better follow up when reaching out about what committees we are part of. What is the role of the chair of the committee?
- L. Effectively, is there a way to communicate more guidance or create a repository of documents for enhancing workshop organization?

Observations:

- A. Is there clear information about the relationship between Intergroups, Districts, and Area? Is the importance of voting representation at the area explained and stressed?
- B. Does the Area prioritize reaching out to underserved communities? Remote locations? Minorities?
- C. Does the Area utilize all methods of communication effectively and consistently and frequently?
- D. Do all DCM's and GSR's know how to access the information already available?
- E. Do members of the Area Committee, Officers, and Standing Committee Chairs make it known to the districts that they are available to visit their meetings and events? And to assist with workshops?

Question #3

Understanding that we have several groups who are not represented at the Area 23 Assemblies.

What could we do to attract more groups?

- A. Only one respondent was unsure, and one suggested consulting a marketing group.

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- B. Two respondents mentioned cliques. One said the Area was cliquish. The other said there were no cliques at this time.
- C. All other respondents, in one way or another, stressed communication and outreach. Area reaching out to Districts and the Districts reaching out to groups. Only a few of the specific responses are included below.
- D. Schedule frequent / recurring workshops / panels directed at general service.
- E. Visit groups and introduce rep and services, what is your purpose, the importance of voting representation, and how can we help.
- F. Seek volunteers to contact other groups. Intergroup communications can help here as well.
- G. The group proposed setting up focus groups to reach out and talk about participation. Personal contact and outreach -- follow-up -- would greatly increase groups' participation at the district and area level. For instance, if we were to set up an outreach event where the delegate or a member of the outreach committee was to show up in a district, then calling beforehand or sending an email would boost attendance.
- H. Groups could use ideas on how to finance their GSRs' travel to area assemblies.

Observations:

This is the age-old question in A.A. and many organizations. About 10% of members do 90% of the work (service).

The suggestions made here are solid. However, it takes resources, human resources. Who will dedicate the time and the passion to follow through on the planning and execution of these ideas? Which Area Officers? Which Standing Committee Chairs? Which DCM'S? This is where self-inventory, sponsorship, and service sponsorship can play a vital role.

Question #4

In Area 23 we encourage GSRs and DCMs to attend area assemblies so their group can have a voice and vote in the matters pertaining to area business.

How could we make service more attractive?

- A. Give an attendance token, like a souvenir pin. People love those things.
- B. Possibly make commitment time shorter for representatives.
- C. Encouraging groups who cannot contribute to take on service anyways. Encourage groups who can contribute more.

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- D. Balloons. We don't believe general service is inherently attractive. However, we as a group believe in the importance of sharing about general service and are willing to always look for more within service. It's about attraction rather than promotion, so we do not promote service as much as we are willing to answer questions and direct people to general service activities and assemblies.
- E. Better organization – e.g. more streamlined communication. More collaboration differs vacation. (??)
- F. Promote zoom options to be involved.
- G. Area appears to recycle representatives.
- H. Keep the ability for people to attend virtually, except new DCMs and GSRs at the service weekends where they learn about their responsibilities.
- I. Reimburse travel expenses.
- J. So grateful for the Zoom option. The time commitment is substantial and to be able sidestep the travel time is meaningful to me at this season of my life—personally. And it makes it affordable.
- K. Emphasis in communications. and reminder that we are the voice of AA.
- L. Provide lunch.
- M. An alternative to having the meeting on Sundays.
- N. Traveling help.
- O. Spread the assemblies to multiple days.
- P. Often the GSR position is a "lonely" position. We should encourage groups to fill Alternate GSR positions, and to stress the importance of fellowship. Same applies to DCM roles.

Observations:

- A. Virtual options for assemblies is appreciated. Is the Area adequately communicating the virtual option?
- B. The time, distance, and expense of attending assemblies is of concern. Finances ought not exclude anyone from being of service to A.A. Is the Area being self-supporting by reimbursing Area Committee members for travel and other expenses as necessary? Are groups encouraged to be self-supporting by having a GSR fund to offset the financial cost of service participation? Are Districts encouraged to do the same for their DCM to participate in service?
- C. Streamlining and simplifying communication is mentioned.

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Question #5

In Area 23 we strive to have reliable communication among all elements of the structure.

How can we improve sending and receiving communication?

- A. A couple respondents said that communication seems good but needs to be streamlined. (No specific methods of streamlining were given.)
- B. A couple of respondents request for minutes, treasury reports, and information for the groups be edited to be “user friendly”. If message is not too long or complicated home group members are more likely to pay attention and respond.
- C. Allow ways to update contact information regularly (self and the group).
- D. Clearly define who we need to be talking to for questions during assemblies.
- E. We believe Email is outdated for the up-and-coming generation of alcoholics. Have something like a social media page dedicated to A.A., A.A. structure, A.A. forum of sorts. Others mentioned better use of social media, specifically for announcements.
- F. Several respondents mentioned having more flyers and improving flyer distribution.
- G. More than one respondent asked that emails be sent to GSR's directly about upcoming events and opportunities. Our District DCM is very good at keeping us well advised about Area events, but I'm not sure is that is uniform across Area 23.
- H. We get forwarded emails without much context. It does help to share information quickly but sometimes it can be difficult to discern the email's relevance.
- I. Spread the word about the area 23 website with access to area business link with the password. Include this info in the Sheets of Sobriety (Indianapolis Intergroup Newsletter.)
- J. Change over to SharePoint as the online mechanism to facilitate archiving.
- K. Encourage GSRs to share handouts they pick up at area assemblies. Perhaps an email newsletter about what's going on at the area level would help us share what's going on. A “how to give a GSR report” workshop was proposed.
- L. There is too much information.

Observations:

- A. Even though a great deal of information is available, some are unaware of how and where to find the information.

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- B. The same is true for services that the Area Committee provides, such as the newsletter, the registrar for meeting updates, and the availability of Area Committee members to visit Districts and to facilitate workshops when invited. Are the offices and committee chairs reaching out to Districts making their availability known?
- C. With the move toward increased use of technology, does the Area have a Standing Committee or Ad Hoc Committee assessing the need for and cost of these potential services? Are there members in the Area who have the knowledge, willingness and talent to determine the means to achieve the requested services?
- D. A friendly reminder: We will want any use of social media to be carefully reviewed so as to be in line with the 12 Traditions.

Question #6

When attending area assemblies, are all members given the opportunity to participate, express the minority opinion and be a part of the voice and effective conscience for our whole Area?

How can we improve?

- A. A great number of the respondents indicated the area is somewhere between good to great to phenomenal by giving the minority opinion a voice. Some gave additional comments / suggestions. Some did not answer these questions or had no opinion.
- B. Offer a chance for people to submit questions early/anonymous.
- C. The small groups splitting up has been great.
- D. This appears to be offered – unfortunately, not a lot of minority represented – again the cliquism. (Lack of clarity between “minority” and “minority opinion”)
- E. Yes, everyone is given an opportunity to participate, express a minority opinion, and be part of the voice and effective conscience of our whole area. Perhaps too much of an opportunity sometimes...
- F. No. Most people have no idea when area assemblies meet, who are our reps, or even what they do.
- G. Doing well. However, sometimes a few bleeding deacons amongst the past delegates make it hard to express an opinion without getting pointed at or “told” why they’re wrong.
- H. Encourage all to be patient with one another as dialog is a key to being effective. After all, we are a very diverse group of people.
- I. Maybe have more information in clear form available to review before questions are asked that could have already been clearly communicated.

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- J. Microphones available for minority opinion.

Observations:

- A. There seems to be a lack of clarity regarding some terminology. (Item D above.)
- B. There seems to be some lack of clarity when voting on a particular motion. Does the Area operate using Roberts Rules of Order (modified)? Are motions submitted in writing, and restated prior to a vote?
- C. Does the Area operate with a level of decorum that fosters a healthy exchange of ideas?
- D. Past trusted servants can provide needed background on a topic to contribute to a fully informed group conscience. This is a place where individual inventory and service sponsorship can be beneficial. Is the information I am adding needed, and presented in the spirit of “Love & Service”? Also, so I listen with an open mind and heart? Do I focus on the principles being presented or the personalities?

Question #7

Is there anything else you'd like to share about a particular question or concern that is relevant to your group that we may not have asked in this inventory?

- A. Communication and accountability. Districts need to hold more GSR/DCM schools. Panel of people to hold these.
- B. Maybe the area could help our DCM be more involved? Is area reaching out?
- C. We have issues with the 7th Tradition contributions, especially from facilities like treatment and sober living.
- D. Most people in our small-town AA groups are happy just attending meetings and trying to practice Step 12. Most people do not have time to branch out past our own little meetings in our own little worlds.
- E. We would like to see the committee dollars be either utilized or reduced. It has seemed that many committees had funds allocated and not used. These funds could be used in other places.
- F. We proposed giving intergroup and someone from the area a small (~3-5 minutes) time to explain what area and intergroup are. Specifically, how the money that goes to area (and intergroup) is used.

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Observation: Throughout the inventory, there is a clamoring for more members of the Area Committee to attend District and some group meetings with helpful information and workshops. There is a need for clarity regarding the roles of and importance of the GSR's and DCM's, and how the Area Committee can support the work that they are trying to do. (Or could be doing.)

Though many of the answers to questions and concerns are available on the Area Website, in the Service Manual, the Group pamphlet, in workbooks, and other service material, not everyone knows how and where to find the information.

Back in the days of the “last gaspers” many of our fellowship grew with most people only have a book they received in the mail. Some also received letters from “The Foundation”. (Now General Service Office.) They learned by reading the book, often alone, and then getting into action to find another “prospect” nearby. Their lives depended on it. They sometimes traveled across State lines, driving hundreds of miles to reach out to another suffering alcoholic.

Today, we walk into a ready-made fellowship. To what lengths are we willing to go? Really. How seriously do we, as individuals, take the “Responsibility Statement”? The hand reaching out for help may not be the drunk in a hospital bed or crawling out of a ditch. It may be the members of a group feeling disconnected from the larger fellowship. It may be the new DCM who read the pamphlet, or even the Service Manual who has no clue on where to start. Afterall, service isn’t numbered like the steps.

Hence the need for Service Sponsorship and real leadership on the part of the Area Committee. The delegate and alternate, the officers and alternates, and the standing committee chairs and co-chairs. Who is willing to sacrifice additional time and travel a few times a year, to carry the message of love and service to a struggling district or group?

How can I as an individual, and WE as an Area, coordinate, collaborate, and clearly communicate the services we provide? Am I or are WE willing to actively participate to carry the message where needed **WITHIN** the fellowship?

And no, we don’t have to wait to be asked. We reach out and request an invitation. We suit up, we show up and ask **how may we be of service**. A workshop? Delegates report? Information about the Area and Regional calendar, the Area website, how to reach trusted servants, virtual options, with QR codes for easy linking, etc?

And so the inventory continues, for the individuals, and for the spiritual body that is the Area.

"I am responsible... When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help,
I want the hand of A.A. always to be there. And for that, I am responsible".