

# ABC Sustainability: Update to the February 2025 Quarterly Delegate Meeting (QDM)

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# What is the Sustainability Study?

The 2024 Conference authorized a fast-tracked study on how to make delegate meetings more sustainable. This included ***“direct[ing] the ABC Study Subcommittee to report to the 2025 ABC on an appropriate number of delegate meetings, strategies for maintaining volunteer support, and models to optimize the meetings’ value and delegate experience”***

As the ABC Study subcommittee was and continues to be primarily focused on Development of a draft **Conference Charter**, that subcommittee opted to create a child subgroup to handle this new additional workstream.

# Tasks of Sustainability Study

- Sustainability SSC report due to the Conference in May (2025 ABC)
- We would like to gather some info today to inform that May report
  - Purpose
  - Voting & Raising Motions
  - Length & Frequency
- Larger Question: Does the current structure/format of the **business meetings of the Conference (ABCs/QDMs)** serve the Purpose of **Conference, as a Service Body** (are they fit-for-purpose in a sustainable way?)

# Overall Issue for Today

**We (WSO + Conference) have a Sustainability problem.** We have found out the hard way that we currently are trying to do more than is sustainable given the current resources we have. What does it look like when we try to do too much? Burnout, attrition, missed deadlines, etc

In any such situation, there is a **tension** between **what we need/want/aspire to do** and **what we can do, given resources available**. In other words, this is a **RESOURCE CONSTRAINTS** problem.

There are 2 ways to solve that problem:

(1) reduce what you are trying to do

OR

(2) get more resources – people (volunteers and special workers), time in meetings, time between mtgs, etc (**aka, ask for help**)

# PURPOSE of the Conference

Taking a look at questions about the purpose of the *business meetings of the Conference* quickly led us to looking at the purpose of the *Conference, as Service Body*.

What do existing materials say about:

- What Delegates are supposed to do when we get together?
- What is the purpose of the Conference-as-Service-Body?

# PURPOSE of the Conference, as a Service Body

## Overall Purpose

- Act as effective group conscience on behalf of the Fellowship (Concept I and II)
- (Strategic) Oversight of WSO (Concept VI)
- Consent & direction for world services (Concept VI)

# PURPOSE of the Conference

## Sources:

- Concepts
  - I, II, VI, VII, and XII
- Charter (currently being drafted)
  - The Conference is a **service body** of the ACA Fellowship
  - **servng as the Fellowship's collective group conscience** and not as a government in matters of world service
- ACA WSO Bylaws
  - Article II, Section 3.3
  - Article IX. especially Section 2, 4, 5
- OPPM section XIII
- Role and Purpose of the ABC and Delegates doc ([link](#))
- Past Conference Decisions/Practices

# PURPOSE of the Conference

- **Decision-Making Functions**
- **Information-Sharing and Input Functions**



# PURPOSE of the Business Meetings of the Conference

## - **Decision-Making Functions**

- ballot proposals that receive sufficient support
- floor proposals from delegates that have time urgency
- Vote on ratification of trustees
- Provide (final) approval to new ACA WSO literature
- Consider and vote on motions from the Board and committees
- Provide guidance to Conference chair on matters of procedure, such as whether to pause or extend a meeting

## - **Information-Sharing and Input Functions**

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## - **Information-Sharing and Input Functions**

- Consider requests for input from boards and committees
- Hear updates, and provide guidance, on studies commissioned by the Conference
- Hear Treasurer and Finance Committee reports
- Hear other committee reports, including on WSO business operations
- Engage in Q&A sessions with board members

# Additional roles under exploration by the Conference

- Make final decisions on changes to Conference procedure
- Make decisions regarding Conference experience and sustainability
- Perform additional roles to have a more “delegate-driven” Conference

*These decisions presumably would need to be made at business meetings of the Conference*

# PAUSE

The Purpose question (of both the Service Body and the Business Meetings of the Service Body) affects other topics such as length and frequency

Before moving on – any thoughts, questions?

*OPEN DISCUSSION (10-15 mins)*

# Open Discussion PURPOSE Conference / Business Meetings (10-15min)

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# What are we trying to do: Do we want Voting? New Business?

Do we need/want **voting** at non-ABC meetings of the Conference?

- *How can we “do business”/make decisions if we don’t have voting?*
- *Votes that have happened at prior QDMs, however there has been lack of clarity on policy – so we come to Delegates today*

**New business** at non-ABC meetings of the Conference?

- Do we want to be able to tackle new business at non-ABCs (or should it just be spill-over business from ABCs?)
- *This has occurred at prior QDMs, however there has been lack of clarity on policy – so we come to Delegates today*

# Length & Frequency: Problem

If Delegates want voting, 4 hours is not enough!

If Delegates want breakout rooms, 4 hours many times will not be enough

**Resource Constraints:** *given current resources, 4 meetings year is unsustainable.*

**Conference Needs:** Given current Conference workload, 1-2/yr is not enough

# Length & Frequency: Potential Solutions

***Therefore –***

One model the Sustainability Study has been leaning towards recommending as *provisional practice (try for a ~year)* is:

- **1 ABC + 2 non-ABCs at 6.5 hours apiece (for non-ABCs)**

Other options:

- Increase resources to support 4 meetings/yr at 6.5 hrs apiece
- Something else?



# Resources: What does it currently take to put the Conference on? (work currently with WSO Committees)

## **ABC Committee**

- Admin work
- Agenda planning
- Delegate Education

## **Ballot Prep Committee**

## **IT Committee**

## **Data Analysis Committee**

Each Committee Needs: Volunteers/Special Workers, time between meetings, time to rest (self-care/avoiding burnout), consistency of volunteer force, volunteer training

# Additional Sustainability Issues for May report:

Strategies to support greater involvement by delegates in business-meeting service.

Strategies to manage ballot proposals per ABC and per year to align with Conference capacity.

Devise a plan for filling "process gap" regarding Policy and Procedure for Conference business meetings (this will be discussed more in next segment).

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# Open Discussion Voting, Duration & Frequency (10-15min)

any thoughts, questions?

*OPEN DISCUSSION (10-15 mins)*

Tensions between Desires/Needs and Current Resources

- Desires/Needs: Voting, New Business
- Format: Duration, Frequency
- Resources: Volunteers/Special Workers

The Conference has expressed desire for more **Ownership**

**WSO CAN'T DO THAT *FOR* YOU ... BUT WSO CAN DO IT *WITH* YOU!**