

## Al-Anon Thought/Task Force - Immediate Past Delegate Position

July 2023

Thought/Task Force Committee: Gail S, Dennis G, Amy G, Ernie W.

**CHARGE:** For the Thought Force Committee to expand on the information and make a recommendation on the original Thought Force Report which charge was “Discuss, using Knowledge Based Decision Making (KBDM), the motion “That the BC/Yukon Area create the position of Immediate Past Delegate (IPD) to become part of the Area World Service Committee.”

**DEFINITION** of KBDM means information gathering and discussion before a possible solution is crafted and a decision is made.

### **ALIGNMENT WITH AL-ANON PRINCIPLES**

- . *Tradition #1:* Our common welfare should come first; personal progress for the greatest number depends upon unity.
- . *Concept #4:* Participation is the key to harmony.
- . *Concept #5:* The rights of appeal and petition protect minorities and ensure that they be heard.
- . *General Warranty #3:* All decisions be reached by discussion, vote and whenever possible by unanimity.

### **FRAMING**

In 2022 at an Area World Service Committee Meeting in Salmon Arm a group of the Officers, Coordinators and Liaisons realized that although our Immediate Past Delegate had come to Salmon Arm she was not able to attend our meetings. It was then discussed how much knowledge was not being utilized for the benefit of the District Representatives, Officers, Coordinators and Liaisons. The benefit we would all gain if there was a position for the Immediate Past Delegate to attend the meetings and share her years of experience would be priceless. Thus, a motion was made at Assembly to create a position for the Immediate Past Delegate which was tabled for the 2023 Assembly as the Groups Representatives needed more information.

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That is what the Thought Force originally investigated and was presented at the Area World Service Committee Meeting in May 2023. The Thought Force was then asked to expand the report, make a recommendation, and provide it for the September 2023 Assembly with the Group Representatives.

Following is the information requested using Knowledge Based Decision Making.

**Question 1:** What do we know about the members' or prospective members' wants, needs, or preferences that are relevant to this discussion?

- . *We know* that members did not receive advance knowledge of this motion.
- . *We know* that members felt they did not have enough information at the time of the vote.
- . *We know* that members are concerned about the finances involved in approving this new position.
- . *We know* that we have already been involving Past Delegates in various informal ways at no cost to Area.
- . *We know* that members value continuity of service, rotation of leadership unity and growth of Al-Anon in BC/Yukon/Area.
- . *We know* that not all members have the experience of serving as an Officer, Coordinator or Liaison which affects their view of how beneficial the knowledge of the Past Delegate is in the aspects of history, familiarity with Area and World Service structure
- . *We know* that past Delegates currently attend meetings such as A.W.S.C.M. and Assembly at their own expense.
- . *We know* that there is the position of Archive Coordinator, which is part of the Officers, Coordinators & Liaison positions that has been open for awhile and other positions go vacant which do not incur expenses.
- . *We know that* the Immediate Past Delegate (IPD) not only has 3 years of Delegate experience they usually have several Officer, Coordinator and Alternate Delegate positions which amounts to a great deal of knowledge and expertise when it comes to Al-Anon operations, links of service and principles, traditions, and concepts.

**Question 2:** What do we know about the capacity and strategic position of the organization relative to this issue?

- . *We know* that a motion was made in 1970 stating that “Past Delegates may serve in an “advisory capacity”. (This motion does not make it a position nor cover expenses.)
- . *We know* that the current Past Delegate would be happy to assist in an advisory role.  
*We know* that the Immediate Past Delegate’s 3 years of experience in their Delegate role could be to aid in the creation and direction to resources for Thought and Task Forces, Workshops, Assembly, AWSCM and past Motions to name a few.
- . *We know* that the IPD could be a valuable contact for the current Delegate to obtain information and contacts to make their very important position easier to navigate particularly with the World Service Conference (WSC).
- . *We know* that other Areas have passed motions like this one in Canada and the United States. Most have the Immediate Past Delegate as a position and pay expenses for A.W.S.C.M., Assembly and Officer & Coordinators, Liaison meetings.
- . *We know* that the Treasurer has advised the average cost of an Officer, Coordinator or Liaison to attend meetings is \$800.00 - \$1000.00 per year depending on where the person lives. This includes travel, accommodations, meals, and any miscellaneous appropriate expenses for a 2 night 3 day double occupancy stay.
- . *We know* that based on the current contributions the Treasurer is receiving she advised that we could afford the funds that would be spent for an Immediate Past Delegate for a 3 year term.
- . *We know* that not all BC/Yukon Service positions are filled but are budgeted for so there could potentially be excess funds available.

**Question 3:** What do we know about the current realities and evolving dynamics that are relevant to this discussion?

- . The general membership is less trusting post-covid. This implies a need to present facts clearly.
- . The Al-Anon Fellowship is changing – there is declining membership, and we are more virtual than ever before.
- . Delegates have less time with each other presently. This motion aims to increase that.
- . We stand to gain wisdom and historical experience and involve Past Delegates more often than has been in the past.
- . Not all Delegates may want to take this position after serving 3 years as Delegate and other previous service positions.
- . There could be some Immediate Past Delegates who may not be able to afford the expense of attending meetings without this being a recognized position to have expenses paid.
- . Evolving hybrid meetings reduces costs for Area.

**Question 4:** What are the ethical implications of our choices (pros and cons)? This includes consideration of how the Legacies apply.

Pros

- . Approving this motion would facilitate the intent of the three Legacies, 12 Steps, Traditions and Concepts.
- . Incorporating the input of Delegates would increase our unity.
- . This motion respects our Links of Service.
- . The current Delegate would be assisted by this motion being approved.
- . The creation of this position would provide depth and some continuity of knowledge and service within BC/Yukon.

Cons

- . This position would increase the time commitment for any Delegate who is voted in taking into consider the IPD position.
- . Rotation of Leadership could be diminished by this motion.
- . The current Delegate could have less autonomy if this motion were passed.

**Question 5:** What we wish we knew, but don't.

- . *We don't know* the attitude and motivation of future Delegates.
- . *We don't know* if some IPD's may exert dominance over the current Delegate.
- . *We don't know* if this motion may discourage the IPD returning to "normal life."
- . *We don't know* if this motion would create "too many cooks".
- . *We don't know* how other Past Delegates would feel about paying their own expenses to the Assembly and AWSCM meetings.
- . *We don't know* if this would imply we would create other "past positions".
- . *We don't know* what it would mean if a Delegate were to serve in the position more than once.
- . *We don't know* if the motion should read "if IPD is needed".
- . *We don't know* if the motion should read "what we would do if an Immediate Past Delegate does not want to serve?"

**RECOMMENDATION**

The Thought Force considered available information through the KBDM process regarding the prospect of a new Immediate Past Delegate position. The Thought Force, based on the information in this report, recommends that Al-Anon members proceed with adding the Immediate Past Delegate to BC Yukon Area allowing them to attend and participate in all Area meetings and their expenses be paid when attending or doing Al-Anon work for Area. We also recommend the motion be revised to add "for a 3 year term". It is very common that members move to other positions in Area once completing a 3 year term to a position that is 3 years. If the Immediate Past Delegate does not want to take on this position it would be offered

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to the next Past Delegate and so on. We believe this position will be a tremendous asset to the AI-Anon Family Group for BC/Yukon.

We, The Thought/Task Force recommend a motion be made at Assembly as follows:

“That the BC/Yukon Area create the position of Immediate Past Delegate (IPD) to become part of the Area World Service Committee.” This will be a 3 year term with expenses paid for attending A.W.S.C.M., Assembly, Area meetings and any other Area business as approved by the Officers of BC/Yukon. If the Immediate Past Delegate declines the position the previous Past Delegate would be offered the position and so on.

It is with gratitude we submit this report for consideration to the Group Representatives at Assembly September 22, 23 and 24<sup>th</sup> 2023 in Langley.