

E-BLAST FROM THE WORLD BOARD

Fellowship Intellectual Property Trust (FIPT) Operational Rules

At our March Board meeting, we talked about what we've been hearing at CAR and CAT workshops about the *FIPT* operational rules and what the most responsible course of action is for us as a Board. We don't want to surprise participants by asking them to make a decision they are not prepared for, but waiting two years doesn't seem like a good option either. We have a recommendation, but it is up to the Conference to determine whether to make a decision at WSC 2018 or not.

The FIPT was created to do what its name states – hold the Fellowship's intellectual property (copyrights for recovery literature and our trademarks) in trust for the Fellowship. It spells out that only the Fellowship, as given voice by its delegates at the WSC, can change trust property. Though the recent inspection request treats it as such, we have never considered it a financial management document. Part of our recent discussions focused on where this leaves NA World Services after this current inspection request is resolved. The most common feedback we have received at the many CAR/CAT workshops we have attended is that delegates do not want one region to be able to independently decide how to speak for the Fellowship and encumber our collective resources at NAWS, both human and financial.

As the Board elected by the WSC to oversee this, we strongly agree with what we have heard. We believe deciding that some extraordinary action is necessary is a Conference responsibility as the trustor of the FIPT and have no question about following any decisions made by the WSC. But Article V, Section 3 of the FIPT Operational Rules does not reflect this understanding. .

We are asking that this section of the operational rules be changed so that an inspection request must come from the WSC. That would mean that everything else in this section—all conditions, selection of the inspection team, limitations, and reports—would be removed. This level of detail about process would not be necessary since the Conference can choose to make any decision or provide any direction that it chooses.

We have diligently tried to have all ideas from the World Board to be considered at the WSC out to participants many months in advance to allow time for discussion. Unfortunately, that was not possible in this situation. It was not until after discussions at workshops and at our recent March meeting that we came to this recommendation.

While the details of this suggestion are being made close to the Conference, this issue has been raised for all of us since last August, and most participants have been discussing FIPT-related issues within their regions.

We would not be asking you whether you want to make a decision at this Conference if we didn't feel that it was an urgent matter. If nothing changes at WSC 2018, we do not want to be faced with the same dilemma in the upcoming cycle. We think it is our responsibility to make this recommendation, and let the Conference choose whether to make this decision now or not. Changes to the Operational Rules require a two-thirds vote by delegates at the WSC. Changes to trust property or the trust itself require a CAR motion or more.

This is clearly not a CAR or a CAT motion so we will be asking the conference its wishes before offering a motion. The outcome of the change we are proposing is shown below.

Section 3: Inspection of Trustee activities

Conditions of inspection

~~Any regional service committee or equivalent service body~~ The World Service Conference may inspect the records and operations of the Trust on behalf of the Beneficiary, ~~providing the following conditions are met~~ if it so chooses. The details of such an inspection would be decided by the WSC.