

WSC 2020 Discussion and Decision Making Processes

This document is our best effort at describing the virtual, partial WSC and how to prepare. This is our first attempt at a virtual WSC, and we will all be feeling our way together as we go. Together we can!

Participant Identification

Each voting participant should name themselves with a three-digit participant number, service position, and region or zone. For example, 001 RD ABCD Michelle, or 122 ZD LAZF Andrea, or 130 WB Tim. Alternates will be named similarly except without the number. For example, AD ABCD Paul, or AD LAZF Mauro. If you have a personal Zoom account, you may want to change your user name in your Zoom account for the virtual WSC week so that your log-in name will remain consistent. The list of all participants, containing the numbers for voting participants, will be sent to you ahead of time. You may notice your region or zone's name has been abbreviated; this is just to fit more easily into the participants' list.

Who Participates

Each seated region or zone has one voice and one vote when the virtual WSC is in session. *A Guide to World Services in NA* explains that each seated region (or zone) is seen as a single participant at the WSC:

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. (*GWSNA*, p. 65)

When we are all together in one room in an in-person WSC, delegates use a numbered card to signify that they would like to speak and an electronic clicker to vote or respond to a straw poll. Each region or zone only has one member with a voice or a vote, but a delegate is able to pass these tools to an alternate when they are sitting next to each other. We are more limited in an electronic platform, and cannot easily pass a number back and forth.

Delegates will be the members who speak, vote, and respond to polls during the virtual WSC. If for some reason, a delegate is unable to fulfill that role, they should contact Lori@na.org to let her know that the regional or zonal alternate will be the speaking and voting participant for a given session, and their number will be reassigned. We cannot reassign numbers without notice of at least an hour before the session starts.

We have had many, many practice sessions to try to prepare for the virtual WSC, but the complexity of administering a virtual Conference of hundreds of people is substantial. Thank you in advance for your patience with the process. We will do our best to make it smooth.

Observers

We believe we will be able to accommodate observers through a separate Zoom feed. We are working out the details. We ask that observers and participants not make recordings, take screen shots, or post pictures on social media. Please respect the anonymity of trusted servants. Thank you!

Translations

Simultaneous interpretation will be available for Spanish-, Portuguese-, and Japanese-speaking participants. If you have translation needs for other languages, and someone who can translate for you, please contact Johnny@na.org and let us know as soon as possible.

Participants who require translation will get help from their interpreter on how to access the translation feed. Be aware, that you may need to have Zoom in full screen to access translations. If you are an English speaker and wish to participate in the WSC in English, please skip the interpretation menu and do not select any language.

Technology Requirements

If you have a computer available, that is the best way to connect to the virtual WSC. Tablets and phones may have less functionality.

Please make sure you have downloaded the most current version of Zoom.

Please do everything possible to maximize your internet connection. We know bandwidth can be an issue for many of us, but we cannot fix an unstable connection from our end. Please make whatever effort you can to maximize your bandwidth. Some participants may want to hardwire their internet connection rather than depending upon wifi. If you have an unreliable internet connection, you may want to consider shutting your video off unless you are speaking.

Because chat will be off during the meeting, if there are participants you plan to communicate with during the meeting, you will want to establish how you are going to talk to each other during the meeting—whether by WhatsApp or text messaging or some other method.

Preparation Beforehand

We plan to be online to assist participants with their connections and get them used to the platform on Wednesday 22 April, 12-4 pm, Pacific Daylight Time. We will do four practice sessions of 30 to 45 minutes, on the hour—one at noon, one at one, one at two, and one at three. Here is the link: <https://naws.zoom.us/j/848482130>. If at all possible, please plan to log on at some point during that four-hour window from the device you will be using at the virtual WSC so that you can be as prepared as possible for the event.

Under ordinary circumstances, one of the primary ways to prepare for the WSC is to read the *Conference Report*. But these are, of course, not ordinary circumstances. Rather than publish a lengthy report, we are posting WSC-related material as we finalize each piece. You will find a link to these materials by clicking the link titled WSC 2020 Virtual Materials at the top of the Conference page: <https://www.na.org/?ID=wsc2020virt>.

Meeting Technology Protocols

We will open the room an hour early for the first session of each day and a half hour early for the second session. Please plan to log in early to make sure your connection is working and that you will be ready to go when we begin. After the meeting begins, we will open a “waiting room” for latecomers. Participants in the waiting room will be let into the WSC if they have named themselves according to the conventions described above.

Once the meeting begins, everyone will be muted and chat will be disabled, though participants will still be able to send a chat message to the host/cohost.

Just as in an in-person WSC, please do not record the sessions in any way.

Types of Sessions

There are several different types of virtual WSC sessions. We have no plans for small-group sessions at this time.

Orientation and Agreements Needed to Proceed: The opening day (Friday 24 April) sessions will be focused on orienting everyone to the processes and making the decisions as a body that need to take place in order to have discussions and make decisions during the week. The Friday sessions will be different than the sessions in the rest of the week.

Presentations: Sessions such as the HRP presentation and the NAWS Report are presentations followed by questions and answers.

Discussion of Items for Decision: Sessions on the budget and project plans or the *FIPT* inspection moratorium will be followed by decision-making polls sent out after the close of business. In an in-person WSC, there is a long process to discuss these items, including the chance to offer amendments. In this virtual process, we need to be able to have enough discussions in session to frame the motions we will be sending to you by poll following the session. That requires building a sense together what is both practical and what the body wishes. The process does not afford considering possible changes by amendment but rather by discussion.

We will have more framed about how the week progresses by the first day of the virtual WSC 2020 sessions – 24 April. We are in the process now of both creating an emergency budget and compiling the *CAR* survey results.

Discussion Process

The WSC Cofacilitators will use the same basic process for discussion that we use in the CAR- and CAT-related Discussion sessions at the Conference:

- ◆ Participants who wish to speak, will raise their virtual hand to be put in the discussion pool. If you wish to be removed from the pool, please just lower your hand.
- ◆ The WSC Cofacilitators will form a queue from the members in the pool by selecting a smaller number of participants, with the goal being to hear from a diverse range of participants and hear first from participants who have not yet spoken.
- ◆ The queue will be displayed on the screen. As participants are called on, they will be unmuted to speak.
- ◆ Each participant has up to two minutes to speak (those being translated will be given more time). We will have a timer on-screen.
- ◆ Remember to speak slowly to allow time for translation.
- ◆ When you have spoken, staff will lower your hand.

Participants are encouraged to email the World Board at any point with questions or concerns that do not get addressed during a session.

Voting and Polling Options

Each seated region or zone has one vote. There are four options when voting or responding to a straw poll: *yes*, *no*, *abstain*, and *present not voting*.

The epolling system and the Zoom software do not report or retain information on how individual Conference participants voted.

The chart below provides an example of how the different options can affect the outcome of polls and votes.

Four options for votes & straw polls

Example with a voting threshold of 2/3

Yes	No	Abstain	Present not voting	Outcome	Explanation
40	20	0	0	Passes	40=2/3 of 60
38	19	3	0	Fails	38<2/3 of 60
38	19	0	3	Passes	38=2/3 of 57

ABSTENTIONS figure into the vote count

PNV does NOT figure into the vote count

Polling and Voting While in Session

During discussion, it can be helpful to take straw polls to determine whether the body seems ready to make a decision and whether discussion is affecting the body. As with a vote, only delegates and Board members should respond to a poll.

The epolling software we are using to make decisions when not in session is well designed for our purposes. Participants can select any one of the four responses—yes, no, abstain, or present not voting. There is no way to determine how individual participants have voted using the epolling software. The results of each epoll are not identified by participant, they are not stored in the system, and they are certified.

Polling or voting options during Zoom sessions are less well designed for our purposes. Because there is no way to determine who is responding to a Zoom poll, we will be utilizing what are called “nonverbal” responses in Zoom. These are found at the bottom of the Zoom participant list. When we will make a decision or take a poll during a session, delegates and Board members will respond using these symbols: the green check mark for yes, the red x for no, the gray back arrows for abstain, and the blue forward arrows for present not voting. Zoom does not record these polls, but those administering the meeting will see the totals, and the Cofacilitators will announce the poll or vote results. Using these nonverbals to conduct votes and polls means that participant responses will be visible to all while the vote or poll is taking place.



Decision Making Thresholds

All WSC decisions require a 2/3 majority except the following

- ✓ 60%: Election of Board members
- ✓ >50%: Election of WSC Cofacilitators and Human Resource Panel members

Decision Making Process While In Session Friday

Most decisions will happen via decision-making epolls emailed to participants after the sessions. Some decisions, however, must take place during the sessions, particularly the decisions on Friday which are necessary to convene a partial, virtual WSC. Those decisions will use the following process.

- ◆ Roll will be taken using the numbers of the participants logged in to the meeting.
- ◆ A motion is introduced.
- ◆ There is an initial straw poll.
 - If there are amendments to change the motion, they must be dispensed with before the main motion is discussed and decided. The process to discuss amendments to motions operates in the same way as the process outlined below for motions.
- ◆ If there is consensus in the initial straw poll, discussion of the 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 there is not consensus in the initial straw poll, discussion of the motion will open, using the process outlined in the Discussion Process section above.
- ◆ In the course of discussion of a motion, straw polls will be taken to measure the body and see if discussion is having an effect.
- ◆ At any point, the Cofacilitators can decide to end discussion. 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.
- ◆ When votes are taken in session, they will use the process described above in the Polling and Voting While in Session section

Types of Decisions

There are several different types of decisions that participants will make.

- *Decisions about the WSC itself:* These decisions include decisions about processes that will be used in the course of the partial, virtual WSC as well as a decision about what it means to be present at the WSC . These decisions will happen during the first day of the virtual WSC, Friday 24 April. We will use the same process described in the Polling Process section above
- *Decisions about an emergency budget and project plans:* In an in-person WSC, these would be CAT motions. These decisions will be made through a decision making epoll that will go out after the discussion session Sunday 26 April. Participants will be given a deadline, and results will be announced Wednesday 29 April

- *Decision about whether to extend the moratorium on the FIPT inspection clause:* This moratorium expires at the close of WSC 2020, so this decision may not need to be made immediately if participants decide not to close the Conference on 3 May.
- *Elections:* These decisions will be made through an eballot that will go out after the discussion on Wednesday. Participants will be given a deadline, and results will be announced on Saturday 2 May
- *Next steps:* These decisions include whether to address the WSC business not yet conducted, particularly the CAR- and CAT-related decisions, and if so when. Other decisions include the sorts of items normally agreed to in the Moving Forward session of the WSC, such as workgroups for the cycle. Most of these decisions will probably happen during the sessions on Saturday and Sunday 2-3 May. Some may happen through decision-making epolls after these sessions, with results announced through email.

Virtual Service Meeting Tips:

If you have not yet read the Web Meeting Participant Orientation document on www.na.org/conference, please do so. Here are some additional tips:

- It may be helpful to download Zoom and establish a log-in, if you have not already done so. Please update Zoom on your computer an hour or two before logging on: Click on your picture in the upper right-hand corner, and select “check for updates” in the dropdown menu.
- Be mindful that if your video is on, everyone can see you.
- Try to find a place where you have the best internet connectivity and no background noise, and try not to move around too much.
- Connecting with a computer is optimum. If you connect with a tablet or phone, it may be challenging to manage controls and you may not have full functionality.
- If your internet connection is unreliable, you may want to connect to the meeting as usual, and then switch to phone audio by selecting that option from the up arrow next to the microphone icon and following instructions. Be aware that language interpretation requires a computer audio connection. Connecting audio through your phone is not an option if you will be listening to an interpreter.

Virtual WSC Agenda

Each Virtual WSC day, sessions will run 11 am-1 pm and 2 pm-4 pm, Pacific Daylight Time

24 April Friday

- Orientation to a virtual WSC
- Business and/or agreements needed to engage in a partial virtual WSC

25 and 26 April Saturday and Sunday

- NAWS Report
- Emergency budget and project plans
- FIPT inspection clause moratorium

These are times allotted for presentation and discussion. Polling for decisions will follow the close of the Sunday session. It will take us some time to finalize the poll and have it translated into Portuguese and Spanish. Participants will have a deadline to vote and then results will be discussed when we reconvene Wednesday.

29 April Wednesday

- Polling results
- HRP report and preparation for elections

The ballot for elections will be sent out following the last Wednesday session.

2-3 May Saturday and Sunday

- Recap of decisions made, announce elections results
- Where we go from here and questions emailed to the World Board during the week