

Al-Anon Family Groups
Southern NSW
AREA SERVICE GUIDE



October 2024



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1. Overview

- a) The *Southern New South Wales Area Service Guide* documents the agreement between the Fellowship side of the Area (the Area Assembly and the Area Service Committee) and the legal entity that represents it (the Area Association Committee). Both committees are sub-committees of the Area Assembly (refer *Australian Service Handbook*). Between Area Assemblies the Area Service Committee acts as representative of the Assembly. The Area Service Structure Diagram (Figure 1) outlines the relationship between the Assembly and the two subcommittees.
- b) The Area Assembly represents the Group Conscience of all Groups in the Area and remains the primary decision-making forum for the Al-Anon Fellowship in the Area.
- c) The Area Association is the incorporated body legally responsible for Al-Anon Family Groups (including Alateen) in the Area. The Area Association President and the Area Treasurer are members of both the Area Service Committee and the Area Association Committee. The members of the Association Committee also participate in the Area Assembly.

The *Southern NSW Area Service Guide* is to be read in conjunction with the current versions of the *Australian Service Handbook* and the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* and the current *Constitution of Al-Anon Family Groups Southern New South Wales Incorporated*.

Other Relevant Documents:

Southern NSW Area Safety Policy (<https://al-anon.org.au/southern-new-south-wales/>)

Southern NSW Area Zoom Guidelines & Protocols (<https://al-anon.org.au/southern-new-south-wales/>)

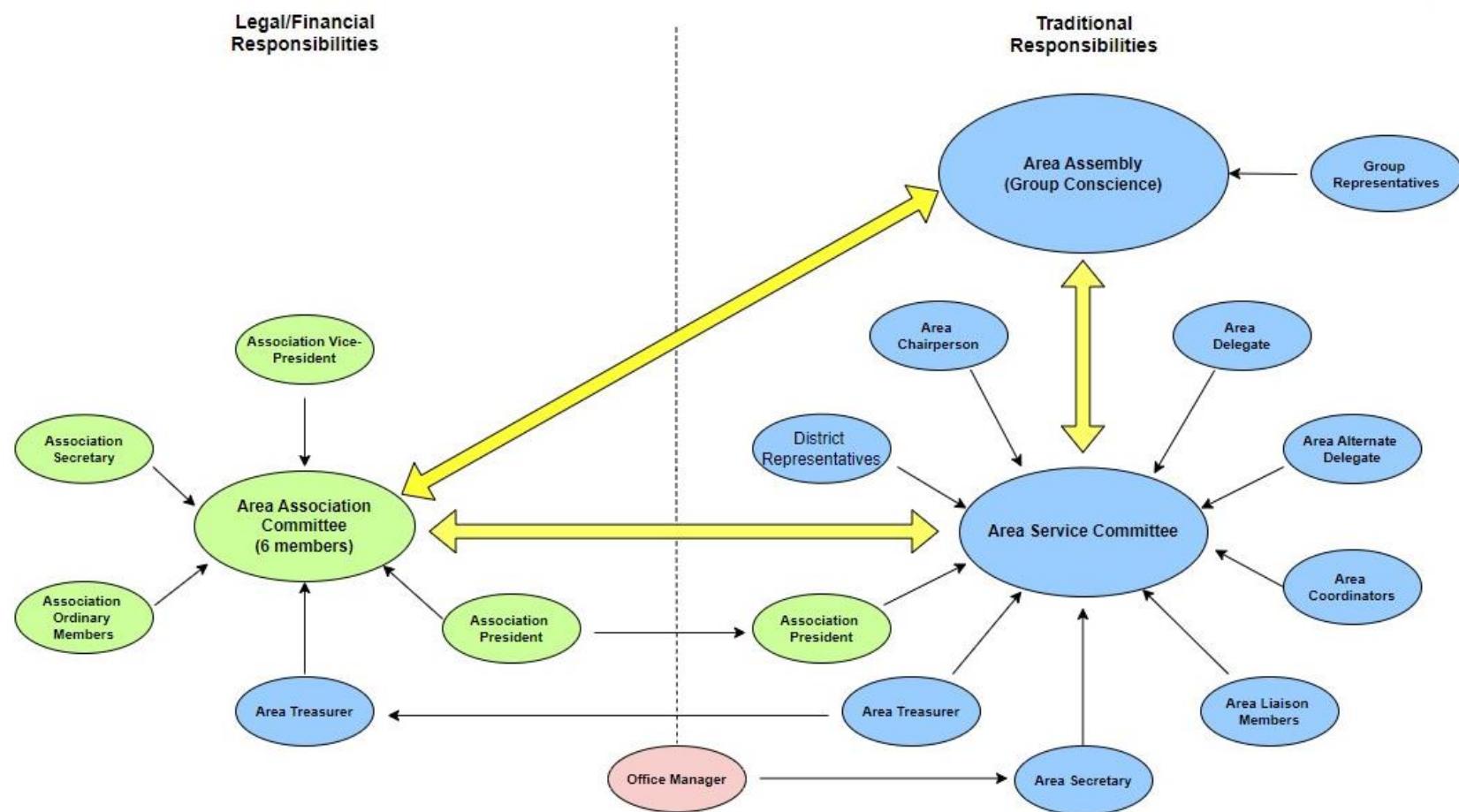
Conflict Resolution Materials:

K-17, Conflict Resolution Kit (<https://al-anon.org.au/shop/conflict-resolution-kit/>)

S-72, Conflict Resolution using our Twelve Traditions (<https://al-anon.org.au/shop/conflict-resolution-using-twelve-traditions/>)



Figure 1. Southern New South Wales Area Service Structure



Note:
Two way arrow indicates
flow of information

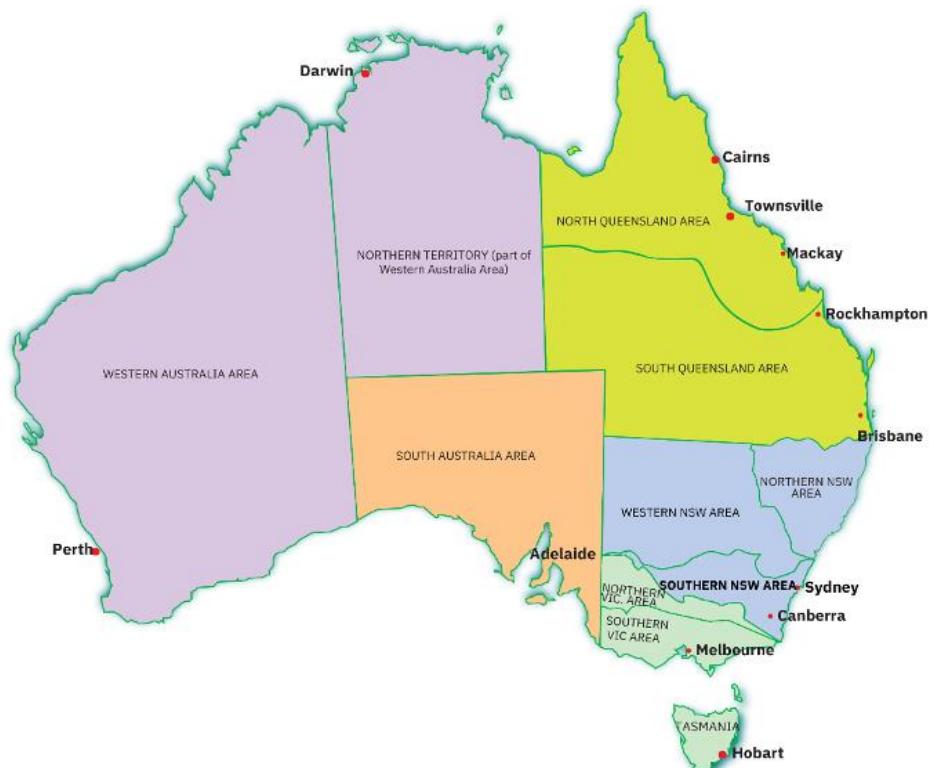


2. The Area Assembly

2.1 Introduction

The *Southern NSW Area Service Guide* sets out the principles and relationships through which Al-Anon can function in the Area. All nine Areas within Australia are registered within their State as an incorporated Association. Each Assembly appoints a small number of members (5-7) to their incorporated Association which acts as the legal entity to take care of legal and financial requirements of the Fellowship within the Area. The Area Association Committee is responsible to the Assembly and the Area Service Committee. The Assembly, representing the voice of the Groups within the Area, is the higher authority (refer *Australian Service Handbook*). Between Assemblies the Service Committee acts as representative of the Assembly.

Figure 2: Areas in Australia

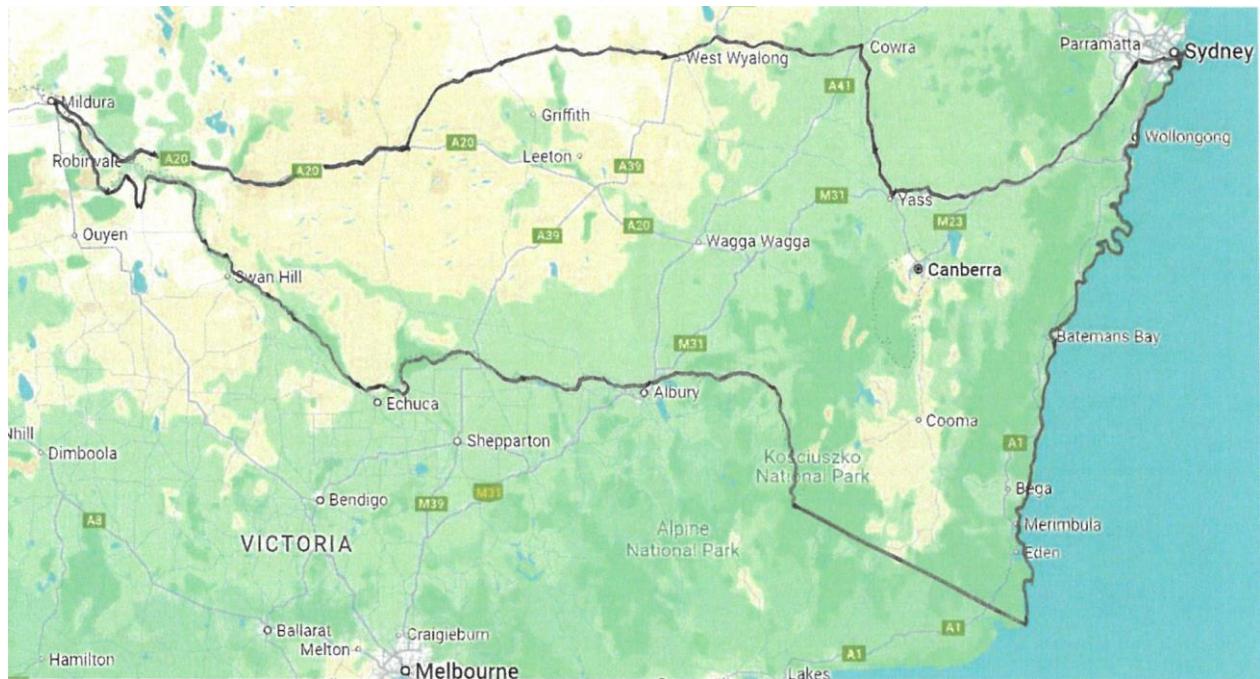


2.2 Description of the Southern NSW Area

The Southern NSW Area includes the area south of Sydney Harbour east until it meets Concord Road at the Ryde Bridge. The boundary goes south along Concord Road/Homebush Bay Drive and continues along Centenary Drive south until it intersects with the Hume Highway (A22). It then continues south-west along the Hume Highway until it reaches the Cabramatta Creek just north of the Warwick Farm Racecourse. The border then follows the Cabramatta Creek until it meets the Georges River. The border continues south along the Georges River west around the Holsworthy Barracks and follows the O'Hares Creek east around Wedderburn until the border of the Campbelltown City Council, then extends directly west to meet the Hume Highway (M31). The border follows the Hume Highway south west until it reaches the town of Yass and continues along the Hume Highway north around Yass until it meets the Lachlan Valley Way (B81). The border follows B81 until it reaches the town of Cowra. The border then heads west along the Mid-Western Highway (B64) until it reaches the town of Hay. Here the border goes south of the town of Hay to where it intersects with the Sturt Highway (A20). The border then follows the Sturt Highway west until it reaches the town of Mildura. The boundary then follows the Murray River east, circling north around the town of Albury and continues until it meets the Pacific Ocean. The boundary encompasses all of the area east of the above to the coast line and south of the Sydney Harbour east up to the Ryde Bridge on Concord Road.



Figure 3: Southern NSW Area



2.3 Description of the Southern NSW Area Districts

There are seven Districts in the Southern NSW Area (Waratah and Illawarra form one combined District).

Figure 4: Sydney Districts

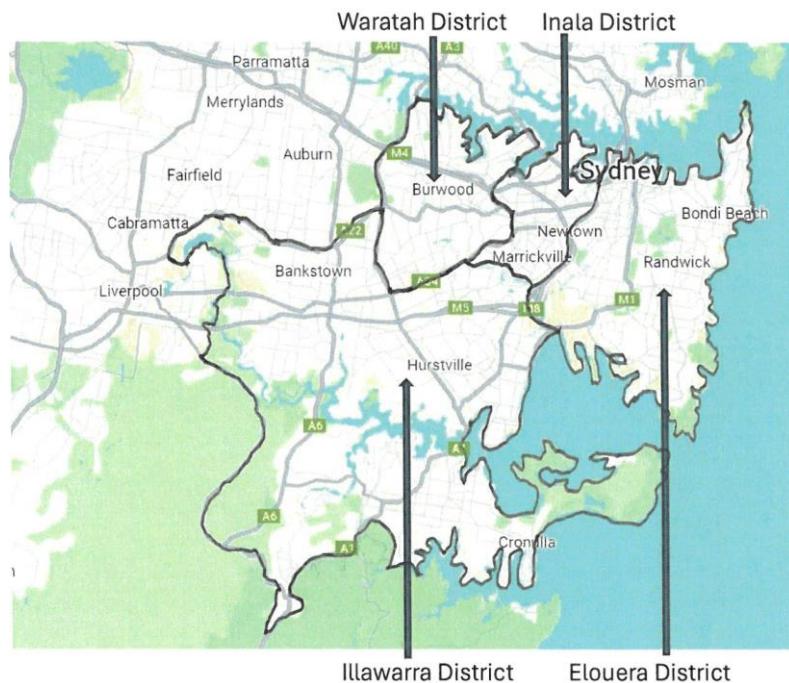
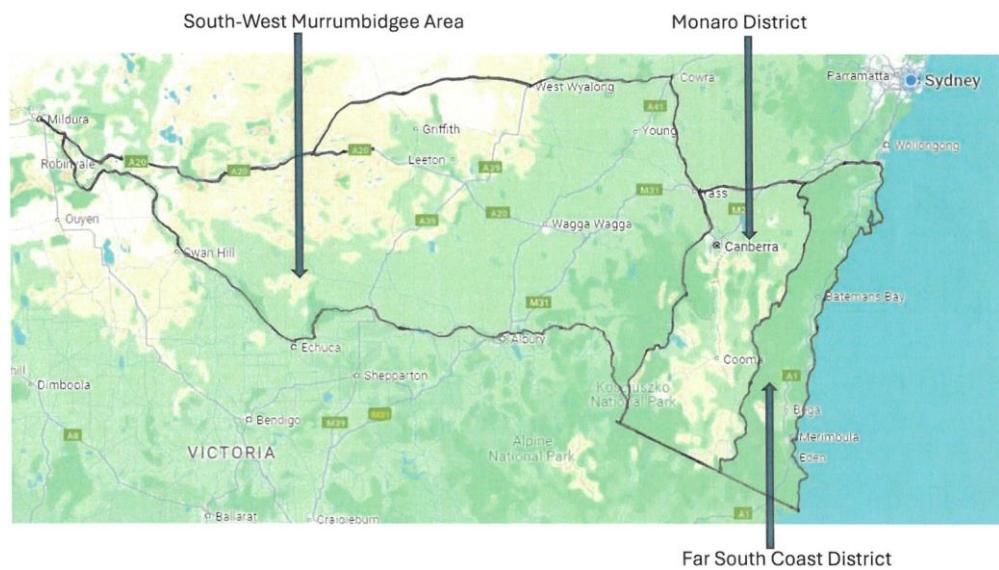




Figure 5: Byamee District



Figure 6: Monaro, Far South Coast and South-West Murrumbidgee Districts



2.4 Composition of the Area Assembly

The Assembly is comprised of:

- Group Representatives (GRs) from Al-Anon and Alateen Groups in the Area
- District Representatives (DRs) from Districts in the Area
- Members of the Service Committee
- Members of the Association Committee

Members of Al-Anon Family Groups in the Area are welcome to attend as observers but do not have a voice or a vote, each Group being represented by its elected GR. GRs as well as Service Committee and Association Committee members present at Area Assembly have a voice. Only GRs are entitled to vote. DRs who are also GRs are entitled to vote in their capacity as GRs. As trusted servants of their Groups, GRs are free to vote as their conscience dictates (Concept 3).



2.5 How the Assembly Functions

- a) The Assembly meets annually, usually in June, and special meetings may be called on important and urgent matters that must be addressed between these Assemblies. An additional Assembly, the Election Assembly, is held every third year, usually in November.
- b) The purpose of the Assembly is to hear the Delegate's Report from the annual Australian Service Conference and to ensure adequate interchange of information and ideas about service activities in Al-Anon. The Assembly hears reports on Fellowship activities from Service Committee members and on financial and business matters from Association Committee members.
- c) Assembly members consider all matters affecting Al-Anon in the Area as a whole, engage in debate, appoint necessary sub-committees and pass suitable motions for the direction of the Service Committee and Association Committee.
- d) The decisions made at Assembly guide the Service Committee and Association Committee in their delivery of services to the Groups.
- e) The Assembly may recommend action respecting serious deviation from Al-Anon Traditions and Concepts of Service in the Area.
- f) At an Assembly, suitably qualified Al-Anon members, nominated by the Association Committee, may be approved by the Assembly. The Assembly may ratify from time to time the filling of casual vacancies on the Association (Refer *Constitution*).
- g) The Assembly may adopt procedures and election processes according to the *Australian Service Handbook*.
- h) Following the Service Committee meeting directly after Assembly, the Service Committee will make available Minutes of the Assembly proceedings to all Groups in the Area and to all Assembly members.
- i) The Assembly follows the principles contained in the General Warranties of the Australian Service Conference Charter (Refer *Australian Service Handbook* p44).

2.6 Assembly Procedures

- a) There are nine Areas in Australia and each is divided into Districts as determined by their Assembly and may be modified if deemed necessary by their Assembly. Each District consists of the Al-Anon and Alateen Groups meeting in that District. Each Group consists of members who have been affected by someone else's drinking.
- b) Each Group elects a GR who has a voice and a vote at their District meetings and at Assembly. The Group also elects an Alternate Group Representative (Alternate GR) who may attend District meetings and Assembly if the GR is unable to attend. Each Group at Assembly has one vote.
- c) The GRs in each District elect from among themselves a District Representative (DR) who becomes a member of the Service Committee. The GRs also elect an Alternate District Representative (Alternate DR) to attend Service Committee meetings if the DR is unable to attend. The Alternate DR completes the DR's term if the DR resigns. If the Alternate DR does not want to complete the term, the GRs elect another DR.
- d) Group Representatives and District Representatives are elected for a term of three years parallel to the term of the Delegate. (refer *Australian Service Handbook*).
- e) If the Group Representative or District Representative resigns or proves to be inactive, the Alternate or an elected replacement completes the term. The replacement GR or DR may then be elected for a three year term of their own.
- f) If a Group from outside the designated boundaries wishes to join the Southern NSW Assembly Area, application is made to the Service Committee and voted on at Assembly. The Assembly can then assign the Al-Anon or Alateen Group to an appropriate District or the new Group can approach their local District for inclusion.
- g) A GR can resign by advising their Al-Anon or Alateen Group. If there is no Alternate GR, the Group should then elect another member as GR and advise the DR and the Area.



2.7 Notice of an Assembly

- a) The Area Secretary, in conjunction with the Chairperson, shall advise each Group of the anticipated date of the next Assembly at least 6 months beforehand and confirm the place, date and time at least 3 months beforehand or as soon as possible.
- b) The Area Secretary in conjunction with the Chairperson shall, at least 2 weeks beforehand, send each Group the Agenda for the Assembly.

2.8 Special Assembly

- a) The Service Committee may, whenever it thinks fit, convene a Special Assembly.
- b) The Service Committee, on receiving a written request from at least one-third of the total number of Groups, shall convene a Special Assembly.
- c) A request from Groups for a Special Assembly:
 - i. Must state the purpose or purposes of the meeting; and
 - ii. Must be signed by the GRs making the requisition; and
 - iii. Must be lodged with the Chairperson; and
 - iv. May consist of several documents in a similar form, each signed by one or more of the GRs making the request.
- d) If the Service Committee fails to convene a Special Assembly within one month of receiving the request from the GRs, any one or more of the GRs who made that request may convene a Special Assembly to be held within three months.
- e) A Special Assembly convened by a GR must follow the same procedures as all other Assemblies.

2.9 Proceedings at Assembly

The Chairperson, or in their absence, the Alternate Delegate, shall preside as Chairperson at each Assembly. In the absence of the Chairperson or the Alternate Delegate, the Delegate may chair the Assembly.

- a) Assemblies are general meetings of the Fellowship. All Al-Anon members can attend. However only GRs, or Alternate GRs in the GR's absence, have a voice along with all Service Committee and Association Committee members and invited guests.
- b) The date of the next Assembly is determined by the prior Assembly or by the Service Committee acting as the representative of the Assembly.
- c) The ordinary business of the Assembly is to:
 - i. Confirm the Minutes of the previous Assembly.
 - ii. Receive the Delegate's report on the Australian Service Conference of Al-Anon Family Groups Australia.
 - iii. Receive reports from the Service Committee and the Association Committee of relevant activities that have occurred since the last Assembly.
 - iv. Review the decisions of the Service Committee and the Association Committee.
 - v. Fill casual vacancies for positions elected by the Assembly.
 - vi. Consider the two nominees for the Area Association presented to the Assembly for approval each year. If a casual vacancy has occurred, further members may be presented to the Assembly for ratification.
 - vii. Receive and consider the financial statements submitted by the Area Treasurer and approve the financial budget for the forthcoming year.
 - viii. Hold workshops

Additional agenda item topics may be suggested as listed in the *Australian Service Handbook*. Special business of which sufficient notice is given may also be transacted.



2.10 Quorum at Assembly

- a) One-half of the number of all GRs in the Southern NSW Assembly Area constitutes a quorum for the transaction of the business of the Assembly. The number of all registered GRs in the Southern NSW Assembly Area and the quorum for the Assembly shall be confirmed at the Service Committee meeting immediately preceding the Assembly.
- b) If a quorum is present at the opening of an Area Assembly, the members present may proceed with the business of the Assembly even if a quorum is not present throughout the meeting.
- c) If within half an hour of the appointed time for the commencement of the Assembly a quorum is not present, the Chairperson shall schedule a further half hour delay in proceedings while GRs are contacted to determine if they can attend the meeting.
- d) If after one hour of the appointed time for the commencement of the Assembly a quorum is not present, the Chairperson shall:
 - i. Adjourn the meeting to a date within 18 days;
 - ii. Specify the proposed date, time and place to which the meeting is to be adjourned; and
 - iii. Subsequently, confirm the actual date, time and place to all eligible Assembly members as soon as practicable after the meeting.

2.11 Voting at Assembly

- a) Elected GRs are the voting members at Assembly. Each Group has only one vote. At Assembly, GRs are free to vote as their conscience dictates based on information presented, and not necessarily as instructed by their Group. If both the GR and the Alternate GR are present at an Assembly, only the GR has a voice and a vote.
- b) If neither the GR nor the Alternate GR is able to attend, the Group may elect an acting GR from among its members, who is not also a member of AA. The acting GR has a voice and a vote.
- c) Any question arising at Assembly for determination shall be put as a motion. Each motion requires a mover and a seconder from among the GRs.
- d) Each motion shall be determined on a show of hands and the numbers voting for, against or abstaining shall be recorded in the Minutes. However, if before or on the show of hands a secret ballot is requested by either a GR or the Chairperson, the motion shall be determined by a secret ballot (refer Australian Service Handbook).
- e) A two-thirds majority of the voting members present is required to pass any motion.
- f) No proxy votes are allowed; all voting members must be present either in person or by approved technology.

2.12 Election of Area Service Committee Members

- a) The *Australian Service Handbook* sets out the procedure for an Election Assembly to be held every three years usually in November and outlines the method of nomination and election of candidates to the Area Service Committee as follows:
 - i. Area Delegate
 - ii. Alternate Area Delegate
 - iii. Assembly Officers:
 - a. Area Chairperson
 - b. Area Secretary
 - c. Area Treasurer
 - iv. Area Coordinators
- b) District Representatives are elected by GRs in their District or at the Assembly.
- c) Liaison officers (e.g., Chair of any Convention Planning Committee, TEAM Event, etc.) are elected as needed and remain on the Service Committee for the duration of their service.
- d) Each Service Committee member elected by the Assembly holds office until 31 December of the year in which the next Election Assembly is held but is eligible for re-election in accordance with the practices and Traditions



of Al-Anon.

- e) If a casual vacancy occurs among the Assembly Officers or Coordinators, the Service Committee may appoint a member to the vacant position up to and including the next Assembly, at which time the Assembly will be asked to ratify this appointment or elect another member to this position following the procedure for an Election Assembly.
- f) Members of the Area Service Committee who are not GRs or DRs and who are not part of the Executive Committee can also serve on the Association Committee.

2.13 Registration of GRs at Assembly

The Assembly will accept registration of a GR from:

- a) Any Al-Anon or Alateen Group within the borders of the Southern NSW Assembly Area, and
- b) Any other Al-Anon or Alateen Group that applies for registration as long as the Assembly votes in favour of that Al-Anon or Alateen Group being accepted.

2.14 Assembly Expenses

- a) Costs for GRs attending Assembly are equalised across all Groups in the Southern NSW Area so that no Group is financially disadvantaged. It is the responsibility of all Groups to pay the Assembly equalised expense as their commitment to being self-supporting within the Area's service structure, whether or not they send a GR to Assembly. Districts pay the full Assembly attendance cost for their DR if this member is not also a GR. All other Service Committee members and Association Committee members are covered by the Area Treasurer from Area funds.
- b) All reasonable expenses incurred in convening and attending the Assembly shall be refunded to the persons incurring the expense.

2.15 Alteration of Assembly Procedures

A three-quarters majority vote of GRs present at the Assembly is required to alter these Assembly procedures. All these procedures have been drawn from trial-and-error experience and should be changed only when an Area Assembly is fully agreed that such changes will better adapt this Service Guide to its needs.

3. The Area Service Committee

3.1 Purpose & Responsibilities of the Area Service Committee

The affairs of the Fellowship are managed by the Service Committee between Assemblies. While the Association Committee is responsible for the financial and legal aspects of the Area Office, the Service Committee is responsible for the Fellowship side.

3.2 Composition of the Service Committee

- a) The Service Committee is comprised of qualified members of the Al-Anon Family Groups in the Area including:
 - i. Area Delegate
 - ii. Alternate Area Delegate
 - iii. Assembly Officers:
 - a. Area Chairperson
 - b. Area Secretary
 - c. Area Treasurer
 - iv. Association President
 - v. Area Coordinators
 - vi. Liaison Members
 - vii. District Representatives



- b) If neither the DR nor the Alternate DR can attend the Service Committee meeting, the District may ask any GR from that District to attend the Service Committee meeting with a voice and a vote. The DR is to inform the Chairperson in advance and ensure the GR has the necessary information to attend and participate in the meeting.
- c) Alternate DRs may attend Service Committee meetings as observers with their DRs. In this situation the Alternate DR has neither voice nor vote as the DR has the voice and a vote for their District.

3.3 How the Service Committee Functions

- a) The Service Committee is composed of qualified members of Al-Anon Family Groups in the Area.
- b) The Service Committee is the traditional (spiritual) service arm of the Assembly. The Service Committee has responsibility to:
 - i. Apply the policies published in the Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies and any additional Australian policies as published by the Australian Service Conference.
 - ii. Provide the Fellowship with services to meet the needs of Al-Anon Family Groups in the Area. It may appoint suitable subcommittees.
- c) A two-thirds vote of GRs present at Assembly is binding upon the Service Committee.
- d) Matters requiring urgent attention in between Service Committee Meetings may be referred to Executive members (Chairperson, Delegate, Alternate Delegate, Area Secretary) and, if applicable, to the Area Treasurer and the Association President.
- e) The legal and financial aspects of any decisions made by the Service Committee or services provided by the Service Committee are referred to the Association Committee.

3.4 Group Records

- a) A record of Groups shall be maintained by the Area containing details of their meeting venue, current mailing address, Group Representatives, officers and contact details for each Group.
- b) A list of the contact details of Service Committee members shall also be maintained by the Area taking into consideration anonymity concerns any individual members may have.

3.5 Resignations & Vacancies

- a) A DR can resign by advising their District that they have resigned. The District should then elect another member as DR and advise the Area Service Committee of this change in writing as soon as practicable.
- b) The position of any Service Committee member will become vacant if they fail to attend two consecutive Service Committee meetings without a reasonable cause and/or without an Alternate attending in their place.
- c) Any member who no longer attends Al-Anon meetings on a regular basis (other than a registered Lone Member) is not eligible to serve or to continue serving on the Area Service Committee.
- d) An Area Service Committee member may resign from the Service Committee by giving written notice of their resignation to the Chairperson and/or Area Secretary.
- e) In the unusual event that a Committee member fails in their responsibilities, the Committee shall have the authority to recall and replace them. The member has the right to appeal this decision in line with Concept 5.
- f) In the case of a casual vacancy the Service Committee may appoint a replacement Committee member until the next Assembly.

3.6 Notice of Service Committee Meetings

Written notice of each Area Service Committee meeting shall be sent to each member of the Area Service Committee by email or post, arriving at least fourteen business days before the date of the meeting.



3.7 Quorum at Service Committee Meetings

- a) Six Committee members present in person or attending by approved technology (two of whom must be District Representatives) constitute a quorum for the transaction of the business at an Area Service Committee meeting.
- b) No business shall be transacted unless a quorum is present and, if a quorum is not present within half an hour of the time appointed for the meeting, the Chairperson shall schedule a further half hour delay in proceedings while Committee members are contacted electronically to determine if they can attend the meeting. If, after one hour of the appointed time for the commencement of the meeting a quorum is not present, the meeting stands adjourned until the Committee agrees on a new time and date for the meeting.
- c) If a quorum is present at the opening of a Service Committee meeting, the members present may proceed with the business of the meeting even if a quorum is not present throughout the meeting.

3.8 Voting at Area Service Committee Meetings

- a) The voting members are:
 - i. Area Delegate
 - ii. Alternate Area Delegate
 - iii. Assembly Officers:
 - a. Area Chairperson
 - b. Area Secretary
 - c. Area Treasurer
 - iv. Association President
 - v. Area Coordinators
 - vi. Liaison Members
 - vii. District Representatives
- b) Questions arising at a meeting of any subcommittee appointed by the Area Service Committee shall be determined on a show of hands or, if requested by a Committee or subcommittee member, by a written ballot.
- c) Each Service Committee member present at the meeting is entitled to one vote and a simple majority of the voting members present is required to pass any motion.

3.9 Proceedings of the Area Service Committee

- a) The Service Committee meets at least once every three months at a place and time determined by the Service Committee.
- b) At a meeting of the Service Committee:
 - i. The Chairperson or, in the Chairperson's absence, the Delegate (or Alternate Delegate) is to preside; or
 - ii. If the Chairperson, Delegate or Alternate Delegate are absent or unwilling to act, one of the remaining members of the Committee may be chosen by the members present to preside.
- c) The Service Committee considers reports from Committee members, discusses any issues relevant to the Fellowship of the Southern NSW Area and makes decisions. (Refer *Australian Service Handbook*)

3.10 Special Meetings of the Area Service Committee

- a) A special meeting of the Area Service Committee may be convened by the Chairperson as needed or at the request of a simple majority of Committee members.
- b) Notice of any special meeting shall be given to members of the Area Service Committee specifying the general nature of the business to be transacted, and no other business shall be transacted at the meeting.



3.11 Annual Report of the Area Service Committee

An annual report for the year ending 31 December shall be prepared by each Service Committee member and provided to the Delegate by the end of January for preparation of the Area's annual report to the Australian Service Conference.

3.12 Subcommittees

- a) The Service Committee may form one or more subcommittees, including a Task Force or Thought Force, e.g., a Convention Host Planning or TEAM Event, consisting of members of the Committee and other Al-Anon members as the Area Service Committee sees fit.
- b) Subcommittees are accountable to the Service Committee; any decisions and recommendations made by a subcommittee require approval by the Service Committee.
- c) A subcommittee may meet and adjourn as it thinks proper.

4. The Area Association Committee

4.1 Purpose & Responsibilities of the Area Association Committee

The Association is the incorporated body legally responsible for Al-Anon Family Groups in the Southern NSW Area. Full details for how the Area Association and Area Association Committee function are to be found in the *Constitution* of Al-Anon Family Groups Southern New South Wales Area Incorporated.

The purposes of the Association are:

- a) To support the Al-Anon Family Groups in the Southern NSW Area.
- b) To align with the 12 Traditions of Al-Anon.
- c) To implement the decisions of the Assembly, providing they:
 - i. Are legal;
 - ii. Will not tend to financially disadvantage Al-Anon Family Groups Southern NSW;
 - iii. Are in accordance with the *Constitution*.
- d) To receive and administer funds gathered by the Al-Anon Family Groups Southern NSW and to disburse those funds according to the decisions of the Assembly as represented by the Southern NSW Area Service Committee.

4.2 Composition of the Area Association Committee

- a) The Area Association Committee is composed of 6 Area Association members; two in their first year, two in their second year and two in their third year of membership of the Area Association.
- b) The Area Assembly approves candidates for membership of the Area Association and the Area Association then allocates the terms of Office on the Area Association Committee each year at their Annual General Meeting in August.
- c) At the annual Area Assembly in June the Area Association Committee puts forward two suitably qualified members of Al-Anon Family Groups in the Southern NSW Area as nominees for approval for membership of the Area Association.
- d) Once approved, these members are available to replace the two Committee members in their third and final year.
- e) If there has been a casual vacancy on the Area Association Committee, for which the Area Association has appointed a replacement, the membership of that person is presented to the Area Assembly for ratification in addition to the two candidates for approval.
- f) The Area Treasurer is elected by the Election Assembly and sits on both the Area Service Committee and the Area Association Committee.



- g) Members of the Association Committee who are not Office Bearers can also hold positions on the Area Service Committee.

4.3 How the Association Functions

- a) Two-thirds majority vote of the GRs present at Assembly is binding upon the Association and any related service, subject to the legal obligations of the Association.
- b) In accordance with the provisions of the *Constitution* of Al-Anon Family Groups Southern New South Wales Area Incorporated, three-quarters of all voting members present at the Assembly may bring about a change in the organisation of the Association if or when it is deemed essential, and may request the resignation of the whole Association Committee, and nominate new members to the Association including the positions on the Committee those members are to hold.
- c) The Association Committee is accountable in all its actions and dealings to the Area Assembly, and between Assemblies to the Area Service Committee.
- d) Minutes of all meetings of both the Association Committee and of General Meetings of the Association are to be forwarded to the Area Secretary within a reasonable time frame for distribution to all members of the Area Service Committee.

4.4 How the Area Association Committee Functions

- a) The Area Association Committee is the legal/financial arm of the Assembly.
- b) The Area Association Committee manages the business affairs of the Association. It may appoint suitable subcommittees.
- c) The *Constitution* of Al-Anon Family Groups New South Wales Area Incorporated and any amendments thereto are subject to ratification by a three-quarters vote of the Assembly prior to adoption by the Association Committee.
- d) Except in great emergency the Association Committee ought never to take action liable to greatly affect Al-Anon in the Area as a whole without consulting the Assembly. However, it is understood that the Association Committee shall reserve the right to decide which of its decisions may require referral to the Assembly.
- e) The Association Committee meets at least once every three months.

4.5 Financial Records

In line with the *Constitution*, the accounts and books of the Association shall be made available for inspection on request by any Al-Anon Family Group member serving at Assembly level within a reasonable time frame after the request has been made.

5. Area Service Guide Review

This is an internal Southern NSW Area Al-Anon Family Groups document. It is not a legal document, but it is a living document to be amended as the need arises for updates and amendments. Any changes are subject to a three-quarters majority vote at the Assembly.

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