Discussion and Decision-Making Processes for Part 2 of the Partial, Virtual WSC
15 June 2020 Draft

At the end of the Part 1 of the partial, virtual WSC 2020, participants decided **to come back together virtually as a WSC 2020 in this cycle with the items for decision to be determined by CPs through eballot**. The Board committed to working with the WSC Cofacilitators to draft a set of discussion and decision-making processes for the sessions, and this document contains our ideas for those processes.

As you will see, we have taken the processes described in *A Guide to World Services in NA* (*GWSNA*) and made suggested updates to reflect current practices and adaptations for online use. We plan to discuss these ideas with delegates during the 27 June Conference participant web meeting. We will factor in participant input, and draft a final version of these processes for approval at the beginning of Part 2 of the partial, virtual WSC 2020.

The first two pages of this document are an introduction with some changes from the sessions in Part 1 of WSC 2020 called out. The pages that follow the introduction contain text extracted from *GWSNA* with changes we are suggesting marked in red.

Time challenges

As we explained in the email we sent about the epoll on items for decision, we are always challenged for time at the WSC, and that challenge is magnified in the limited time frame of a partial, virtual WSC.

In the virtual WSC 2020 sessions held recently, it took about 35 minutes to decide on a motion. There are 23 possible items for decision remaining in the *CAR* and CAT, not including any amendments or seating motions submitted by participants. Making decisions on those items alone, at 35 minutes each would take about 13 1/2 hours, not counting possible amendments. We are cautiously optimistic that it won't take that long to get through business, if we stick to the processes we all agree upon and if we commit to pay attention and listen mindfully.

It's so easy to get distracted when no one is watching us, and we are in front of a screen and tempted to check our email or WhatsApp chat with our fellows. For some of us, it may be very late or very early, and that makes it even harder to concentrate. One reason we are limiting each day to two sessions is so that we can all realistically devote our full attention to the Conference during each of those two-hour sessions. This isn't about pointing the finger at anyone in particular; we are *all* prone to distraction. Let's do our best to approach the WSC with a single-minded concentration.

If we listen well to each person, we will recognize if someone has already made the point we were going to make, and we can remove ourselves from the discussion pool. We will also know when a vote or straw poll is coming, and we can promptly respond.

Some changes from Part 1 of the partial, virtual WSC 2020:

Chats and Distractions: Part of handling the upcoming sessions as we would an in-person WSC means minimizing sidebar conversations. We are going to discontinue private chats to the WSC Cofacilitators or NAWS staff, except in the case of technical challenges. Sidebar conversations wouldn't be able to take place while a session was going on during an in-person WSC, and they don't seem to have been helpful in the first part of the virtual WSC 2020. (If you have technical challenges during the sessions, please reach out to Matt.)

Initial Straw Polls: You may remember that we had planned to use epolling to do the initial straw poll for all items for decision. We still intend to do that. So sometime soon after the amendment/motion deadline, which is 15 days before the first session, you will be receiving an email with a link to the poll and a deadline to respond. All of the results will be distributed prior to the WSC. The responses to those polls will help the Cofacilitators establish the order of business.

Amendments: We are asking that amendments and seating motions be submitted 15 days before the WSC (the deadline is ordinarily 10) so that we can get the material translated, prepare the epoll for the initial straw polls, and distribute the results before the sessions begin.

Pool and Queue: As in an in-person meeting, the order of hands in the *pool* is not relevant. The *queue* is an ordered list, selected from the members in the pool. The queue is selected to maximize diversity and to favor those who have not yet spoken. Because of the size of the body, if you have already spoken, you may not have another opportunity.

When we took a break between sessions during the first part of partial, virtual WSC 2020, the Cofacilitators took care to preserve the list of members whose hands were raised in the pool. The Cofacs will no longer do that because the order the hands are raised does not matter. This is the same as in the in-person WSC 2018, where used a numerically ordered grid to keep track of who had raised their hands to be in the pool. The grid was not in order of who raised their hand first.

We are suggesting an improvement that should help the body hear from a variety of views: If you wish to speak to a motion, we are asking that you select either thumbs up or thumbs down—indicating whether you intend to speak for or against the motion—to be put in the pool.

There were several pieces of Input from participants asking that we try to limit debate in some way, not necessarily with a rule, but through facilitation. We are going to attempt to take frequent polls and if debate is not moving the body in a substantial way, we will proceed to a vote.

Polling In-Session: In response to your requests, we are going to try to take less time for each poll or vote in session. We would like to take not more than two minutes per poll/vote. We will call out the numbers of participants who have not responded but we do not plan to unmute each of them and ask for a response.

We were asked to display the voting/poll buttons during the vote/poll and we plan to do that.

GWSNA, page 7:

The Meeting of the World Service Conference

. . .

For the purposes of decision making, conference participants are defined as regional delegates, zonal delegates, and World Board members. Regional and zonal delegates vote and make motions or proposals in all business sessions at the conference. Delegates may give their speaking right to their AD in a queue. World Board members do not vote during CAR-related Discussion and Decisions sessions, but may make motions or proposals in all sessions. The executive director of the World Service Office does not have a vote or the ability to make motions or proposals at the conference meeting. [Note: The chart on page 8 lists the different business sessions at the conference and what types of items (proposals or motions) are decided on in each.]

GWSNA, pages 10-12:

Introducing Motions and Amendments and Measuring Consensus

All of the motions and amendments to be considered at part two of the partial, virtual WSC 2020 will be straw polled electronically before sessions begin to measure the initial level of support for each motion and amendment.

When a motion or amendment is presented, the facilitator will ~~conduct~~ read the ~~initial~~a straw poll ~~to measure the initial level of support~~ results for the motion.

After the initial straw poll results of a motion are read, but before discussion of that motion, the Conference must make decisions about any amendments to the motion, unless the exception noted below applies.

Consensus will be measured as 80% or more of voting participants in agreement (identified as *consensus support*), or 80% or more of voting participants not in agreement (identified as *consensus not in support*).

- If there is a *consensus not in support* of the motion, the Conference has the option to decide on that motion without any changes (amendments) if participants wish. This decision must be made before the discussion of the motion, which is described in the next three bullet points.
- After amendments are dispensed with or the body decides not to hear amendments, ~~T~~the facilitator will select up to two members who are not part of the consensus, to comment on the motion
- The facilitator will then conduct a second straw poll.
  - If *consensus not in support* remains, discussion ends. The straw poll will be considered a vote, and the motion will have failed. The Cofacilitators will make it clear to all participants when the Conference is making a final decision.

- If there is *consensus support* for the motion, the Conference will have the option to discuss and decide on that motion without any changes (amendments) if participants wish. This decision must be made before the

discussion of the motion, which is described in the next three bullet points

- After amendments are dispensed with or the body decides not to hear amendments, Tthe facilitator will select up to two members who are not part of the consensus to comment on the motion.

- The facilitator will then conduct a second straw poll.
  - If *consensus support* remains, discussion ends. The straw poll will be considered a vote, and the motion will have passed. The Cofacilitators will make it clear to all participants when the Conference is making a final decision.

- The same process applies when there is consensus support or consensus not in support of an amendment: The facilitator will select up to two members who are not part of the consensus to comment on the amendment. Then a second straw poll will be taken. If consensus remains, the second straw poll will be considered a vote; a decision will have been made on the amendment.

- If the motion or amendment receives more than 20% but less than 80% support in the first or second straw poll, the facilitator will allow for discussion of the motion or amendment, as discussed in *A Guide to World Services* and using these tools.

Managing Discussions

The following are our current approaches for use in all *CAR-* and CAT-related Discussion and Decision sessions. They should be viewed as tools to assist in discussing business rather than policy or restrictions.

The facilitator has the ability to manage the discussion by using the following approaches:
- The facilitator may conduct intermediate straw polls to measure any change in support for the motion or proposal.
- The facilitator may declare that discussion will end after a specific speaker, or the facilitator may close the discussion queue or pool.
  - If there is an objection, the facilitator will conduct a vote to determine support for the facilitator's decision. *Two-thirds support* for the facilitator's decision is required for the decision to prevail. Any particular decision to close discussion can only be challenged once.
- Members may speak for a maximum of two minutes each timewhen they are recognized by the facilitator. Additional time may be allotted, at the discretion of the cofacilitator, for reasons such as translations.

Decision-making Thresholds

All decisions at the World Service Conference, excluding WSC elections, but including changes to motions or proposals and requests for a roll call vote or other procedural decisions, require a two-thirds (2/3) majority of those present and voting to vote in the affirmative to be adopted. See page 31 for the details of election procedures.

Straw Polls

Straw polls can give a sense of where the body is on a particular issue and can be used in a variety of ways in addition to the above described. The following terms may be used by the WSC Cofacilitator when announcing the results of a straw poll:

Unanimous support
Consensus support (meaning 80% or greater support) 80%–<100%
Strong support (meaning 2/3 majority support 66.66%–<80%)
Support (meaning simple majority support >50%–<66.66%)
Lack of support (meaning less than simple majority support >33.33%–50%)
Strong lack of support (meaning less than 1/3 support >20%–33.33%)
Consensus not in support (meaning 20% or fewer support >0%–20%)
No support

A straw poll can help to determine if any or further discussion is indeed necessary, to frame issues while discussion is occurring, and to determine if the body is ready to make a decision. These are not binding decisions and are simply a tool to aid in the consensus-based process.

It may be helpful to remember that an item must have at least "strong support" to pass.

If a motion or amendment has already received adequate discussion during the week, the conference may choose to have no further discussion at this time. As a body that only meets every two years, it is important that the conference be able to make decisions. When discussion on each motion or amendment is finished, the body makes a decision about that item, usually through a vote.

Decision Making

The WSC has decided to no longer have formal business sessions, using parliamentary procedure. Decisions about motions and amendments are made in the CAR- and CAT-related Discussion and Decisions sessions.

Robert's Rules and formal voting can often be an adversarial process where there is a "winner" and "loser" or a "right" and a "wrong." This is why the CBDM process that precedes voting at the conference is so important. It honors the importance we place on our common welfare and the value of all viewpoints—even when we agree to disagree.

Throughout the week, each participant is challenged to really listen to what is being said, to consider with an open mind what will best serve the Fellowship worldwide, and often to surrender to what seems to serve the greater good. With over a hundred participants, respect, patience, and trust are required. But we think the effort is worth the investment, and our experience from over twenty five conferences has taught us a lot about what works and what does not. The commitment to consensus-based decision making is a part of the spiritual means by which we invite a loving God to influence our decisions.

~~CAR-related Discussion and Decisions~~Items for Decision at Part Two of the Partial, Virtual WSC 2020

The purpose of the *CAR*-related Discussion and Decisions session at the conference is to consider the motions contained in the *Conference Agenda Report* and any amendments to those motions. Part two of the partial, virtual WSC 2020 will consider motions selected in advance by participants through electronic decision-making ballot. These may include selected *CAR* and CAT motions, any amendments to those motions, a decision on the *FIPT* moratorium, seating motions submitted by regions Items that appear in the *Conference Agenda Report* are ideally the result of

lengthy discussion and input at the previous conference and throughout the conference cycle. Any amendments to those motions must be submitted ~~ten~~ fifteen days before the opening day of part two of the WSC. Amendments to *CAR* and CAT motions are subject to a vetting process. The WSC Cofacilitators will ensure that the amendments are clear and lend themselves to a yes/no vote. Once arriving at the conference, the body is usually ready to make a decision. ~~The *CAR*-related Discussion and Decisions session occurs early in the conference week. The items contained in the *CAR* are the culmination of the work from the previous cycle, and finalizing them allows the conference to spend the rest of the week having discussions and sessions that will frame much of the work for the next conference cycle.~~

Straw Poll*: A straw poll is a measure of where the body stands on a particular issue. It is an informal pulse. Often motions or amendments are straw polled more than once during discussion.*

Vote*: A vote happens when the body makes a decision on an item.*

~~**CAT-related Discussion and Decisions**~~

~~The purpose of the CAT -related Discussion and Decisions session at the conference is to consider the motions related to material in the Conference Approval Track. During this session, decisions are made on motions to approve the NAWS budget and project plans; requests for seating, including any motions submitted within ten days of WSC opening day; most World Board motions included in the CAT such as approval of service material, revisions to Conference policy, or other changes *to A Guide to World Services in NA*; and any amendments to those motions. Amendments to motions must be submitted ten days before the opening day of the WSC. Amendments to *CAR* and CAT motions are subject to a vetting process. The WSC Cofacilitators will ensure that the amendments are clear and lend themselves to a yes/no vote.~~

WSC DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES

Note: For the last several Conferences, the WSC has been shifting from a set of decision-making rules based in parliamentary procedure to a set of consensus-based processes. We have tried to update the next three pages to reflect the changes the Conference has decided on thus far, but the transition to a new set of processes is ongoing, and the WSC has not yet made formal decisions about all of the new processes. As such, some of the sections below are no longer entirely applicable. We've noted when that is the case. Page 10 of this *Guide* also describes some of the processes used for discussion and decisions of motions and amendments.

In addition we have begun to use electronic voting at the WSC and the language in these Rules does not reflect that change. We hope to offer some revisions in the 2020 Conference Approval Track material to bring this section of *GWSNA* up to date.

The World Service Conference uses the following processes during the *CAR-* and CAT-related Discussion and Decisions sessions. Mutual trust and respect should be the basis for all decisions. In keeping with that spirit, the World Service Conference strives to base its decisions on consensus.

The guiding principles of NA, including the *Twelve Concepts for NA Service*, are foundational in all our service efforts.

WSC Processes

1.   Each Conference participant has only one vote. RD alternates and ZD alternates are considered to be the same "member" as their respective RD and ZD when acting as a participant. Delegates may give their speaking right to their AD in a queue.

2.   No member may speak on a motion more than once until others who wish to speak have had a chance to do so.

3.   Members may speak for a maximum of two minutes ~~each time~~when they are recognized by the facilitator. The facilitator may extend the time limit when they believe such action is warranted. Otherwise, the Conference must make a decision to extend time limits in order to increase the amount of time for each participant.

4.   When an item has consensus in an initial straw poll, initial debate is limited to no more than two speakers who are not part of the consensus. If consensus remains, the second straw poll will be considered a vote (a decision). Debate only occurs if necessary. The facilitator may extend that number if they believe such action is warranted.

~~4.~~5.   If a motion has consensus in the initial straw poll, the body may decide not to consider any amendments to the motion.

~~5.~~6.   Every main motion and amendment to a main motion must be ~~presented in writing~~submitted on a WSC Motion Form ~~and submitted~~ no less than ~~ten~~ fifteen days in advance of the partial, virtual WSC ~~2020~~ Part 2 opening day. Motions and their intents should be stated in a clear and concise manner. The names of the members proposing ~~and seconding~~ the motion must be listed on the form. When the motion or amendment is

introduced within the session, there must be a second. Motions presented by the World Board do not require a second. When the motion has been introduced and seconded, it will be displayed so that it is visible to all members. At that point, the motion belongs to the Conference and must be disposed of in some manner.

6.7.   Once a motion belongs to the Conference, discussion follows only if necessary. Amendments, as appropriate, may be applied to the main motion and must be disposed of in some manner before a decision is made on the main motion. If a motion has consensus in the initial straw poll, however, the body may decide not to entertain any amendments on that motion. Debate should focus on the merits of the motion or amendment and bring up points that have not already been made. Members should speak to a motion or amendment only after being recognized by the facilitator.

7.8.   The Conference may decide to replace or amend motions that have been presented based on prior discussions. When the motion is presented, the facilitator may recognize any participant offering a replacement or amendment, or offer a suggestion to the Conference. If supported by two-thirds of the Conference, the replacement/amendment will be accepted. The facilitator may interrupt this simplified process at any time they believe such action is warranted.

8.9.   Adoption of Motions

   a.   A two-thirds majority present and voting in the affirmative is required to pass a motion.

   b.   Regarding the addition of property to the Fellowship Intellectual Property Trust, deletion of property from the Trust, or the revision of the contents or nature of Trust Properties, only NA groups through their Regional Delegates may vote. To adopt, affirmative votes are required of two-thirds of the Regional Delegates recorded as present at the most recent roll call.

9.10.   A quorum (the number of voting members who must be present in order to conduct business) for the WSC is a majority of all eligible voting members.

Voting

After debate on a motion has ended, the conference decides the issue by a vote. The following rules apply to voting at World Service Conference business sessions:

When they believe there has been a sufficient amount of debate, the Cofacilitators will close the queue and move to a vote. Before beginning the voting process, they will ask, "Is anyone not ready to vote?" This is your opportunity to ask a question if you are confused about the process or you need a piece of information to make the decision. This is not an opportunity to express your view on the measure itself.

If you object to the Cofacilitators' decision to close debate and move to a vote, this is your opportunity to appeal the Cofacilitator. An appeal of the Cofacilitator means you believe that the Cofacilitators should not have closed the queue and moved to a vote on a measure. If you appeal the Cofacilitator, you will be given two minutes to explain why you believe discussion of the measure should continue; again, this is not an opportunity to express your view on the measure itself. The Cofacilitator will be given two minutes to explain why they closed the queue and moved to a vote. The body will then vote on whether to uphold the Cofacilitators' decision. Two-thirds of those present and voting must vote in favor of the Cofacilitators' decision for it to stand.

Note: At WSC 20

16 and 2018, we utilized an electronic voting system. This section of the WSC decision-making processes has not been updated to reflect current practices.

1. After the Cofacilitator establishes that everyone is ready to vote, Vvoting occurs in one of the following three two ways:

    a. Voice voteVoting in session -- The Cofacilitator will announce that the poll is open. Participants eligible to vote will select yes, not, abstain, or present not voting (see number 2 below) by using the symbols at the bottom of the participant list. The Cofacilitators will call out the numbers of participants who have not voted, and then they will close the vote and announce the results. The facilitator first asks if there are any objections to the motion. If none are voiced, the facilitator declares that the motion passes by unanimous consent. If there is any objection, the facilitator asks those in favor of the motion to respond by saying "aye," then asks those opposed to the motion to respond by saying "no," and then asks those abstaining to respond by saying "abstain." The facilitator then announces if the motion was approved or rejected. When the result is announced, any member can challenge the accuracy of the facilitator's determination and request a standing or roll call vote. The facilitator will ask the body if that is what they wish and then announce a decision.

    b. Standing voteVoting by epolling after the close of sessions -- The Cofacilitator will announce that the motion will be decided by epoll after the close of the sessions. Participants will receive an email with a link to log in to the decision-making poll. The deadline will be included in the email, and participants will have at least 48 hours to respond to the poll. After the poll is closed, participants will be notified that decisions have been posted to na.org. The facilitator asks those in favor of the motion to stand and remain standing while their numbers are counted. Those in favor are then asked to be seated, and the process is repeated for those in opposition, and then for those abstaining. Upon completion of the vote, the facilitator announces the number of votes in favor, the number of votes opposed, the number of abstentions, and then if the motion was approved or rejected.

    c. Roll call vote - The facilitator calls the name of each participant registered at the most recent roll call. When called, the participant responds by stating either "yes," "no," or "abstain." Participants who do not wish to participate in the vote may answer as "present" to be reflected in the record but to not affect the vote. After all responses are tabulated, the facilitator announces the number of votes in favor, the number of votes opposed, the number of abstentions, and then if the motion was approved or rejected.

2. Voting generally takes place by voice, unless a request is made and approved by the conference for a standing or roll call vote. A majority of those present and voting is required to adopt a motion ordering a standing or roll call vote. The facilitator may ask for a standing vote if a voice vote is unclear.

3.2. In a standing or roll call vote, pParticipants may choose to not affect the decision at all by being present but not participateing in the vote. This means that they will not be counted in the total of the vote for that motion and will be recorded as "present not votingdo not impact the decision." This differs from an abstention. An abstention does impact the outcome of a vote because it is effectively counted as not being in support of the motion.

4.3. A majority vote is more than half of the total voting body, and a two-thirds vote is at least two-thirds of the total voting body. All motions and amendments require

two-thirds to pass, as per WSC policy.

5.4.   An adopted motion takes effect at the conclusion of the conference, unless otherwise stated in the motion.

6.   Motions included in the *Conference Agenda Report*, and any amendments to those motions, are considered in the *CAR*-related Discussion and Decisions session. All other motions and amendments are considered in the CAT-related Discussion and Decisions session.

7.   Only Regional and zonal Delegates are eligible to vote on motions ~~during the~~that were published in the *CAR*. As noted above, only regional delegates are able to vote on motions regarding the addition of property to the Fellowship Intellectual Property Trust, deletion of property from the Trust, or the revision of the contents or nature of Trust Properties,

8.5.   related Discussion and Decisions session.

9.6.   Regional Delegates, zonal delegates, and World Board members are eligible to vote on motions ~~during the CAT-related Discussion and Decisions session~~that were published in the CAT.

The Discussion to Decision Process

Following is the process that was used at WSC 2018 in the *CAR*- and CAT-related Discussion and Decisions Sessions. These bullet points come from a handout given to participants before the WSC and have been revised to reflect decisions made at the WSC such as changing the amount of time each participant has to speak.

◆ A proposal or motion is introduced.
◆ There is an initial straw poll.
◆ If there are proposals to change the motion, they must be dispensed with before the main motion is discussed and decided.
◆ The process to discuss proposals to amend motions operates in the same way: the proposal is read, and an initial straw poll is taken.
◆ If there is consensus in the initial straw poll, discussion of the proposal or motion is limited to two participants in the minority. (The WSC defines consensus support as 80% or greater support and consensus not in support as 20% or fewer support.) After those two people speak, a second straw poll will be taken. If consensus support or not in support remains after those two participants speak, the second straw poll will be considered a vote, and the measure will be decided. Participants will be reminded before the second straw poll that this will be a decision if the Conference is still in consensus. If the second straw poll reveals that there is no longer consensus, discussion will proceed until a decision is reached.
◆ If a motion has consensus support or consensus not in support in the initial straw poll, the body may decide not to consider any amendments to the motion.
◆ If there is not consensus in the initial straw poll, those who wish to speak to the measure will ~~raise their cards~~select "thumbs up" or "thumbs down" to be placed in the discussion pool. The Cofacilitators will develop a queue from the members in

the pool, and call on members when it is their turn to speak.

- The order of hands in the pool is not relevant. The queue is an ordered list, selected from the members in the pool. The queue is selected to maximize diversity and to favor those who have not yet spoken. Because of the size of the body, if a participant has already spoken, they may not have another opportunity.

- Each member has up to two minutes to speak (those being translated will be given more time). The Conference uses a timer in decision-making sessions that ~~goes from green to yellow to red as the allotted time passes~~will be displayed on the screen.

- In the course of discussion of a motion or proposal, straw polls will be taken to measure the body and see if discussion is having an effect.

- Before a vote on an item, everyone will be asked whether they are ready to make a decision. Participants requiring information to make a decision, or who are unclear about the process, have this opportunity to ask those urgent questions.

- At any point, the Cofacilitators can decide to end discussion and take a final vote on the item being considered. A participant can challenge that decision, and if so, the body will vote on whether to uphold the Cofacilitators' decision to end discussion. Support (at least two-thirds) in favor of the Cofacilitators must exist for the Cofacilitators' decision to end discussion to stand.

- If any of the ~~proposals~~ amendments to ~~change~~ a main motion pass, the main motion will be changed accordingly. After the ~~proposals~~ amendments to ~~change~~ the motion are decided on, the body will discuss and decide on the main motion using the same discussion process. It will still be possible to ask to commit a motion or proposal to the World Board or to divide a motion or proposal into more than one measure. Either of these actions needs two- thirds Conference agreement.

Introduce motion and announce initial straw poll results

Consensus in initial straw poll (≥ 80% for or against)

Lack of consensus in initial straw poll (21%–79% support)

If there are amendments, decide whether to discuss and decide on them

if the body decides to consider amendments

Amendments are decided before motion using the same process

Discussion pool is open. Cofacs manage queue. Participants have up to 2 minutes to speak.

Discussion limited to 2 in the minority

Second straw poll is taken

Straw polls measure effect of discussion

If consensus remains, this is a decision

If there is no longer consensus, discussion continues using the process described for measures without consensus

Cofacs determine when to end discussion and announce when a vote will be taken