

1 **Concept Six**

2 ***The Annual Meeting of the board and delegates recognizes that the chief initiative and***
3 ***active responsibility in most International service matters should be exercised by the***
4 ***trustee members of the Annual Meeting, acting as the International Service Organization.***

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6 The first five Concepts of COSA give us clear guidance about how individuals and groups may
7 participate in the process of managing COSA's business. Concept One states that "final
8 authority for COSA world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our
9 whole Fellowship." Concepts Two through Five guide our decision-making process, including
10 the way we manage differences of opinion. A shift occurs as Concept Six places responsibility
11 for carrying out the day-to-day business of the fellowship squarely on the shoulders of the board
12 members. While our primary purpose of carrying the message to those who still suffer is
13 spiritual in nature, accomplishing that purpose requires tangible human efforts. Concept Six tells
14 us that the responsibility for those efforts lies with the International Service Organization (ISO)
15 board.

16 In Concept Six, "chief initiative" refers to a primary and important right to initiate action. "Active
17 responsibility" denotes an accountability or duty that is characterized by action rather than by
18 contemplation. We are reminded here that the ISO board is charged with overseeing the
19 practical implementation of most service-related matters. Those matters include but are not
20 limited to literature development, web services, management of the operating funds, and public
21 communication.

22 Once each year, COSA delegates gather together with the ISO board for the Annual Delegate
23 Meeting. This meeting provides an opportunity for discussion, collaboration, and voting which
24 establishes a group conscience on issues that affect the worldwide fellowship. In the months
25 preceding the Annual Delegate Meeting, delegates each discern their home meeting's group
26 conscience regarding the business items on which votes will be taken. After the delegate
27 meeting, the ISO board members continue to meet monthly and communicate frequently,
28 maintaining the momentum required to carry out the plans that were established during the
29 meeting with the delegates. As a smaller group, the board is able to more quickly take action
30 and make swift progress toward the fellowship's goals than a larger group would be.

31 It is important for us to understand that Concept Six does not give the ISO board ultimate
32 authority over the fellowship or its daily business. It simply states that when the time comes for
33 action to be taken regarding matters of worldwide service, the board is responsible for doing so.

34 They are not entirely responsible for making the decisions that determine what that action
35 should be. Once the delegates who represent the whole fellowship have reached consensus
36 with the board on a desired plan of action, they wisely turn over the implementation of that plan
37 to the board. The board members are then accountable to the fellowship for exercising their
38 chief initiative and putting plans into action. In recent times, there has been increased
39 communication during the year between the board and the delegates and their groups due to
40 weekly fellowship emails, video conferencing, and a greater reliance on electronic
41 communication. In this way, feedback can be exchanged during the year when necessary.

42 The first word of Step One is “We” because this is a program based on working together,
43 interdependently striving to accomplish our primary purpose through various actions. The
44 services provided through the board’s activities are the very components that enable our local
45 groups and meetings to be there when we need them: online meeting facilities, literature, the
46 COSA website, and more. Our inverted triangle of leadership puts the many individual voices of
47 COSA members around the world at the top, and the ISO board at the bottom, as our servant
48 leaders charged with accomplishing the plans of the fellowship.

49 We see Concept Six at work all around us in healthy group dynamics. Some examples are:
50 When the fellowship votes to approve new literature, the publication of that literature is
51 facilitated by a small committee under the direction of a board member. Once a local meeting
52 decides through group conscience to purchase medallions or literature, responsibility for placing
53 the order and bringing the materials to the meeting is given to just one or two people. Large
54 corporations are often run by small boards which take direction from proxy-holders who
55 represent their stockholders. A family may work together to decide on their next vacation
56 destination, but the arrangements are made by just one or two people who are authorized to act
57 on everyone’s behalf. In most cases, practical action can be accomplished more quickly by a
58 small, nimble group than by a large one.

59 Ultimately, Concept Six is a reflection of our willingness to trust the process and turn over
60 control of outcomes to our Higher Power. COSA as a whole makes decisions through our
61 network of individuals, local meetings, Intergroups, delegates, and board members. When it
62 comes to taking decisive action toward practical results around our world service matters, we
63 turn to the ISO board for initiative and accountability.