

LEADERSHIP MANUAL  
of  
THE ASSOCIATION  
of  
SALESIAN COOPERATORS

(ASC)

[Further suggestions welcomed]  
[World Consultancy](#)  
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[Rome](#)

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## FOREWORD

Introducing a new book is like the baptism of a baby: full of fond hopes and aspirations that all will go well, that the future will excel all expectations, that life will be long and happy.

However, we are not dealing now with a new creation, nor are we in fear that all will not go well according to our desires. We are concerned with a text that can be perused with a critical eye, touched up, added to, corrected, adjusted according to practical needs.

All this does not detract from the importance of a new book, such as the present one, prepared at the request of the World Consultancy of the Cooperators in answer to the requirements expressed by the various Centres. Its usefulness can be gauged by its capacity to stir up reactions, to make a fitting impact, to encourage members to examine whether their daily living is in accord with the written and spoken word.

One particular aspect is of great importance: our willingness to make the effort to turn to those in the front line who have the onus of animation and direction. We refer, of course, to those who have to deal with organisation. Although these members may be restricted in number, preparations have to be made to train co-ordinators, councillors, section leaders and delegates. The text, then, is written for the guidance of a group of persons on whom it generally depends whether the Centres develop and flourish, or whether they merely stagnate.

With these thoughts in mind, we sincerely hope that the study of excellence in sincere theory and practice will result in a top range of competent formation.

The present booklet deals with various aspects pertaining thereto:

- a. individual persons: with their interior, spiritual and Gospel qualifications;
- b. Local and Provincial Councils that deal with the animation and guidance of their particular groups;
- c. various roles entrusted to particular persons - not as absolute heads of their special field, but rather as faithful guardians of a common good;
- d. the urgency of spiritual skills that give assurance of competent advice;
- e. the importance of external organisation that is not just an empty and inconclusive formality, but rather sustains and develops interior talents; and
- f. the characteristic Salesian way of life and action that should imbue office-bearers in the Association of Salesian Cooperators (ASC), so that the continuance of the magnificent life experience initiated by Don Bosco will be assured.

There are many other aspects that are dealt with in this text, and in fidelity to those who have gone before us with the same intentions, it is called a Manual. It should, then, continue to be used and kept up to date in the sensitive and industrious hands of those privileged members for whom it is written.

In the name of the entire Association, and of all who find the Manual useful, I sincerely thank all who have collaborated directly or indirectly in its compilation. It is my pleasant duty to recommend and offer the Manual to all involved in the animation and direction of the Association of Salesian Cooperators.

May Don Bosco accompany you in your apostolate,  
Sincerely yours,

Father Antonio Martinelli,  
Councillor General for the Salesian Family.

Rome, 15 August 1993

## INTRODUCTION

### 1. Growth of the MANUAL FOR LEADERS OF SALESIAN COOPERATORS

In 1883, during the 3rd SDB General Chapter, discussion took place regarding a set of regulations for leaders of the Pious Union of Cooperators, and a general approval was given to formulate such regulations along the lines of the observations made during the discussion.

Don Bosco, who had clarified a few points, undertook the task and had the Regulations printed that same year (1883) under the title of General norms for the Leaders of the Pious Union of the Salesian Cooperators. The General Regulations were 17 in number - written to cover the time till an appropriate manual could be drawn up.<sup>[1]</sup> This was printed in small booklet form by the Salesian Printing Press at Sampierdarena.<sup>[2]</sup>

Don Rua felt the need to provide a guide that would illustrate the method of Salesian 'co-operating', help to safeguard its true spirit, and also strengthen the structure of the Pious Union. To this end a Manual was published in 1893.

In the same year the first Assembly of Diocesan and Local Leaders was held; it took place on 12 and 13 September in the college of Valsalice, Turin, where Don Bosco was buried.<sup>[3]</sup>

Those attending the congress already had in hand the Manual of theory and practice for the General and Local Leaders of the Pious Union of Salesian Cooperators, printed in December 1893 at the printing press of the Turin Oratory. It contained Don Rua's Foreword in which he outlined a brief history of the Association, defined the tasks of the General and Local Leaders, the norms for the Constitutions of the Cooperators' councils and subcouncils anent the running of Salesian enterprises, the directives for propaganda, a detailed record of the principal forms of apostolate recommended by the Founder, and (taken from the Salesian Bulletin)<sup>[4]</sup> suggestions and extracts from various conferences.

In 1894 Don Rua sent copies of the Manual to Rectors of houses with the instruction to have them read aloud during meals. He wanted all Salesians to be well informed regarding the Cooperators.<sup>[5]</sup>

When Don Rua presided over the 7th General Chapter of 1895, he appointed a special commission to study suitable norms for the relationship between the Cooperators, the Salesian communities, and the Salesian headquarters in Turin.

These norms are now reduced to 11 articles at the foot of the Constitutions and Regulations of the Salesian Society.[\[6\]](#)

The 1893 Manual was amplified and improved in successive editions up to 1898 under the title of Manual of theory and practice for the use of General and Local Leaders of the Pious Association of the Salesian Cooperators of Don Bosco (Salesian Press, Turin, 1898, 162 pp.).

The booklet carried a photo and signature of Don Bosco, a small likeness of St Francis of Sales, and a letter-preface by Don Rua dated 8 December 1893, addressed to the 'valiant Cooperators'. It was in three parts, with additional outlines for conferences, and two appendices.

In the 3rd Congress in Turin (May 1903), approval was given to the directives regarding the activities of the Cooperators; it was a practical application of their Regulations in conformity with the needs of the times.[\[7\]](#)

In 1904, during the 10th General Chapter, Don Rua proposed the codification of the Directive Norms for Salesians, set out in 37 deliberations from the preceding Chapters, and inserted as an appendix to the text of the Constitutions.

To facilitate the operation, an edition was printed in booklet form separately with the title Pious Union of Cooperators: Regulations for the use of members.[\[8\]](#)

In 1917 Don Albera published a new edition of the Regulations.[\[9\]](#)

About 1920 Don Rinaldi forwarded to the Leaders of the Pious Union an Appendix to the Regulations, in which he set out the norms of activities studied by the Superiors, deliberated by the Cooperators' Congress at San Paolo (Brazil) in 1915 and approved by the Rector Major Don Albera.[\[10\]](#)

The Manual of 1893 was reprinted in various editions: 1898, 1917, 1920 and 1941. This final edition (published with the nihil obstat of Don Renato Ziggotti) was printed at the Salesian Press, 32 Via Cottolengo, Turin. It omitted the section on Conferences.

In 1958 the Manual for the Leaders of the Pious Union of the Salesian Cooperators, edited by Father Guido Favini, Secretary General of the Cooperators, was printed by LDC (Tecnograph, Turin).

The definitive edition of 1959, with soft green plastic cover, and carrying Father Agostino Archenti's stamp of approval, was printed at Salesian Graphic Arts Institute, Colle Don Bosco (Asti). It offered, as Don Ziggotti wrote, clear and precise information and concepts regarding the Third Salesian Family, with the practical norms for its organisation and activities.

It was presented to the Cooperators by the Rector Major, Father Renato Ziggotti on 31 January 1959.

The Manual comprised the following: An INTRODUCTION, with the history of the Pious Union; part I: organisation; part II: members; part III: form of apostolate; part IV: norms and directives of the 17th Salesian General Chapter regarding the Pious Union; part V: spiritual treasury (indulgences and privileges); and an appendix with conference outlines.

In 1975 the booklet Cooperatori Salesiani. Manuale per Dirigenti was published in extra-commercial edition, with an unsigned Presentation which explained the main reasons for its existence: the preceding edition of 1959, 'edited competently and attentively by Father Favini', was by this time out of date, and it was necessary to update the New Regulations for Cooperators and the deliberations of the Superiors of the later years. Besides, the criteria and principles they had inspired needed to be illustrated and also their use: it is a working tool, for guidance and

consultation, to facilitate the application of the New Regulations of the Cooperators. The purpose was to encourage unity of direction between the Centres and greater creativity and efficacious activity.

In 1977, when Fr Luigi Ricceri was the Rector Major, the Councillor for the Adult Apostolate (and the Cooperators) was Fr Giovanni Raineri and the Central Delegate Fr Mario Cogliandro, a second edition of this Manual was printed (in pocket-size) together with the Guide for the Formation of the Cooperators.

It comprised a Preface, an Introduction, and the following sections: I: The Cooperator; II: Mission; III: the Centre; IV: the Provincial Council; V: the National Council; VI the General Leadership; a Document for Salesians; and an appendix containing:

1: various aids; 2: spiritual privileges; 3: joint apostolate of SDBs and FMAs (1974), and 4: Pattern of Regulations of the National Council.

The first Leaders' Manuals (from 1878 to 1941) were written for the Leaders of those particular times, that is, the local Rectors and the local Parish Priests.

The Manuals of 1958 and 1959 were written for the Salesian Superiors (Generalate, Provincials and Provincial Delegates, Rectors and Parish Priests).

For the first time mention was made of a Superior Council of the Cooperators - and it included lay council members. It also included both lay and clerical supporters (Zelatori), some of whom were chosen to form Local Councils and Provincial Councils.

The 1975 and 1977 Manuals benefited by the post-Conciliar principles and were the first to take into account elected lay Leaders.

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## 2. Development of the present

### **MANUAL FOR LEADERS OF THE ASSOCIATION OF SALESIAN COOPERATORS**

The present volume is the result of work that began in 1987, when, on the occasion of the second meeting of the World Consultancy it was deemed necessary to provide certain general guidelines for animators and leaders of the Association; indeed a reference text for all members.

At the beginning of 1988, at the request of Father Sergio Cuevas, the then Councillor General for the Salesian Family, Father José Reinoso drew up a scheme containing chapters for Leaders that was then sent to a group of SCs, SDBs and FMAs for their comments and contributions.

During the 1989 meeting, the World Consultancy carefully examined this scheme and decided to endorse it and distribute copies to animators of the Association who so much desired its help.

During that same meeting of the World Consultancy the Consultors drew up the rulings for all the sectors of work, with the exact tasks and closing dates for suggestions according to the experiences of each member.

Three Consultors, Pierangiolo Fabrini, Katalaie Kabeya and Maria Teresa Martelli, actually sent to the Executive Central Secretariat the drafts of certain chapters.

Then certain Italian Cooperators, especially knowledgeable in various sectors, were consulted. The prerogatives that prompted the choice of these Cooperators were basically their capacity, competence and experience and the edifying way they lived the Cooperator's vocation with the sensitivity and characteristics of lay folk. The Cooperators concerned were Oliviero Zoli, Luigi Sarcheletti, Silvio Milia, Lello Nicastro, Nino Sammartano, Turi Mobilia, Giuseppe Ceci and Lella Foti; and the Co-ordinator General, Paolo Santoni. They all accurately recorded their findings.

Those who drafted the different chapters were invited to a meeting to examine and discuss all the material received. They were Daniela Beretta, Luigi Sarcheletti, Pierangiolo Fabrini, Sr Maria Collino, Fr José Reinoso, Paolo Santoni and Maria Teresa Martelli.

All the suggestions were sent in to the Central Executive Secretariat to be reorganised, touched up and integrated into the sections that needed improving, according to the observations made by those present at the meeting.

The Consultancy met in June 1991, carefully examined the first proof, and offered its own observations.

A careful draft was then drawn up, as consistent and comprehensive as possible. Pierangiolo Fabrini, a member of the World Consultancy, then completed the task of assembling the various parts.

After this work, a group restricted to five consultants plus the ex-Co-ordinator General, Luigi Sarcheletti, met together to make a further combined revision, clarifying any part of the text where needed, and checking on the general co-ordination and coherence of the text.

The final phase of the process received the significant and exacting attention of Father Martinelli. Together with the Consultants who worked on the final draft, he checked on the clarity of the text, the cohesion and logic of the contents, and the fidelity to the objectives that were set out when the task was begun.

The resulting volume presents certain norms and directives already validated by experience; it proposes certain new ones and invites a diligent try-out.

It makes constant references - especially to the Regulations and official comments. Wherever it is considered opportune, references are made also to Conciliar documents and other more recent pronouncements by the Magisterium of the Church.

The volume aims at being a helpful reference guide for management and formation, and indeed in various other ways too - for leaders and animators who are preparing to offer their services for other Cooperators and the Association in general.

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## **PART I**

### **COMPETENT ANIMATION OF THE SALESIAN COOPERATORS**

#### **Chapter I SALESIAN ANIMATION FOR THE ASC MEMBERS**

#### **Chapter 11 OFFICE HOLDERS OF THE ASSOCIATION**

#### **Chapter III FORMATION OF THOSE WHO HOLD OFFICES IN THE ASSOCIATION**

#### **Chapter IV STRUCTURES OF ANIMATION**

#### **Chapter V Method and means of animation**

#### **Chapter VI Apostolate and planning of the ASC**

### **CHAPTER I**

#### **SALESIAN ANIMATION FOR THE ASSOCIATION MEMBERS**

1. Introductory concepts
  - A) The specific nature of the ASC.
    - B) The Regulations of Apostolic Life and respective responsibilities of lay and religious facilitators.
  2. Animation
  3. Salesian animation
  4. Salesian animation in ASC
  5. Those responsible for Salesian animation in ASC
  6. Salesian animation a) re persons; b) re principles
  7. Various important clarifications

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## 1. INTRODUCTORY CONCEPTS

### A. The specific nature of the ASC

According to Don Bosco's thinking (and emphasised in the Special General Chapter of 1971-1972) the Cooperators constitute a definite part of the Salesian Family, and share its particular responsibilities in furthering the common apostolate of the Founder.

To understand its special charism two principles need to be stressed:

\* There is an essential bond between Cooperators and SDBs;[\[11\]](#) and

\* ASC autonomy does not mean separation.

In the mind of Don Bosco, the Salesian Congregation is the basis of stability, cohesion and animation. The Rector Major, Don Bosco's successor, and hence the representative of the charismatic fatherliness of the Founder, is the Superior of the Association and acts as its Supreme Moderator.[\[12\]](#)

The autonomy of the Association must be understood in the light of

\* its special bond with the Salesian Congregation (that has the same Superior as the Association), and also

\* the special relationship between the SDBs and FMAs (which is also shared by the Association).

This autonomy is realised as expressed by the Regulations of Apostolic Life in article 43 § 1: At local and provincial levels the Association is governed collectively by a Council. Art.43 then goes on to define the make-up of Councils, while art. 44 sets out their principal tasks and functions, specifying the areas of decision-making competence enjoyed by the Cooperators. This autonomous administration is collegial, in conformity with the principles of Vatican II regarding apostolic associations;[\[13\]](#) and governance at the various levels always requires a Council.

Thus, COMMUNION, AUTONOMY, COLLEGIALITY are at the heart of the specific identity of the ASC within the Salesian Family.

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### B. The Regulations and the respective competence of the lay and religious office-bearers

The Regulations deal with these principles[\[14\]](#) and, consequently state the following:

a) The sectors of responsibility (generally apportioned to Religious, but not exclusively so): spiritual assistance and Salesian formation, especially regarding apostolic activities.

b) The areas in which the laity, through their particular Cooperator Councils, have a special responsibility resulting from the Association's autonomy: apostolic activities, formation and information particularly in secular matters, organisation and administration, proposals and appeals.

c) Some sectors that rightly belong to common competence, since they treat of matters that require the concurrence of both parties, as for example the basic aspects of formation.

It is in this context of communion-autonomy-collegiality that the animation of the Association is to be found, in which both lay and religious members have a part, and together contribute to a

complementary development. Both parties, in their work of animation, must bear in mind this autonomy of the Association: it is expressed in its institutional communion, and sustained by its collegiality in animating responsibility.

## 2. ANIMATION

The word 'animation' is a term used to express an activity both creative and pervasive. It is a modern approach to group-effort and active government. The following lines deal only with certain aspects considered essential for a useful animation in regard to Cooperators.

- It is a style of activity that develops participation from within, with suggestion, motivation and persuasion, not as impositions or coercions from without, nor even expectations.
- It is a choice made for life, in regard to the basic groups of the Salesian Family (SDBs, FMAs, SCs), and makes for work along lines that are practical, committed and beneficial.
- It is a process that promotes a mature conscience and personal growth in the faith and self-donation.
- It is a call to work with others to achieve the aims of the Gospel.
- It is docility to the Holy Spirit, the primary Animator of all God's People throughout the world.[\[15\]](#)

## 3. SALESIAN ANIMATION

In this context, Salesian animation is the expression of the Salesian System, that uses REASON, RELIGION AND KINDNESS to achieve the following:

- personal development;
- commitment to seek the full potentials of life;
- conditions needed for directly participating in a common goal.

Salesian animation completes

- the loving-kindness of Don Bosco;
- his accompanying pedagogy;
- his 'presence'; and
- his assistance that calls for interior individual resources that lead to personal development.[\[16\]](#)

## SALESIAN ANIMATION IN THE ASSOCIATION

4. Within the Association, animation must include those with whom we are involved - hence it is extended to:

- both youngsters and adults;
- laity and clergy;
- parents and educators;
- white-collar and blue-collar work force.

Cooperators must achieve the special characteristics of this Salesian animation and apply them when striving

- to help people towards Salesian spirituality so that they see it as an apostolic commitment that is both personal and shared with others;
- to stimulate them to discern and be faithful to their vocation through activities that will develop their generosity and helpfulness;
- to develop their social and cultural responsibility by taking on some kind of human and Christian work that will help the local Church.

Animation is a work of 'assistance' and accompaniment after the manner of Don Bosco. It presupposes:

- ability to dialogue: to be a good listener and able to converse with sympathy;
- ability to communicate: able to 'get across' to others and speak to them heart-to-heart;

- ability to discern: being aware of their problems and circumstances, how they see and feel things, what kind of help they may need, and what attributes and capabilities they possess, etc.

Indeed, it requires sensitivity, generosity, spontaneity, sincerity, brotherliness, collaboration and communion.[\[17\]](#)

## 5. THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR ANIMATION IN THE ASSOCIATION

The primary animator of the People of God, and of course, of the Cooperators, is the Holy Spirit. The Regulations also specify those who, docile to the Spirit, are entrusted with the role of animation within the Association.

\* At the local level, it is the Council of the local Centre[\[18\]](#) that is responsible (within its own zone),[\[19\]](#) bearing in mind that the Council includes the local Delegate,[\[20\]](#) and it will be opportune that, in the spirit of art. 23 § 2 of the Regulations, the Leaders too be involved.

\* At Provincial level,[\[21\]](#) the promotion and co-ordination of the formative and apostolic work of the Cooperators are handled by the Provincial Councils,[\[22\]](#) the Provincial Delegates,[\[23\]](#) and the Provincials.[\[24\]](#)

\* In the ambit of world responsibility, the animators are the Rector Major,[\[25\]](#) the World Consultancy of Salesian Cooperators,[\[26\]](#) and the Councillor General of the Salesian Family.[\[27\]](#)

\* When considered suitable, substitute animation arrangements may be made at the National level and/or Regional level, in accordance with what may be needed as outlined in the ASC Regs., art.47.[\[28\]](#)

Careful work on the present Manual has made it particularly relevant for members of the Councils at the various levels (local, provincial, national, regional and world-wide), each group having its own practical responsibilities according to the Regulations of Apostolic Life.

## 6. A BRIEF WORD RE THE OFFICE OF ANIMATOR

The following are a few brief points regarding animators, their suitable personal characteristics and the animation they are expected to supply.

### A. Personal qualities

In order to perform their tasks well, animators need to continually study, cultivate, and develop certain personal traits.

a. Salesian animators must be able to make use of education and all its integral and essential aspects. Thus:

- they need to apply the Salesian System of education, the method permeated with the charity of the Good Shepherd;[\[29\]](#)

- they must be living witnesses to the practice of the Faith;

- they must strive to imbue other Cooperators to develop their personal human, Christian and Salesian identity.

b. The Salesian animator needs to communicate within the Association, and with the various Groups of the Salesian Family, with the Church, and with people in general.

c. Salesian animators must read the signs of the times;

- their animation must be in keeping with the facts of life they have to deal with;

- they must be willing listeners to the needs and suggestions of other Cooperators;

- they must be willing to accept the practicalities of life so as to direct the Association towards suitable projects and solutions for the future.

d. Salesian animators must be faithful members of the Church;

- identifying themselves with its life and history;
- accepting its traditions and its novelties;
- putting into practice the improvements proposed by the Pope and the bishops;
- imbuing the ecclesial groups and institutions with the wealth of Don Bosco's

charisma.

e. Salesian animators must be attentive to individual persons, thus:

- taking an interest in the cares and concerns of their clients;
- being willing to help with their daily problems;
- cultivating an unselfish awareness of others;
- learning to live with others, avoiding useless argumentation, and being careful to

avoid hurting their feelings;

- putting heart and soul into assisting others;

- getting to know all members of the group, taking an interested share in their problems, trying to be actively involved in working out the best possible ways to attain positive results.

f. Salesian animators must be able to accept on-going formation. They must not think their formation is complete when they assume the task of looking after others - quite the contrary, indeed, since the very fact of taking on the formation of others demands a more perfect development in themselves. Formation is not merely of a knowledgeable or doctrinal nature; modern situations call for a continual formation that is integral, practical and detailed. Formation must translate itself into living one's personal life in total coherence, integrating spiritual life with professional, uniting service with mission - striving for a real vocational commitment. One's life in its totality and in every detail and in all stages must be subject to this formative process.

B. The task of animating others:

To carry out animation efficiently, animators must be careful to develop beforehand certain qualities that will characterise their efforts.

1) Availability. This demands:

- being generous with one's time and talents;
- listening and being open to other people's ideas;
- being willing to collaborate enthusiastically, accepting the leadership of others,

not simply furthering projects under one's own personal care. This presupposes a strong dedication to the Association and especially to the group being animated; and all this must be done with the apostolic zeal bequeathed to us by Don Bosco.

2) Involvement

- Both animator and animated must understand that they are not called to work in a way that is purely individualistic.

- Animators must enthuse others in practical projects and endeavour to extend activities towards Don Bosco's wider horizons.

- They will expound their ideas in a lively, practical, direct way, and within the capabilities of the group.

- They should seek the proper approval of other members so that the activities assumed will be carried out in unity.

3) Creativity: an infinite number of practical examples are possible.[\[30\]](#) A few are enumerated here.

- Use occasions, circumstances, means and resources to do good, even when the situation does not seem the best or most suitable.

- Offer the Association new stimuli, perspectives, commitments and objectives, avoiding merely annual repetitions.
- Try to foresee future events in the world and the Church.
- Endeavour to see innovations as possible indications of the Holy Spirit for ways of coping with new emergencies.
- Unite actuality and hope, courage and wisdom, careful appraisal and total trust in God.

#### 4.) Accompaniment

This is a way of standing by those we are helping, a modern way of living the dynamic presence proper to the Salesian Educational System, a most important choice that belongs to the commitment of every ASC office-bearer (which will be discussed further in Ch. V).

#### 5) Family spirit

This is the typical Salesian way of acting.

- It cancels distance.
- It puts everyone at ease.
- It eliminates useless formalities, but of course retains courtesy and respect.
- It involves all equally in the same apostolic project.
- It give interior and exterior certainty of belonging to the same Salesian

Family.[\[31\]](#)

## 7. SOME IMPORTANT CLARIFICATIONS

The animation given by ASC Leaders is indeed an apostolic activity, and represents a valid contribution to the vitality of Cooperators. Thus it is not necessary that leaders seek new pastoral activities in responding to their apostolic vocations as Cooperators.

This office-bearing service should not dismay or discourage the Cooperator called to carry it out at different levels of organisation. Discouragement suggests a lack of confidence in God and the confreres at our side, or an excessive lack of confidence in our own capabilities and talents. No-one is perfect; we just have to forge ahead trying to improve.

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## CHAPTER II

### THE OFFICE-BEARERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

#### 8. INTRODUCTION

- A. Relationship between animation and government in the ASC.
- B. Collegiality
- C. Conciliar Collegiality and personal creativity.

#### 9. LAY LEADERS IN THE ASSOCIATION

- A. Who they are.
- B. The roles of lay leaders.
  - 1. Responsibility for complete running of the Association.
  - 2. Responsibility for lay significance of the Association.
  - 3. Practical matters pertaining to a lay office-bearer.
- C. Lay leaders at various levels of the Association.
  - 1. Method of election of the various lay office-bearers.
  - 2. Tasks proper to the various levels of responsibility.
- D. The lay leader at the international level.

#### 10. SDB and FMA DELEGATES

- A. Who they are.
- B. The roles of SDB & FMA leaders.
  - 1. Spiritual animators.
  - 2. Responsible first and foremost for apostolic Salesian formation.
  - 3. Right to participate in ASC Council.
- C. SDB & FMA Delegates at various levels of the Association.
  - 1. Local level.
  - 2. Provincial level.
  - 3. National and Regional levels.
  - 4. Delegate at international level.

#### 11. LAY DELEGATE and DIOCESAN PRIEST DELEGATE: a particular case

#### 8. INTRODUCTION

- A. Relationship between animation and government in ASC.

This chapter presents the figure of animator in their roles of animation and government.[\[32\]](#)

It is important to note that animation in the Association includes the aspect of government, which must not be undervalued. In this sense one can speak of leaders in the Association, intending with the above-mentioned term those who assume a task, a responsibility of service in the

Association according to the Regulations. Art.43 of the Regulations speaks of this role when it says that the ASC, at both local and provincial levels is ruled collegially by a Council.<sup>[33]</sup> Thus the leaders in the strict sense would be lay, religious and diocesan clergy members of the local and provincial councils.

At World level the role not only of animation but also of government belongs to the Rector Major as the Supreme Moderator of the Association with the collaboration of the Councillor for the Salesian Family. In the exercise of his ministry the Rector Major avails himself of the World Consultancy of the Cooperators.<sup>[34]</sup> The Regulations set out certain governmental powers for Provincials.

## B. Collegiality

Art.20 of the Regulations of Apostolic Life indicate that all responsible offices are carried out as a friendly service, thus emphasising the particular spirit of responsibility and sharing that must inspire all those who are chosen to animate and direct the Association at all levels.

Collegiality requires that the Council members work in harmony and seek to collaborate actively, ready to study ways of better understanding and development of the elements that the roles demand. They need to be able to work as a group (cf. Reg.43.1). We note certain applications and consequences as follows.

The kind of 'collegiality' we delegate to our leaders is clarified in two complementary sentences:

1. The whole Council is responsible for the whole life of the Association.
2. The allocation to Council members of specific activities and tasks within a certain sector, presumes that final decisions need the approval of the whole Council.

Leaders should be able correlate their efforts within their own level and also with other levels (local, provincial, national and world).

The specific tasks entrusted within a sector require reciprocal exchange of information 'horizontally' for that same sector and shared 'vertically' with other sectors.

The same person should not be burdened with a multiplicity of tasks and commitments. The distribution according to the capabilities and means of each will make for better efficiency in attaining the objectives and aims of the Association.

All sectors of the Cooperators need to foster this active collegial responsibility; thus if reasonable motives prevent leaders from completing their work, all members of the Council can help out..

## C. The collegiality of a Council needs personal creativity.

Given their specific responsibilities, leaders must become, in their special fields, proficient specialists who provide fruitful results through their preparation and the skills they have acquired in their daily professional work.

They have to be open to the contributions of all members.

They will forge ahead in their own field of guidance and animation with creativity. The collegial principle of the Association does not negate personal initiative, especially when leaders have to give a periodical account to the Council regarding the area of their responsibility and the particular initiatives being planned.

The creativity and initiative of councillors, however, must not generate a plethora of commitments. All planning and organising need to be practical and timely.

## 9. LAY LEADERS IN THE ASSOCIATION

## A. Who they are.

As stated in the Regulations, the Association's lay leaders are the lay members of the Local, Provincial and World Councils. All have a role not only of animation, but also of government. The members and the facilitators of the National and Regional Conferences are expected to carry out a regular role of animation. Their governing responsibilities extend only to the specific commitments entrusted to them by the particular guidelines applying to every National and Regional Conference. All must bear in mind that they are dealing with a governance that is collegial.

## B. The roles of lay leaders.

The lay leaders, given their secular condition, make their contributions according to their own specific experience. These are invaluable for the fruitful development of the lay dimension of the Association.

Their personal and secular experience in the family, in society and in the Church is also precious.

The Gospel teachings lived to the full in their lay aspect render the leaders most competent in animation and spirituality in all sectors of the Association.

### 1.. Responsibility for complete running of the Association.

We wish to make the following principles clear:

1. The government of the Association, (that is, the decisions regarding the life and activities of the Association) does not fall within the competence of the Delegates.
2. Decisions are made only when the layfolk outnumber the religious.
3. The organisation of the appropriate means for the development of the Association is a matter for the laity.
4. The areas within the ambit of lay intervention are not limited to things material, administrative and simply technical: indeed they include formation and spirituality.
5. The functioning of the Association is not just a matter of exterior activities: it includes the effects and repercussions on each person and on the various groups. This requires that the Leader should be well versed in the knowledge of the Regulations and those sections of Canon Law that refer to Public Associations of the Faithful.

### 2. Attention to the lay character of the Association.

According to art. 38 of the Regulations, the lay leaders have the specific responsibility of attending to the 'secular' aspect of the formation of the Cooperators.

Formation is directed to specific life situations:

- 1.family,[\[35\]](#)
- 2.employment,[\[36\]](#)
- 3.civil society,[\[37\]](#)
- 4 .political society,[\[38\]](#)
5. culture.[\[39\]](#)

### 3. Practical matters pertaining to a lay office-bearer

Two particular situations are to be noted:

\* Time and family.

If office-bearing commitments clash with family commitments it will be necessary to find suitable solutions.

Leaders would fail in their vocation as Cooperators if they neglected their active presence in their families.

A good idea is to involve the family in the Association: a sharing of the two commitments would avoid any division or divergence between families and Cooperator activities.

Planning a yearly timetable beforehand would help to overcome many practical problems.

\* Time and employment

The above remarks apply also to this particular problem.

One's employment demands not only material time, but also psychological time. Jobs may demand civil and legal attention and responsibilities; these aspects, together with mastering special skills and coping with time variations - all may combine to restrict freedom of movement.

The Association too could suffer these complications.

It could well happen that difficult and painful choices have to be made.

1. In some cases, when it is impossible to fulfil commitments, it is better to renounce office-bearing positions in the Association.
2. In other cases, when a greater effort is needed to attend to the two commitments, leaders will find ways of redoubling their efforts and succeed in serving both God and neighbour.
3. In all other cases generous members will be found to take on the office required.

## C. LAY LEADERS AT VARIOUS LEVELS OF THE ASSOCIATION.

1. Method of election of the various lay leaders.

The Regulations of Apostolic Life state that members for the various Councils be chosen by election. Members of the local Council are elected by the Cooperators of that particular Centre.[\[40\]](#) The Provincial Council members are elected by the Councillors of the Centres.[\[41\]](#)

Co-ordinators are also subject to election, each Council electing its own co-ordinator from among its lay members,[\[42\]](#)

Possible inconsistencies can be avoided by recourse to the higher Council or the World Council, or finally the Rector Major.

The Regulations insist on election for all members for all Councils.

The Local Council consists of members elected by the Cooperators of the particular Centre.

The Provincial Council's members are elected by Councillors of the Centres.

The same elective principle is used for all Co-ordinators with the exception of the World Co-ordinator.[\[43\]](#)

Elections in the Association are subject to three conditions:

- freedom of choice for every elector;
- the respectful acceptance of the choice of the majority;

- the rotation of persons for the various posts.

The elector's freedom of choice calls for:

- a short curriculum vitae of the candidate, noting attributes and capabilities;
- prayer (privately and together) for discernment to be able to choose persons capable of furthering the development of the Association;
- avoidance of 'honorary leaders'. Leaders who will not be available for a suitable, regular, active and continuous input should not be elected.

The respectful welcome given to those elected by majority calls for the full observance of the Regulations in all details. Possible inconsistencies can be avoided by recourse to the higher Council or the World Council, or finally the Rector Major.

The Association must help to rotate official positions by:

- preparing suitable members to take on responsible tasks;
- readiness to entrust responsible tasks to duly elected 'newcomers';
- helping, with discretion and friendliness, those relinquishing office to remain members of the Association.

2. Tasks proper to the various levels of responsibility.

#### \* LOCAL LEVEL

Generally, of course, members at the local level are all lay persons, with the exception of a Delegate with specific tasks. It is their job therefore (not the Delegate's) to do the lion's share of the work in all the projects undertaken by the group.

It is the local levels that are the life of the Association. All other levels exist to give life to the local groups. This is the reason why the role of governance, animation and formation of lay leaders is so essential. If there are members capable of fulfilling the triple role outlined above at the local level, the vitality of the Association can be taken for granted. Thus, ideally, leaders at this level need to possess the qualities and capacities spoken of in Chapter I. These qualities and capacities are required equally of all leaders at the various levels.

Organisation is a fact of life. This implies planning, assessment and anticipation, and these activities are among the most demanding responsibilities of the lay leaders of the Association.

Organisation calls for the distribution of responsibilities with a view to greater efficiency. Generally every Councillor looks after a particular sector.

Most members should be involved in the various activities and projects. The office-bearers must apply and live out the principle of co-responsibility and subsidiarity: the former involves the greater number of members; the latter deals with the potentials of other members. The following queries and replies may help the leaders to assess their progress:

- \* Is the collaboration in our group improving?
- \* Is there anything hindering our collaboration?
- \* Does every Cooperator really feel a true member of our group?
- \* What makes members feel obliged to give of their best?
- \* Is the Centre a genuine ambience for developing human, Christian and apostolic development within the Salesian ethos?
- \* What part does the Council play in these matters?
- \* How would you gauge the input of each member of the Council?

These 'check-points' will help us to be better aware and convinced of just where we stand; they will make for greater durable and stable achievements; they will lead to better practical proposals for a regular on-going Christian formation; they will help members to achieve a genuine educative

service within the Salesian ethos.<sup>[44]</sup> Whatever pertains to this procedure, assessment and planning is also applicable to the other levels of animation.

#### \* PROVINCIAL LEVEL

The lay leaders at the Provincial level are elected by the Local Councils. Since those elected do not always have contact with the local groups, they need to make an effort to get to know them and how they are functioning. Indeed it is their responsibility to help them develop in collegial fashion, since it is they who make up the Provincial group.

The Provincial leaders then should be composed of members who are able to make contact with the Local Centres and render it possible for them to shed their isolation and get to know Cooperators of other Centres and even beyond.

Thus these leaders should be open-minded and capable of animating on a wider scale. They have deliberative power in certain matters within the ambit of the Province. Such occasions call for a wise discernment and an avoidance of anything that is superficial or merely 'ad hoc'.

It is very important that the leaders make these contacts with Councils and Cooperators in the various centres.

#### \* REGIONAL, NATIONAL, WORLD LEVEL

At the national and/or regional levels the Association, in accordance with art. 47.1, may hold a National and/or Regional Conference that deals with Provincial concerns. Such a Conference serves the Association by raising the apostolic activities of the various Local and Provincial Centres to national or regional interest at both ecclesial and civil level.

The office-bearers of this Conference are elected by the Provincial Councils that compose the Conference; their role is to co-ordinate and stimulate.

In this case the Regulations speak solely of a Cooperator elected who tends to the smooth running of the Conference together with a Delegate. The role of this Cooperator is simply to co-ordinate and stimulate the activities of the group of Centres. Such a person needs to be capable of inspiring friendliness and motivation; and must also be able to travel about, meet, and work in harmony with other leaders.

Relevant tasks and responsibilities will be established by the Conference itself.

#### D. The lay leader at the international level.

Here we speak of World Consultors. Five of these are appointed by the Rector Major; the rest are all elected by the Provincial Co-ordinators and a certain number of Delegates who may not number more than half the lay or diocesan clergy electors

The Consultors form a group who directly assist the Rector Major in the matter of animation and governance of the Association on a world-wide scale; but it is not a governing organisation as are the Provincial Councils and the local Councils.

'It is clear that the Consultancy has an important role and carries great weight, called as it is to be for the Rector Major the direct voice of the Cooperators of the various Regions throughout the world, and to help him in the complex and sensitive responsibility of animation and co-ordination of the entire Association.'<sup>[45]</sup>

What is said about the World Consultancy refers mainly to the lay members, since of the eighteen components of the organisation, only three are normally Religious.

It is desirable that members of the World Consultancy, further to the qualities required of all leaders, should also fulfil the following conditions, having:

- a considerable knowledge of the Region they represent;
- the possibility to travel about the Region and animate and take part in its important get-togethers, and also to participate in the meetings of the World Consultancy.

## 10. SDB and FMA DELEGATES

### A. Who they are.

Delegates are members of the Salesian Congregation or the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, and are appointed by

- their respective Provincials (local and provincial levels); or by
- other competent organisations of their SDB/FMA Institutes (National or Regional Conference).

The appointment is made after hearing the recommendation of the Cooperators' Council at the corresponding level.

The presence of the Religious Delegate (SDB/FMA) in the Association is regulated by art.46 of the Regulations of Apostolic Life (RAL).

The Delegate is a responsible and collegial member of the Council with a specific task, namely, the Salesian and apostolic formation of the Cooperators.

For this, according to the norms of the Council, the Delegate must be:

- trained for this task;
- faithful to the doctrine and spirit of the Church;
- capable of developing the spiritual life and apostolic perception of layfolk;
- capable of counselling layfolk wisely, helping them in their apostolic undertakings and encouraging them in their initiatives;
- capable of dialoguing with them so as to render their mission more efficacious;
- admirers and promoters of apostolic works of the laity.

It is especially recommended to the Religious that they dedicate themselves voluntarily to promoting the works of the laity according to the spirit and particular norms of the latter.

### B. The roles of SDB & FMA Delegates.

#### 1. Spiritual animator.

Delegates are defined by the Regulations basically as 'animators',[\[46\]](#) in the sense understood by Canon Law.[\[47\]](#)

This signifies that the Delegate is called to vitalise and stimulate the Association. This can be achieved by calling the attention of the Cooperators to

- the nature and aim of the group in so far as it is an ecclesial group;
- the motivation of membership; sharing of responsibilities; the specific commitments demanded by the various roles;
- the particular kind of governance;
- the Salesian authenticity;
- the apostolic commitment and the spirituality of *Da mihi animas*.

The Delegate's animation gives priority to the vocational growth of each individual member as well as the group.

The Delegate must be particularly aware that the aim of animation is the development of the Cooperators, especially the leaders, helping them to discover their talents and to put them at the disposition of all.

## 2. Responsible above all for apostolic Salesian formation.

The Delegate can also be defined as a 'formator' (one who trains)[\[48\]](#) in the Salesian apostolate. A formator instructs in matters spiritual, prayerful and apostolic; and is (or should be) well versed in these matters[\[49\]](#).

Within this ambit, Delegates, co-responsibly with the Council and in keeping with their special function of formation, should direct their instruction to

- the human formation of the Cooperator;
- the Christian and ecclesial formation of the Cooperator; and
- the Salesian formation of the Cooperator.

The Delegates' presence should be a living sign of their efforts to encourage and develop the Salesianity and apostolicity of individual members and the whole Association.

The Delegates' activities should not be limited to formal periods of formation such as, for instance, spiritual direction and programmed 'conferences': they should also develop friendship and trust and shared common prayer and discussion.

## 3. Right of Delegates to participate in Council

Finally, it should be noted that the Delegates, as members of Councils at the various levels, participate in discussions and take part in decision-making. Hence they need to be present at Council meetings - but without taking charge of the Council or assuming the normal duties of the Co-ordinator.

## C. SDB & FMA DELEGATES AT VARIOUS LEVELS OF THE ASSOCIATION.

### 1. Local level.

#### I. Appointment

Delegates are appointed by Provincials after hearing the opinion of the Local ASC Council. Rectors and Superiors (FMA) have no power of appointment or dismissal.

The Provincial can obtain the opinion of the Local Council of the Cooperators in a joint session or in some other way considered opportune.

#### II. Scope of Delegate's Office

The Delegate attends to apostolic formation. Salesianity cannot be understood apart from *Da mihi animas*, and hence a special area of Salesian formation deals with apostolic formation. Two aspects should be noted:

\* Delegate for the 'Salesianity' of the Association:

Don Bosco wanted the Association to be distinguished by its dynamic charity, inspired by his motto, *Da mihi animas*, which demanded an untiring commitment to the salvation of the young and an effort to attain an interior spirituality. True Salesianity cannot be separated from this motto, and thus a special area of Salesian formation deals with apostolic formation.

\* Delegate for an active Salesian Community.

\* According to the Regulations of Apostolic Life,[\[50\]](#) the community is responsible for the animation of the Cooperators.[\[51\]](#)

Delegates therefore are the links between the Religious Community and the Cooperators. Many difficulties between Cooperators and Religious Communities are due to the lack of communication, with resulting problems of reciprocal unease.

Delegates promote friendly and apostolic relations between Communities and the Association.

## 2. Provincial level.

### I. Appointment

Provincial Delegates are appointed by their respective Provincials, after hearing the opinion of the Provincial Council of the Cooperators.[\[52\]](#) This consultation may be made in the presence of all the Council or individually, or in some other way considered opportune - even by letter.

### II. Duties common to Delegates

a) SDB and FMA Delegates must see that local Delegates are well prepared for their roles. They may see to these tasks either separately (according to the norms of their particular Institutes) or together.

b) SDB and FMA Delegates are officially members of ASC Provincial Councils, and thus participate collegially in the government of the Association at Provincial level. Neither SDB nor FMA Delegate, however, presides at meetings or makes final decisions.

c) SDB and FMA Provincial Delegates see to the Salesian and apostolic formation of the members of the ASC Council, in accordance with the planning of both the Association and the head of the sector.

d) Delegates make regular visits to the Cooperator Centres of their respective Provinces.

### III. Specific task of the SDB Delegate

By arrangement with the FMA Provincial and Provincial Delegate, the SDB Provincial Delegate also visits those ASC Centres in the vicinity of the FMA communities.

## 3. National and Regional levels.

1) Art.47 of the Regulations of Apostolic Life makes allowance for this arrangement as a furtherance of 'animation and co-ordination'.

2) If it should seem opportune to create Conferences at National and/or Regional level, provision is also made in the Regulations for the Religious present to be an SDB or an FMA.

3) The Regulations and the Conference itself (in accordance with the individual statutes) deal with the work of the National and/or Regional Delegate.

The Religious animators at the national/regional level, have so far all been SDBs; but they may also be FMAs.

The Regulations of Apostolic Life speak of this in art.47.3, affirming that the Conference be conducted by a Cooperator elected by both the Conference itself and a National and/or Regional Delegate designated by Provincials SDB and FMA of the Provinces concerned.

These tasks are no different from those of other Delegates, but it should be borne in mind that it is the Conference itself that makes its own Statutes (which must not contradict any of the Regulations of Apostolic Life). Therefore the Conference cannot assume roles that are assigned, for instance, to the Councils. The purpose of these Conferences is to achieve a more efficient vitality and collaboration. The Statutes, following this line, will determine the tasks of the Delegates, according to the purpose of these Conferences and the role that the Regulations of Apostolic Life assign to Delegates.

#### 4. Delegate at international level.

The Convention explicitly states that among the five members that the Rector Major appoints to the World Consultancy, there must be an FMA.[\[53\]](#) The article does not specify any particular tasks for the FMA Delegate within the Consultancy. Her role will thus be determined by what arts.23 & 48 of the Regulations of Apostolic Life state in respect of the Consultors.

This consists in assisting the Rector Major in the animation of the Association and the organising of formative apostolic activities in so far as the FMAs are concerned. This means, in the first place, the contribution of her animation regarding the Association at world level, especially in the areas connected with the FMAs, with particular reference to FMA Provincial Delegates.[\[54\]](#)

Furthermore, according to art.48 of the Regulations, her contribution as a consultor is the same as is required from all Consultors, since she has the same duties and rights as the other members of the Consultancy.

The case of the Central or General Delegate is different, since he is not explicitly considered in the Regulations. This animator up to the present has operated in the World Consultancy as one of the five members appointed, not by the Regulations or the Consultancy, but directly by the Rector Major. He acts in accord with the Councillor for the Salesian Family, who is a 'member by right' of the World Consultancy and who has particular roles assigned to him by both the SDB and Regulations of Apostolic Life. In the World Consultancy and the ASC in general, the role of the Central Delegate depends on the fact that he is appointed by the Rector Major as a member of the World Consultancy. His specific role is to represent the Councillor for the Salesian Family and to carry out whatever assignments are given him by the Rector Major.

#### 11. Lay Delegate And Diocesan Priest Delegate: A Particular Case.

When the Centre is not set up in the vicinity of an SDB or FMA community, the Provincial may appoint as local Delegate a Cooperator who is adequately adequately prepared for the task.[\[55\]](#) Today Cooperators too are Delegates.

Persons who first come to mind, because of their theological and pastoral training, are the Cooperators who are diocesan priests or permanent deacons. However, well trained Cooperators are not excluded from being Delegates. What is required for this kind of Delegate is adequate training, especially in matters Salesian and apostolic.

Such Delegates are appointed by the Provincial according to the requirements for SDB Delegates.

It is fitting that the appointment of the Cooperator Delegate be made with the knowledge of the Bishop, since the Centre is erected with his permission.

Such Delegates are to be invited to the meetings of Delegates of the Centres within the Province.

Delegates who are not SDBs or FMAs, carry out their specific tasks in the same way as the SDB or FMA Delegates - with the exclusion (in the case of a lay member) of the priestly functions that are not extended to the laity.

For the Cooperator Delegate who is not a priest it is important to keep in mind art.5 of the Convention: Local Delegates who are not priests should endeavour as far as possible to have the Provincial approve a Salesian priest for their Centres on the occasions of more important gatherings for prayer or discernment and for sacramental and liturgical ceremonies for the Cooperators.

It is important that the lay Delegate respect the areas of authority of the Co-ordinator and other members of the Council, and not assume responsibilities that belong to other members. The fact of being lay and Delegate does not confer a position of superiority over other members.

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## CHAPTER III

### FORMATION OF THOSE WHO HOLD OFFICES IN THE ASSOCIATION

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### 12. Introduction [\[56\]](#)

This chapter deals with the specific training needed for the formator (whether lay, religious, or diocesan cleric) of the Cooperators. Hence it does not deal with the formation plan of the members of the Association.

### 13. Importance of formation of office-holders

#### A. For the individual person.

To carry out with competence their special task, office-bearers need personal on-going formation. Above all, the new significance our world today gives to formation should be noted. What is all-important is the experience gained in the formative process, the integration of the spiritual and secular dimension, past knowledge and newly acquired principles, personal achievement and the commitment to be apostolically active. This is the only way a Cooperator makes interior progress.

#### B. For the service to be rendered.

The Regulations of Apostolic Life state that the office-bearers of the Association must not limit themselves to mere words, but really assist the Cooperators in their formation. To render a service worthy of the name, the office-bearer must understand the importance of personal formation as 'a continuing personal progress in faith and the imitation of Christ as willed by the Father, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit'. [\[57\]](#)

Art.37 of the Regulations of Apostolic Life is very clear regarding these requisites and the need of the Salesian ethos in formation. [\[58\]](#)

#### C. Requisites for a successful mission

The mission demands trained persons, capable of responding to the needs of today. The following aspects must not be forgotten.

- a) The changing character of the human person, who grows and matures, learning from life and responding to its varying situations; and hence the necessity that people help each other to become active members of the Church and society - which too are undergoing continuing renewal.

b) Fidelity to vocational growth demands from believers, in line with the indications of Vatican II, the ability to keep pace with the changed conditions of life, to overcome the inevitable dichotomies that social complexities present.

c) The dynamism of youth is truly a challenge to educative efforts. Education is more urgent today because evolution and social transformation are more rapid, owing to the increased pluralism in contemporary society.

To tackle these three demands is to construct a 'plan of life that leads to human and Christian maturity' [59] - a plan never totally achieved but continually sought after.

Consequently the commitment to a solid formation is a primary obligation and a matter of conscience for an office-bearing Cooperator; it is an obligation never to be undervalued or neglected.

#### 14. Salesian criteria in the training of office-bearers

##### A. Interior and external activities in harmony.

All Christians are called to harmonise their interior and external lives. Today, the Salesian phrase used for this concept is 'interior apostolicity'. The dichotomy is obvious in the case of a person being superficial (lacking interiority) and purely activist (lacking apostolicity).

Cooperator leaders are not expected to choose between being members of the Church or citizens of the world; rather, they must do their best to achieve a complete unity of the two.

##### B. Interaction of thought and activities

Formation is achieved through the continuous interaction of interior and external life. It involves a dynamism, an activity, a methodology, a deep concern that imbue one's entire life. Indeed, an 'auto-formation' is attained through this kind of reflection on the Cooperator's apostolic activities.

Theory is necessary, but it is always measured by practice. Experience is indispensable, but must find the reasons that underlie its expression.

##### C. Formation comes with practice

From the preceding criterion it is plain that formation is achieved by practice; by training others, formators also perfect their own formation. The call to continual development, to progressive improvement, to holiness, is enlivened by activities and practical events: this is what God seeks of us. Activities are educative when they stimulate self-formation and demand a conscious contribution of the participants themselves to the process of formation. Don Bosco was always a living model of this principle: he applied it to himself whilst applying it to his young charges.

##### D. Good deeds are their own justification. (Competence and professionalism)

Today the criterion of development and success in all areas is excellence. Competence becomes inaccessible only when it is seen as a goal; but seen as a means, an instrument, it becomes a necessary tool for acting efficaciously.

Goodness comes from doing good; action alone is insufficient: it must be joined to planned purpose.

## 15. Delegates responsible for formation

What follows refers to formation structures and office-bearers. The list is set out according to logic, not importance; it moves from the worldwide sphere to the local Centres.

### A. The World Consultancy

The responsibility of the World Consultancy in regard to formation is set out in art.23.2 of the Regulations of Apostolic Life: In the exercise of his ministry to animate the entire Association and co-ordinate its apostolic and formative activities, the Rector Major will avail himself, above all, of the ASC World Consultancy. The service of the World Consultancy to the Association consists of animation and co-ordination. Animation aims at further education; and it is important to note that co-ordination does not seek to lessen individual creativity: it only insists that goals be achieved by the combined the efforts of ASC members.

### B. The National and Regional Conferences

The aim of such Conferences is to co-ordinate, encourage, and help increase efficiency, vitality and collaboration.<sup>[60]</sup> The Regulations also make provision for co-ordination and encouragement in the area of formation.

### C. The Provincial Council

This is the privileged mouthpiece of the Consultancy in the matter of formation.

To the Provincial Council is entrusted the task of promoting and coordinating the formative and apostolic initiatives at Provincial level. Hence it is not sufficient to simply co-ordinate: what is required is the actual promotion of activities for the Centres that make up the Province. Both the Provincial Council and the individual will work on:

- training competent individuals in the Centres;
- organising various meetings and formative activities;
- using admittance to the formal Promise as an occasion for confirmation and commitment in regard to further formation;
- contributing to the procedure and adaptation (for the Province) of the Association's special formation routine.

### D. The Local Council

The Local Council<sup>[61]</sup> carries out the formative commitments according to the Regulations of Apostolic Life. It is the particular 'task of the Local Council to help the aspiring Cooperator in his formation'.<sup>[62]</sup>

Just as the Provincial Council does, the Local Council also promotes the formative and apostolic initiatives stated in the preceding paragraph.

## E. SDB and FMA Delegates

In Chapter II of this Manual, Delegates have been presented as formators. In fact in art.46.1, it is affirmed that they are responsible 'above all for Salesian apostolic formation'. They do not act alone in attending to this task, but work together with other well-trained Cooperators.

## F. Formation Councillors

The Regulations of Apostolic Life do not make mention of these Cooperators or their specific role. However, in Chapter IV of this Manual, reference is made of the experience of many local Councils who have (with great success) instituted this invaluable service in the life of the Association.

Their duties and responsibilities depend on the arrangements their Councils make with them.

## G. Cooperators with particular qualifications

Article 38.2 states that formation is also attended to by Cooperators with particular competences. Their work does not replace that of the Delegates, but rather complements it.

H. The responsibility for personal formation rests primarily with the individual Cooperator. Article 38.1 emphasises that Cooperators themselves are the 'principle persons responsible for their own formation'.

## 16. Formation of office-holders: spheres and sectors

We now consider the three objectives of formation:

- a) to help people to develop a new mental attitude built on profound convictions (mentality: doctrinal knowledge a necessity);
- b) to pass from rational and reasonable analysis of problems and situations, from intellectual content to interior attitudes that sustain a person on the way to activity (attitudes: to be imbued with spirituality); and
- c) finally to move on to the practical: what is seen by the mind, what is assimilated in the spirit, is now expressed in action (action: pastoral activities).

### A. Mentality: doctrinal knowledge a necessity

Office-bearers need to further their own formation if they wish to be really helpful to others; they need to explore more profoundly the reality of Christian and Salesian tradition according to the following principles.

#### 1. Ecclesial doctrine

The following developments are fundamental for today:

##### i) The new theological ideas coming from Vatican II.

We consider it sufficient to stress the doctrinal importance of the new vision of the Church (Lumen Gentium and Gaudium et Spes), and prayer in the Church (Sacrosanctum Concilium).

##### ii) New thinking regarding evangelisation and catechesis.

Special emphasis is laid on the development of catechesis in the Catholic Church and what it has done for a more profound understanding thereof.

A more practical understanding of *Evangelii Nuntiandi* is made possible by the document of Santo Domingo and the various statements of John Paul II on the new evangelisation. Don Bosco loved repeating that his work was born from a catechism lesson. To better our world thereby is the task of the Cooperator Leader who wishes to be faithful to our Founder.

(iii) Novelties in the Church's social doctrine.

This is a particularly significant aspect of the Church's presence in the contemporary world.

It is not possible to cite all the documents. We should make ourselves reasonably competent regarding the Church's teaching on the work-force (*Laborem exercens*), social responsibility (*Populorum progressio*, *Sollicitudo rei socialis*), an advanced understanding of the world (*Centesimus annus*). The guide-lines resulting from this prolific tradition must be understood by Cooperators who are office-bearers, if they wish to prevent the Centres from being mere onlookers whilst a new world is being born.

(iv) A new commitment of the faithful in matters of morality.

The practical life situations and family relationships of civil and political society demand a return to the substance of the Gospel: justice, the common good, sharing, solidarity, the sense of duty, recognition of the facts of life, etc. It is a recall to morality in all life's predicaments.

(v) Novelties in lay activities in Church matters.

Two documents in particular stress the novelties of postconciliar thinking: *Mulieris Dignitatem* and *Christifideles laici*. The relationship of Church-laity-world calls for a further reading not only of *Lumen Gentium*, *Gaudium et Spes* and *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, but also of *Redemptoris Missio*; new horizons are opened up regarding lay commitment.

2. Salesian tradition and its doctrinal contents

The Delegate needs to regard the following aspects of doctrinal formation in an expressly Salesian manner.

(i) Knowledge of Don Bosco and the Salesian Family. The life of Don Bosco, his work, his educative and pastoral experience at Valdocco and reproduced at Mornese - these cannot be mere objects of intellectual curiosity. It is indispensable to have a profound understanding that is the fruit of study and love. It is also necessary to have knowledge of the individual groups that form the Salesian Family. We possess a rich documentation that the Cooperator office-bearer should know.

Father Egidio Viganò has written a letter that deals in depth with the identity of each Group. It is a document of great use to study the life and experience of the different institutions inspired by Don Bosco.

(ii) A more thorough understanding of the history and life of the ASC both at world level and local level. Little is known of the holiness of particular Cooperators. We should compile the facts of these good persons' lives. There is no doubt that this official comment on the Regulations should become a 'manual' for all Cooperators who are office-bearers.

B. Attitudes: to be imbued with spirituality

Mere knowledge of the ecclesial and Salesian matters mentioned in the preceding paragraphs is not sufficient. A vital assimilation is indispensable: they should become an easy and habitual endorsement for all daily events.

What has been learned must be translated into good normal ways of acting.

When Delegates make use of the Gospel values and the principles of Don Bosco, they will be able to consider themselves 'spiritual' persons, persons capable of unifying the manifold, with hearts full of Christ and the Salesian spirit.

In the present context it is useful to recall the typical attitudes of convinced formators who look to Don Bosco to inspire and guide their lives.

It is not just a case of listing the Salesian spiritual elements; we have to learn from history to live for today, helping others to grow and achieve their right formation. The following are the main attitudes we have to acquire:

#### 1. Willingness to collaborate with all.

Don Bosco was renowned for his spirit of cooperation; he entrusted others with all kinds of responsibilities, great and small. Office-bearers are not central figures: they invite others into the very heart of their interests.

Leaders do not go forth to conquer alone: their battle is to achieve a convergence of many.

Many 'Salesian' virtues find in this convergence a fruitful soil for growth: optimism and trust in persons; openness and a welcoming attitude in the face of practical proposals from all; creativity stimulated by common discussion; adaptation to different practical situations, etc.

#### 2. Appreciation and use of the talents of others.

Office-bearers are regularly confronted with many challenges and much is expected from them. ASC office-bearers work for the formation of others, helping them to discover their personal talents, to make use of them in relation with the gifts of others; to seek together a common and shared project.

The history of Don Bosco's Oratory deals with young and old, religious and secular, educated and simple folk: all in union and all generous in offering their contributions in accordance with their individual talents.

Our office-bearers help all Cooperators to pass on to others what they have received personally.

#### 3. All activities include animation

Right from the first chapter we have insisted on the necessity of animation for all Cooperators.

In keeping with these principles, animation means the duty of the office-bearer to accept the task of seeing to the formation of persons rather than structures; to attend to vocational processes rather than organisational aspects; to aim at quality rather than quantity of interventions; to be open to life and culture rather than to enclose the Association in a comfortable isolation.

#### C. Activity to be apostolic

Interior attitudes are habitually reinforced by action.

Furthermore, our interior attitudes need to be expressed in visible and planned behaviour.

An important part of the formation imparted by the formators is the choice of practical activities that result from the Salesian way of life (interior and external).

Two possible cases exemplify this.

(i) Working in a group

A formation for individualism is not a preparation for working with others, for solidarity, for forging ahead in unity. When confronting problems or when having to make decisions in our daily lives, the first reaction of a formator is to be willing to consult others, to discuss seriously and search for solutions together. Group work is the beginning of the solution of difficulties.

Furthermore, group work heightens the quality of projects: many heads are better than one.

Sometimes we are tempted to believe that working alone makes for a quicker conclusion.[\[63\]](#) This does not hold for the Association: in fact such a way could be harmful.

Group work, however, needs the technical support that will guarantee its success. For information on this point, consult chapter VII, section B of this manual.

(ii) Developing the autonomy of the Association

This title can be considered from various angles. Here we view it through the eyes of the office-bearer. The autonomy of the ASC involves following three principles:

\* Ability to make courageous decisions.

Without a doubt the bond of the Association with the Salesian Congregation and the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians is a strong one. Sometimes, however, the bond takes the form of dependence on them for decisions. Centres may tend to leave decision-making to the Religious who happens to be present. This means that the roles set out by the Regulations are not carried out correctly, and the result is an imbalance in the lay aspect of the Association.

\* Ability to organise the work of the Centre.

The office-bearer is guided entirely by the Regulations of Apostolic Life, and in them finds not only the source of spirituality, but also the importance of the internal ASC organisation. Article 44 .1 of the Regulations sets out the principal tasks of the Councils. Keeping to these guidelines will give strength and consistency to the Association.

Don Bosco considered organisation as the exterior wrapping of spirituality, and the support of a person's formative progress; it assures the members that the choices made are good ones.

\* Renewal of continuity.

Leaders will do what they can to make the role and service of the ASC more suited to life's realities, in accordance with the purpose envisaged by the Founder.

Thus they will be keen to examine the signs of the times, with an eye to the future; and will dedicate themselves with practical empathy and creative vision to employ the most suitable ways and means to ensure the progress of the Association in keeping with times and circumstances. They should develop an interior attitude of constant renewal that calls for vigilant discernment. Thus they will be able to avoid undue haste and debilitating stagnation; they will beware of 'change for change's sake', and will safeguard that fruitful continuity that flows from a rich and profound spirituality.

## 17. Means and times of formation of Delegates

### A. Means of formation

In order to achieve the objectives indicated above, Leaders need to be constantly committed to perfecting their own vocation and formation. They need to set aside time each day for reflection and study, thus spiritualising their daily activities. In line with what has been said regarding doctrine, attitudes and action, we list certain practical ways that will help further on-going formation.

- \* Specific formation courses for office-bearers of the different animation sectors at the various levels.
- \* Assemblies, study days, Cooperator meetings, that are part of the Association's life and enrich the energies of its members.
- \* Get-togethers promoted by ecclesial organisations for a more efficient animation of the various associations of the laity in general.
- \* Thoughtful reading of Salesian literature on the animation of Cooperators (e.g., Cooperatores, the Salesian Bulletin, books and pamphlets on specific themes and places, etc.
- \* Monthly retreats, spiritual exercises and special times of prayer that contribute to the growth of personal spirituality and witness.
- \* Constant concern to know personally the members of the group, sharing the joys, sorrows and aspirations of those about us.[\[64\]](#)
- \* Participation in pastoral activities at the different group levels of the ASC and the Salesian Family;
- \* Personal and group concern and contact with actual animation by means of specific encounters (e.g., with office-bearers at different levels or sectors of commitment).

### B. Times of formation of office-bearers

#### 1. Ordinary times

Christifideles Laici sees childhood and teens as the times most decisive and most significant for formation; but every moment of human existence can be formative, opportune for the passing of the Lord, 'who never ceases to call to us through changing personal situations and places'.[\[65\]](#)

Only attention to God and his transforming action can actuate a formation that is in keeping with what life and circumstances need.

#### 2. Extraordinary times

The Association may benefit by a specific period of formation on the part of an office-bearer in certain particular and extraordinary circumstances and occasions. Such events can vary in kind, duration and importance and yet all are equally exacting. They should be welcomed with docility to the Holy Spirit and generous availability. They should be treated as privileged moments of spiritual enrichment and self-donation. Such situations could be occasioned, for example, in preparation for the Cooperator's Pledge, for a profound study of the Regulations, the preparation and organisation of a course of specific formation, a day of spiritual encounter, etc.

## 18. Specific aspects of formation of office-bearers

It is important that each office-bearer be aware that in accordance with personal situation, personal state of life and personal role in the Association, each has a specific contribution to offer.

Continual efforts must be made to deepen commitment and become ever more competent and fitting to cope with the changes and exigencies of daily life.

#### A. Lay office-bearers

The specific formation of lay office-bearers should render them:

- \* more significant models of the role and mission of the laity in the Church;
- \* more knowledgeable of the contents and processes of the formation mentioned above;
- \* more committed to on-going formation so as to better grasp the Gospel values of the Salesian spirit in the web of daily life: the spirituality of the Incarnation;
- \* protagonists of the 'interior life' that expresses itself in pastoral charity;
- \* devotees deeply committed to the animation and organisation of the Association and the formation of the Cooperators, and thus furthering pastoral activities.

#### B. SDB/FMA Delegates

SDB and FMA Delegates, must focus specific formation particularly on:

- \* further clarifying the identity, mission and role of the laity in the Church and within the Salesian Family, so that Cooperators will have clear and convincing ideas regarding Salesian apostolic formation;
- \* developing availability and involvement in the formation of persons who live in the world, transmitting to them the genuine values of secular spirituality in the Salesian way;
- \* working together in union even when certain areas of co-responsibility seem to clash with one another;
- \* faithful and practical commitment, together with other competent members, in a pastoral service that offers a spiritual help that will sustain and guide others.

#### C. Delegates (laity and diocesan priests)

Delegates who are not SDBs or FMAs should be aware of certain aspects of formation that are presupposed in those who have made the choice of the Religious Life.

\* There is the need of a truly profound Salesian formation: formation is not possible if the Salesian spirit is not well known, understood and practised, by the one is to be a formator; it is necessary to be cognisant of Salesian sources and have contact with things Salesian. It would be helpful and opportune to have at one's disposal a small Salesian library. Furthermore it is indispensable to be in touch with the Salesian world in its various aspects, and join in study days so as to experience and maintain a lively and authentic Salesianity in general, in addition to the particular Salesian aspects of the local Centre.

\* There is need too of a theological and biblical formation. When the Delegate is a lay person who has not had any specific theological and biblical training, it is necessary to make special arrangements for this fundamental aspect of formation. Actually today there are many courses of theology for the laity (even by correspondence) which can fill the gap.

\* Finally there is need of a formation that is pastoral and apostolic.

A good formation in this sector is definitely required by a Delegate who is dedicated mainly to pastoral service. Very useful for this purpose is the practical experience gained in the apostolic work among the young.

Being 'formed' is of fundamental importance in the life and development of the Association, and formators should constantly carefully check and assess their work and development as animators, both at the personal and community level.

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## CHAPTER IV

### STRUCTURE FOR COOPERATOR ANIMATION

#### INTRODUCTION

Salesian criteria for the organisation of the ASC

#### THE CENTRE - the basic component of the ASC

The characteristics of the centre  
The community aspect of the Centre  
Support for Cooperator vocation  
The Family Spirit that animates the Centre  
Apostolic activities of the Centre  
Where the Centre is situated

#### B. The Life of the Centre: vital Elements

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###### I - Characteristic Qualities of the Local Council

- \* The Nature of the Local Council
- \* Electing Council Members
- \* The First Meeting of the Local Council
- \* Functions of the Council

###### II - The Local Co-ordinator

###### III - Collegiality in administration

###### IV - Responsibility of the Co-ordinator

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###### Formation

###### Areas of apostolic endeavours

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###### Missions

###### Media

###### Young Cooperators and the Relationship with the Salesian Youth Movement

###### The local Church

###### Working with the Salesian Family

###### Other possible activities

##### 2. The Office of Secretary

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##### 4. Regular Meetings

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2. The unification of Centres
3. Relocating Centres
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5. Relationships between Centres

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###### Essential Criteria

###### I Requisites for admission

###### II Vocational criteria

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###### IV Motivational criteria

2. Leaving the Association.
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- a. Nature of these Conferences
- b. Constitution of these Conferences
- c. Activities of these Conferences
- d. Conference Office bearers
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- f. Other possible groups of the Conference

## 23. World Consultancy

- a. Nature of World Consultancy
- b. Aims, tasks and functions of World Consultancy
- c. Members of the Consultancy
- d. Convoking the World Consultancy
- e. Activities of Consultors at Regional level
- f. Functions within the Consultancy
  - 1<sup>o</sup> Duties of the Co-ordinator General
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  - 3<sup>o</sup> Duties of the Central Executive Secretariat
- g. Relationships with the Salesian Family and other Organisations
- h. Meetings of the World Consultancy
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## Appendix I:

Regulations for the internal functioning of the World Consultancy. Guidelines for activities of the Consultors.

Appendix II: Draft of the internal Regulations of the Council

Appendix III: Draft of the internal Regulations of the Conference

Appendix IV: Statement of expenditure and budget

Appendix V: Module for calling a meeting

Appendix VI: Module for request for admission into the ASC.

Appendix VII: Decree of erection of a Centre of the ASC.

19. Introduction: Salesian criteria for the organisation of Cooperators.

According to the mind of Don Bosco the Association should be organised according to the following criteria:

- flexibility
- adaptability
- and benefit to the person

For the smooth running of an organisation complicated and rigid structures are not necessary. These should be geared for the good of the Association, to foster its activity, and not according to bureaucratic procedures.

Thus it is important that at every level programming, assessment and discussions should be simplified.

Furthermore, since all branches are part of the same world organisation, attention must be paid to the particular needs of various cultures, and the historical and geographical nature of the environments in which the Association operates.

The Regulations of Apostolic Life state the following:

“The organisation is to be flexible and adapted to the various local and ecclesial situations”[\[66\]](#)  
The main criterion, of course, is the good of the individual person. After all, we have Our Lord’s own words in the Gospel that “the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath”.

Applying this principal to the matter of structures, it is clear that personal development and vocational growth are at the very centre of everything. Apostolic ability and fidelity to the Salesian spirit are plainly the objective of the Association.

The Cooperator Centre is the fundamental ASC unit[\[67\]](#)

As the Regulations of Apostolic Life indicate, the Centre is the true basic unit of the Association, and can thus claim to be the foundation of all the upper levels.

As a matter of fact it is the fundamental operative unit and the *raison d’être* of all the other units in the higher levels (who actually exist to devote their services to the local unit). It is easy to deduce from the Regulations of Apostolic Life certain specific characteristics of the local Centre.

The nature of the Local Centre

1. The Local Centre is a community

Of course we live our vocation as individuals. However, Don Bosco envisaged the Cooperators as members of a group and working in close collaboration and communion with other members of the Association. This gives the Cooperator an important and wider point of reference when called on to carry out important tasks in more extensive and complex situations. Every Cooperator finds

in the local Centre the practical answer to all problems that involve 'matters Salesian' and particular apostolic activities.

## 2. Support for Cooperator vocations

The most important function of the Centre is to help the individual Cooperator live to the full the Christian and Salesian vocation. In this way members' growth is assured and the better equipped to be of service in the apostolate..

## 3. The family spirit that animates the Centre

The Centre fosters the welcoming spirit as a way of life. People are not made to feel they are mere guests - and far less 'outsiders'. The Centre is open to work hand in hand with other sections of the Salesian family. In fact, sharing and relating with other persons and groups actually give it greater vitality. The Centre is on common ground with all who come within its influence, especially youngsters and working-class people.

## 4. The Centre and apostolic activity

It is essential that the Centre should not become merely a pleasant refuge for people who just like being together with others. Rather, the Centre must strive to be the life and soul of its particular ecclesial and civil ambience. Such a place then will be fruitful in proposals and decisions.

## 5. The meeting-place of the Centre

The actual meeting place plays an important part in the organisation of the Centre. It should be unpretentious, simple and functional, with a friendly atmosphere, where the Cooperators can enjoy one another's company - a place where they can organise their ASC commitments.

Care must be taken to keep up to date and functional whatever concerns the Association in its apostolic activity, e.g., the updating of its member lists and the recording of the main ASC activities and projects, correspondence, circulars, projects achieved, minutes of meetings, and whatever else concerns the running of a Centre.

These details will not be merely a record for posterity but a documentation helpful for assessment of progress made and for reflection; they will add interest and enrichment to the common effort and a better realisation of the life of the Centre; they will also stimulate further initiations and suggest solutions to problems.

The Centre thus becomes a place where people feel at home, where they can help one another, and where the Centre and its activities can be made known to friends and sympathisers.

## The life of the Centre: indispensable characteristics

Besides the 'flexibility and adaptability demanded by the local and ecclesial situations'[\[68\]](#), the following elements are essential:

the Local Council (Co-ordinator [\[69\]](#), Delegate [\[70\]](#), Administrator[\[71\]](#), and office-bearers[\[72\]](#) of other sectors;

the Secretariat;

Regular Meetings.

The animation and co-ordination of the Centres will be a truly fraternal service in accord with the spirit of the Regulations.

## 1. The Council

### I. The Characteristic Elements of the Council

\* The nature of the Local Council

The Local Council is the governing body that animates and directs the Association at the local level. It is a collegial organisation with precisely delineated commitments, on which the Centre depends for its smooth running. Three to six members and a Delegate make up the Local Council.

#### \* Election of the Local Council

When elections are called, or official functions are to be carried out, the local Cooperators meet in an assembly

- which is convoked by the Provincial Co-ordinator, if it is a case of the first establishment of the Council.

In the event of setting up of a new Province or Delegation, this will be done by the Consultor for the region or the Co-ordinator General).

- In the case of a new Council replacing an out-going Council, the retiring Co-ordinator does the convoking.

It is the task of the Council and/or the actual assembly to decide on the method of voting, and the number of candidates to be elected - three to seven, including the Co-ordinator, according to the number needed, the activities in mind, and the extent of the territory to be covered.

It is well to note in regard to Local Council elections (as is stated in the Regulations of Apostolic Life and the Code of Canon Law) that every retiring Council or Assembly may adopt the particular mode of election that best suits the various local situations, provided the electors have freedom of expression, freedom of choice, observance of the rule of the majority, acceptance of the rotation of office-bearers. Thus for future occasions [\[73\]](#) other norms may be adopted by common agreement.

For the validity of the election, the norms laid down in Canon 119 of the Code of Canon Law [\[74\]](#) must be observed; they are listed below:

- 1) Absolute majorities are required for the first and second voting.
- 2) In the event of inconclusive first and second ballots, the eligible candidates for the third ballot will be the two candidates who acquired the relative majority in the second ballot. If, however, there are more than two candidates, only the two older ones are eligible. In the case of an equal number of votes received by the two candidates, or in the case of diversity of votes between a candidate with relative majority and other candidates with equal votes, then the elder of the two latter candidates is eligible..
- 3) After the third ballot the one (of the two candidates) who has the majority is elected. In the case of a draw, the older in age is elected.
- 4) The third ballot is final in every case, and there is no further voting [\[75\]](#).

It is worth noting that it could be beneficial both to the person and the Association to make use of an available Cooperator who was not elected.

Those who have held office as councillors for two consecutive periods of three years may not be re-elected. Exceptions could be made for particular cases, recognised as necessary and put to the Rector Major with the request for a third term of office on the Council. The outgoing Council must however make the request in good time.

#### \* The First Meeting of the Local Council

The first meeting of the new Council is convoked by the Co-ordinator of the outgoing Council. That not being possible, the meeting may be called by the member of the Council with the

majority vote. In the case of equality of votes, the one who is the senior Cooperator; if there is equality of profession, the senior in age, and in the case of parity of age, the Co-ordinator of the Conference performs the task.

At the first meeting the Co-ordinator and Administrator are chosen. At the same time the smooth running of the Council will call for the other Councillors to have their various tasks allotted to them.

The first meeting of the Council should take place immediately after the election or as soon as time and place can be arranged.

#### \* Duties of the Local Council

The principle duties of the Council are listed in art.44 of the Regulations of Apostolic Life. Further comments on the following brief notes can be found in the Official Commentary [\[76\]](#).

- In consultation with the Salesian Provincial, to arrange the plan of action for the ASC. The Association's proposed activities in the local ambience should be carefully borne in mind so that they may be realised in the best possible way. This requires regular assessment and planning. It is obvious that the Council simply must involve the Provincial, at least through the Delegate; and the Provincial must show a practical interest in the activity of the Association. During his annual canonical visitation to the Salesian houses, the Provincial will seek to meet the local Cooperators. Even though not expressly mentioned, the FMA Provincial will have an analogous role in regard to the Centres under the aegis of the FMA.

- To promote and co-ordinate the formative and apostolic initiatives of the Cooperators. The Council must consider itself responsible to promote the formation and apostolic activities of the Cooperators. This is indeed an essential service. A primary task is to study the formation requirements of the members, and the needs of the apostolate. To avoid labouring in vain, suitable organisation is necessary, and hence regular planning and assessment.

- To foster the bonds between the Salesian Congregation and the various groups of the Salesian Family. The first and foremost item on the agenda is to realise the significance of being members of the Salesian Family and getting to know one another; then, to strengthen these bonds in order to achieve a true communion. Members should be aware of the role of the Co-ordinator to keep in touch (in the name of the Council) with the various groups that make up the Salesian Family.

- To decide on times for meetings, assemblies, and congresses. These are means of adding vigour to the Association and giving it a sense of belonging [\[77\]](#), and therefore indispensable. Regularity, adequate preparation, and the smooth organisation of functions are all important, if negative results are to be avoided. (See Chapter V for further information and deeper understanding.)

- To see to the financial administration of the Association. The Council's first task is to create an attitude of solidarity and supportiveness in the members. It should be borne in mind that administration is entrusted to the Council, to whom the administrator must render an account. It is the Administrator's responsibility to draw up the budget and balance sheet and keep the books.

## II. Local Co-ordinator

The Co-ordinator is elected by the Council at the first meeting, and is a lay member according to Canon Law (can.119) as mentioned above. It is a crucial role that greatly affects the good or poor performance of the Centre; art.44.2 details the duties of this office, namely:

- to call and chair meetings, co-ordinate the various activities, and ensure that decisions are duly carried out.

Following the prearranged calendared schedule the co-ordinator arranges for regular meetings. The co-ordinator makes sure that the notice of meetings and agenda are distributed in good time. Regular absentees should be reminded to make an effort to attend. The Co-ordinator should appoint another Council member to chair and run the meeting. It would be helpful if the Co-ordinator, together with the Delegate and (if possible) the Formation Councillor, could keep in touch with Cooperators who live at a distance, or who are ill, or in difficulties, and also anyone who aspires to join the Cooperators.

- to keep the higher Superiors informed of the life and activities of the Association. Communication is obviously a necessity in any organisation. This principle applies equally to our Association. It requires close contact with members in higher offices. This information, regularly and appropriately forwarded, should be sent in good time; and requests from above should be attended to promptly. All that is required by the Regulations of Apostolic Life should be forwarded - such as the financial information, requests for new Centres, etc.

- to represent the Association. Co-ordinators should personally attend meetings that require their presence, and if unable to attend delegates should be appointed as substitutes. This is particularly important when it is considered that in such organisations the Association's voice should be heard.

- to keep in touch, as a representative of the Council, with lay and Church organisations and with the various groups of the Salesian family, liaising with ecclesial organisations (parochial and diocesan), lay apostolates, advisory bodies, councils, etc.

Naturally all this applies likewise to the many sectors of the Salesian Family. As far as possible, one's presence is expected when it is a case of invitations to attend functions and celebrations pertaining to the Salesian Family such as congresses, meetings, special feasts etc.

- to make decisions in urgent circumstances, within the competency of the Council, and duly account for them. The job of Co-ordinators is to co-ordinate, not to preside. They are not invested with personal authority, but act as a member of an authoritative Council. Hence arises the obligation of giving an account of decisions taken in the name of the Council. Other duties of Co-ordinators are as follows:

- to receive applications from prospective Cooperators;

- to receive possible letters of a Cooperator's intention to retire from the ASC;

- to transmit (when requested) to the Provincial Council the conclusions of the Local Council [\[78\]](#).

### III. Collegiality in direction

Collegiality in direction is characteristic of every Council [\[79\]](#) and must always be borne in mind. The genuine participation of all members will reflect the co-responsibility of the whole Council. The Co-ordinator does not make individual decisions, but co-ordinates the thinking of the members.

The Official Commentary on the Regulations of Apostolic Life [\[80\]](#) notes the necessary conditions for a decision to be collegial, mentioning Canon 119 and three requisites:

- 1) the calling together of all members of the Council (v. Canon 166);

- 2) the presence of the absolute majority of the respective Council;

- 3) the absolute majority (calculated by the actual number of members present for the collegial act.

The presence of half the members plus one makes a majority absolute.

#### IV. Qualities of the local co-ordinator

##### Tact

The service offered by the Co-ordinator requires finesse and is irreplaceable; at times it far from easy, calling for sensitivity and friendly generosity.

If a Co-ordinator is overbearing, a loner, and acts with unbending authority, the Cooperators of the Centre will not progress or develop. This would have repercussions later on when a new Co-ordinator is appointed according to the Regulations of Apostolic Life.

Being a Co-ordinator has nothing to do with power, nor is it an opportunity for an ego-trip. The Co-ordinator needs to be able to inspire all the members of the Council to be active workers, avoiding the need for frequent substitutions; it means making room for the special talents of members, and following with interest the progress of their activities.

#### V. The Delegate of the Centre

Every local Council has its Delegate, normally appointed by the Salesian Provincial in case of an SDB Centre, or by the FMA Provincial in the case of an FMA Centre. In the case of a Centre situated far from any SDB or FMA foundation, the Delegate is a lay Cooperator or a member of the secular clergy, appointed by the Provincial concerned<sup>[81]</sup>.

#### VI. The organisation of the Council and the animation activities entrusted to the various Councillors.

The duties of all the members of the Local Council should be well defined, and thus well understood and carried out in a practical manner.

Thus the Council members, by mutual agreement, will be able to parcel out the tasks and responsibilities proper to the various activities; they must also appoint an Administrator from their number.

There is nothing in the Regulations that forbids changes in these appointments if such should seem advisable.

It is well to take note of members with special expertise, sensitivity and interest that fit them for particular duties. Indeed all members should be available and suitably prepared to take on the various responsibilities of the Association.

It would be helpful in this regard to draw up a list of the more important animation tasks<sup>[82]</sup>.

##### \* Formation<sup>[83]</sup>

The Councillor for Formation is a member of the Council, well qualified for such an office. His is the responsibility to arrange the programme for the human, Christian and Salesian formation of the members of the Centre; he should submit the programme to the Council for approval - and thereby stress the importance of the matter.

The Councillor for Formation works in conjunction with the local Delegate and the Co-ordinator, and some of the specific tasks are the following:

- to promote the Cooperator vocation (in certain cases this could be part of the animation process);
- to adapt, according to the circumstances of the local Centre, the programs for initial and ongoing formation proposed by the Provincial and World Councillors, and include them in the aims and contents of the local Centre's annual program;
- to see to the organisation of the monthly day of recollection and annual retreat of the members;

- to attend to the setting up of library facilities dealing with the members' formation, and make available literature and other teaching aids produced by the various sectors of the Salesian Family;
- to join the local Delegate in showing a deep and practical interest in the discernment process of Cooperator aspirants, and also encourage fellow Cooperators to progress in their spirituality and fidelity to their Salesian commitments.

#### \* Apostolic Commitment

The Councillor assigned to this sector of activity has the task of sensitising, animating and encouraging the apostolic activities of the members of the Centre. This will include the encouragement of all Cooperators to live and work in harmony with the requirements of chapter 2 of the Regulations of Apostolic Life (Apostolic Commitment); the chapter deals with environments, people who need spiritual or material help, interventions, and methodology - all according to the way of Don Bosco. The Councillor will help every Cooperator to take on an apostolate commensurate with the member's capabilities.

The Councillor will also organise the development of learning aids modelled on those of the pastoral work for youth, the working class and the missions. Further duties will include helping members of the Centre to increase their skills in various areas of the apostolate, cementing relationships with other pastoral organisations of the local Church and with other organisations interested in assisting youth and the working classes. Where possible the local Centre could organise a group apostolate that could give the members the opportunity to share the various apostolic experiences of the members.

#### \* The Family[\[84\]](#)

This is indeed a vast area. It involves the family and all its problems, such as preparation for marriage, education of children, the right to life, etc.

Further areas include encouragement and help for engaged couples (not limited only to Cooperators), such as the Spanish Hogares Don Bosco ("Don Bosco Family Movement") and parent-child relationships. Cooperators are encouraged to associate with Family Conferences and civil, social and cultural organisations that involve family discussions and recommendations.

#### \* Missions[\[85\]](#)

The missionary apostolate could include fund-raising activities, prayer vigils, propaganda, fostering missionary interest through seminars, short courses, handicrafts, missionary expeditions and short stays in mission lands, voluntary service to Third World countries, spreading of mission literature, missionary bursaries, and "twinning" with missions.

#### \* Social Communications[\[86\]](#)

Cooperators should be encouraged to take home Catholic publications, (especially on Salesian matters) and distribute them to others. They should also be encouraged in the management, participation and the publicising of suitable programs on the radio and television; learn to take their part in suitable criticism and debating; promote local stage productions; and appreciate music as a means for spreading the word, for improving the liturgy, and for healthy recreation.

#### \* Young Cooperators and the Salesian Youth Movement[\[87\]](#)

It is important to keep in close touch with young people aspiring to be Cooperators; they need to be encouraged in activities to do with catechetics, youth centres, and similar work for the young. Young and old Cooperators should meet from time to time - after all, the ASC is a single Association! They should be helped in the organisation of youth camps, and such initiatives as Salesian Youth Movements, where they exist. In accord with the Councillor for Formation and the Delegate, activities for vocational promotion should be organised.

\* The Local Church<sup>[88]</sup>

The Councillor responsible for this sector should seek to be involved in the pastoral activities of the laity of local church and the diocese. An effort should be made to set up a 'Domestic Church' which is the basic cell of any local Church. The Councillor should endeavour to promote catechetical groups that will help build communities of faith, foster liturgical activities, and enliven the apostolate of service and human development.

To attain these objectives, the Councillor needs to have a good knowledge of the Diocesan apostolate by taking part in the local activities, collaborating with the local organisations (especially those favouring the young) and noting the guidelines set up by Bishops and Episcopal Conferences.

\* Association with the Salesian Family

Relationships with the Salesian Family are under the aegis of the Co-ordinator, and the bonds of union are strengthened by the Council. The task of representing the Salesian Family is one thing - the sensitive bonding with it is quite another. There is an ever-increasing effort to deepen the communion and collaboration between the various groups comprising the Salesian Family, and the ASC is giving it special attention. In total accord with the Co-ordinator, the Councillor of this sector will have a hand in the organisation of the activities of the Salesian Family and see that the Cooperators give a helping hand in them.

\* Other possible sectors

Further sectors could be created to meet the challenges and pressing needs of the ASC and the local situation - such as vocations, liturgy, etc.

The Council could avail itself of the help of Cooperators whom it judges especially competent for specific activities (teachers, Past Pupils, Cooperators who are priests or deacons, et al.)

2. The office of secretary<sup>[89]</sup>

It is the secretary's duty to keep updated the list of Cooperators, (including addresses, phone and fax / e-mail numbers); to look after the correspondence, archives (circulars, official documents, photographs, reports, certificates and minutes of meetings, etc); to keep an inventory of assets, furniture, equipment, etc., of the local centre. The secretary will collaborate with the co-ordinator particularly on such matters as the practical preparation for meetings, conventions, etc. Minutes must be kept of every meeting of the local Council and the Centre (they are to be read at the beginning of the next meeting). A report on the state of the Association at local level shall be regularly sent to the Provincial Office.

3. The Administrator

The administration of the goods of the Association is the responsibility of the Council; and a Councillor is expressly appointed to this office with the full responsibility for the said administration. This office includes the following duties::

- to look after the financial accounts keep an inventory of all goods;
- to present the balance of expenses (with receipts) and prepare the annual budget;
- to draw up and assess the financial position to be presented to the Council;
- to forward the statement of accounts to the higher authorities.

Since the ASC is a public association of the faithful, its belongings are Church property, and as such, the Code of Canon Law gives clear instructions regarding the administration thereof <sup>[90]</sup>.

Councils at all levels are responsible for the management of affairs regarding the economy and finances of the ASC.

4. Regular meetings

Being an Association, the Cooperators need to have regular meetings for the purpose of formation<sup>[91]</sup> and the achievement of ASC aims<sup>[92]</sup>. One cannot be a Cooperator without explicit reference to a Centre<sup>[93]</sup>; and that implies that there be meetings and shared activities<sup>[94]</sup>.

## C. Matters regarding the establishment of a centre

### 1. Erecting a Centre<sup>[95]</sup>

The establishment of a new Centre requires the permission and decree of the Provincial Council, signed by the Co-ordinator after having received the previous written consent of the Provincial (SDB or FMA, according to where the Centre is situated).

For Centres other than those attached to SDB or FMA houses, the written permission of the local Bishop is required, together with that of the Provincial and the Provincial Co-ordinator.

In the case of a new Province or Delegation, whilst awaiting the formation of a Provincial Council, the erection of the first Cooperator Centres will require a decree signed by the Rector Major or the Co-ordinator General.

### 2. The Amalgamation of Centres

Two or more Centres may be amalgamated by act and decree of the Provincial Council, and in agreement with the Councils concerned; also required is the consent of the Provincial (SDB or FMA, depending on location of the interested Centres).

In the case of Centres not attached to SDB or FMA houses, the written consent of the Bishop is also required.

The new Centre inherits all the active and passive financial dealings of the amalgamated Centres, apart from any exceptions made in the decree of amalgamation.

### 3. Relocating Centres

Whenever an SDB or FMA enterprise is to be closed down, any Cooperator Centre attached to it may be transferred to a nearby SDB or FMA institute following the same procedure for the founding of a new Centre<sup>[96]</sup>, and in agreement with the local Council concerned..

If however, there is already a local Centre in existence there, then the fusion of both Centres could be considered.

If it is not possible to transfer the Centre to an SDB or FMA institute, then with the previous written approval of the local bishop it may be transferred to a diocesan foundation according to the conditions and procedure outlined in Regulations of Apostolic Life art. 45, 2.

### 4. Closure of a Centre

A local Centre may be dissolved when an SDB or FMA institute closes down, or for internal reasons or justifiable motives accepted by the Provincial Council, with the knowledge of the local Council, and the previous consent of the SDB or FMA Provincial, or the Diocesan Bishop for Centres not attached to SDB or FMA institutes. The material goods of the dissolved Centre, including the active and passive financial affairs, are transferred to the Provincial Council, unless different dispositions are laid down in the decree of closure.

### 5. Affiliation between Centres

When both SDB and FMA foundations have a local Centre attached to each, it is very fitting that there should be close understanding and collaboration between them. The local Councils should foster this fellowship without impinging on the autonomy of each Centre and the superior competence of the Provincial Council. It is advisable that the Centres should work together on at least a few projects.

#### D. Characteristic elements of the Centre

##### 1. Acceptance of members into the Association<sup>[97]</sup>

Anyone wishing to become a Cooperator should apply to the particular Centre of the area to undertake the necessary preparation. The local Council will examine the request and decide on the admission to the formation course and how long it will take<sup>[98]</sup>.

When the candidate is sufficiently prepared, a written request for admission is presented to the local Council, whose members, when meeting, will express their opinion and forward it to the Provincial Council for the necessary approbation<sup>[99]</sup>.

At the formal profession, a Councillor from a higher level will present to the new Cooperator a certificate or similar official document of acceptance, signed by the Rector Major or his representative.

##### I. Important Criteria for Admission

It is well that certain criteria for admission to the Cooperator Association be listed for the information of the candidate as well as for the Centre which will attend to the formation; the criteria will also help Provincial and local Councils that have the responsibility of pronouncing on suitability of admission.

##### II. Important Criteria for Cooperator Vocation

1. All those responsible for admission into the Association need to discern whether the candidate possesses the requisite disposition for the Salesian life and its commitments.
2. It is not enough that the candidate be simply a 'good person' or an 'apostolic Christian'.
3. The aspiring Cooperator should know about Don Bosco, his life and his ethos, and be willing to undertake the commitment of a true Salesian in the world and in the Church, under the aegis of a Christian community (the local Centre).

##### III. The main facets of the formation programme

The candidate seeking admission needs:

- to have accepted and carried out the requirements of the initial formation program, showing a knowledge and acceptance of the Regulations of Apostolic Life;
- to have had experience of group work in a Centre, sharing in its life and mission and showing a sense of belonging and responsibility in regard to the Association;
- to cultivate a vivid awareness of being an integral part of the Salesian Family by participation and fellowship in it;
- to have fulfilled the requirements of formation with the help and direction of those of the Centre responsible for this training;
- to have attained that degree of human and emotional maturity for carrying out family, professional and civic duties, together with a mature faith and charity resulting from daily practice of the spiritual life.

##### IV. Correct motivation required:

- Motives should be personal and convinced.
- Decisions and choices should be free.

- Motives should fit in with the Salesian vocation.
- They should meet the challenge of the Holy Spirit after personal and group discernment.

## 2. Leaving the Association<sup>[100]</sup>

When, after serious consideration, a Cooperator requests to retire from the Association, the Council of the local Centre should be informed; the reasons are noted and the request then forwarded to the Provincial Council of the Association. The Cooperator concerned may prefer, for personal reasons, to send the request directly to the Provincial Council.

In the case of a Cooperator whose life style is incompatible with the Regulations of Apostolic Life, it is up to the Provincial Conference to consider the situation carefully and decide, in all charity, to cancel the Cooperator's membership.

In accordance with the spirit of Regulations of Apostolic Life, art.39 (mentioned above), the reasons for this action will be passed on to the Cooperator in question, and to the Provincial Council of the Centre concerned.

Possible appeals against such decisions should be forwarded to the Rector Major.

## 3. Relations with other organisations

### I.. Salesian organisations.

The Centre may undertake new projects, or adhere to activities already championed by other branches of the Salesian Family, such as the Mamma Margaret Guilds, "Hogares Don Bosco" (Spanish Salesian Movement for Families), Devotees of Mary Help of Christians, Lay Missionaries, Youth Clubs, etc. In such cases it would be advisable that a Councillor assume the task of liaison officer with the above groups, or a Cooperator in the Council could be asked to represent such organisations.

### II. Church organisations.

The Centre shall stand by all that is laid down by diocesan and parochial authorities to incorporate and co-ordinate lay associations, such as the pastoral Consultancy or Council of the laity. The Council shall inform the competent diocesan or parish office of the names of its representatives (the Co-ordinator and/or another member of the Council).

These representatives undertake to be actively present at the meetings of the above mentioned organisations, suggesting solutions for problems of the local Church and fostering the relationships of the organisations with the ASC Centre.

### III. Civic and social organisations

The Centre shall foster good relations with local leaders on civic councils, committees, consultancies and constituencies, dealing with affairs of government, decentralisation, etc.), especially local bodies interested in helping youngsters, underprivileged people, and the working classes.

## 4. Cooperators not attached to a local Centre<sup>[101]</sup>.

Cooperators who live where there is no Salesian Centre, belong to the centre that is nearest, and participate in its activities, etc.

If there are a number of Cooperators living nearby, and there seems no possibility or opportunity of a Centre being founded, they can gain the approval of the local and Provincial Councils and form 'groups', with a representative who could be called to take part in the local Council in a consultative capacity.

The local Council will arrange with such Cooperators how they may hold and vitalise their participation in the Centre.

Financial solidarity[\[102\]](#)

Both Council and Centre need to be able to finance their activities. The Regulations of Apostolic Life mention 'voluntary contributions', and every Centre should work out the most appropriate ways of helping to support the Association. Office-bearers should insist with members that whoever loves the Association and desires its progress, should share the responsibility of helping to make ends meet financially.

This is indeed an excellent way of cultivating a sense of belonging to the Association and taking an active part in the apostolate of the Centre. Every Centre must have its administrator, as is required by the Regulations of Apostolic Life.

The finances of the Centre should be conducted carefully, with all income and expenses noted with clarity and exactitude.

Each Centre should present to all the Cooperators of the Centre a brief annual report for their perusal and discussion. The report should then be forwarded to the Provincial Council.

The Centre is the basic cell of the Association, and thus has an interest in the financial support of the various levels according to the grouping to which it belongs: provincial, national, regional or worldwide.

## 21. The organisation at Provincial level

### A. Nature and purpose[\[103\]](#)

As soon as possible all Centres should be organised on a Provincial plan, modelled on the SDB province[\[104\]](#), even when the FMA[\[105\]](#) provincial boundaries do not coincide.

It is evident that the Centres and the Provincial Council each have an important responsibility. The Centre of course is the basic element of the Association, but must recognise the authority of the Provincial Council; and the Provincial Council, in turn, must foster the relationships between the Centres.

This effective unifying influence of the Provincial Council will ensure that the Association will exert a tangible influence in the diocese..

The animation and co-ordination exercised by the local Council is of the utmost importance for the Provincial Council, on account of the extensive area to be covered and the need to spread Don Bosco's work far and wide.

Even at Provincial level a Council is needed.[\[106\]](#)

### B. Indispensable elements

For Cooperators to exist 'on a Provincial level', there must be a Provincial Council (Co-ordinator, Delegate, Councillors, Administrator) with a number of Centres within the Provincial area; there should also be regular meetings for Council animation and, advisably, a Secretariat..

#### 1. The Provincial Council

##### I. Characteristics of the Provincial Council

The Provincial Council animates and governs the Provincial Centres. It consists of from three to twelve members elected by the local Councils within the Provincial area. Members may be elected for three years and may be re-elected for another (consecutive) three years. The Provincial Council has an SDB or FMA Delegate appointed by the respective Provincial.

\* Establishing a Provincial Council

To establish a new Provincial Council requires agreement between the Councillors of the interested Centres and the SDB Provincial; and if there are centres near FMA institutes, the FMA Provincial should be consulted. The situation may suggest either an SDB or FMA Delegate. The decision for the new establishment may emanate from the World Consultor for the Region the Province belongs to. In this case it is the Consultor who will convoke the local Councils of the proposed new ASC. Provincial Council.

The decision to establish a Provincial Council must be approved by an absolute majority of the Councillors of the Centres, who have assembled for the purpose. All the Councillors of the local Centres must be called and be present, and number an absolute majority<sup>[107]</sup>.

\* Election of the Provincial Council

The same assembly that meets to establish the Provincial Council will see to the election of its members, after having decided on the manner of the election and the number of Councillors to be elected (from 3 to 12); these latter will be from among those who are neither SDB nor FMA. Local Delegates may also be elected, but these plus the Provincial Delegate must not exceed a third of the members of the whole Council.

At this meeting or at a later one, the Co-ordinator will be elected from among the already elected members, excluding SDB or FMA members. If this election is postponed to another meeting, the convoking will be done by the Cooperator longest professed, or, in the case of equal length of profession, by the senior in age.

At this meeting or at a later one, the Provincial Council will elect an administrator<sup>[108]</sup> and assign specific responsibilities needed by the activities it plans to take on. These duties may also correspond with those of the various sectors of the local Council, but of course the scope of the Provincial Council<sup>[109]</sup> is wider and more diverse than that of the local Centre; the same holds for the possible establishment of work groups and committees.

\* Re-election of the Provincial Council

It is the task of the outgoing Co-ordinator to convoke the Assembly for the election of a new Provincial Council. It is possible that an appeal may be made to renew the Provincial Council. This is extremely exceptional, only made in a very special situation, and needs to be amply justified. The procedure to be followed is set out under ruling for Local Council: election (21.B.01.A.02 §4).

\* Duties of the Provincial Council

The duties of the Provincial Council are the same as those of the Local Councils<sup>[110]</sup>, but applicable to the Provincial situation, with a wider scope and also less personalised (since it is difficult for members to know every individual in every group throughout the Province). A few words now on the main tasks:

- To ensure, in accord with the Salesian Provincial, that the Association function in total fidelity to its aims.

Just as the Provincial's interest is necessary at the local level, it is plain that it is much more so at the Provincial level, and this knowledge and support regarding the Provincial situation will have a powerful effect on the animation of the Cooperators. The Regulations of Apostolic Life and the SDB Regulations emphasise the necessity of this involvement: they expect from him knowledge and wise advice and recognise his important prerogatives, such as the appointment of Delegates,

his approval for the erection of a Centre, etc. It should added too that although the FMA Provincial is not directly mentioned at this level, no Provincial Council should neglect her valuable help in animating the Association at the Provincial level.

The Regulations of Apostolic Life state that the good performance of the Association at the Provincial level depends on the Council and the Provincial. It must also be borne in mind that the successful functioning of the Council and its understanding with the SDB and FMA Provincials can be a vital help in the development of the Association, the birth of new Centres, and the efficacious presence of the ASC in the ecclesial and social life of the region.

The Council requests a visit from the Provincial from time to time to keep the members informed regarding ASC matters at Provincial level, and the activities of the Salesian Family in general. The Council will also keep in touch with the FMA Provincial.

Thus are the members able to become fully involved in the situations and activities of the SDB and FMA Provinces, keeping in touch with the various Provincial operations regarding vocations, youth centres, parishes, clubs, etc.

- To promote and co-ordinate the formative and apostolic activities of the Cooperators.

The Provincial Council can be of great help in so many projects, especially regarding formation and the apostolic ventures of the Centres, since it can organise these activities on a much larger scale and with far greater variety. The very participation of the other Centres in these activities is already an advancement. Some examples are: meetings to discuss general and specific topics regarding formation; retreats; days of recollection; discussions with leaders of various sectors; courses of formation, etc. Thus, from the apostolic point of view, it can undertake projects that are beyond the possibilities of single Centres.

- To strengthen the bonds between the Salesian Congregation and the other groups of the Salesian Family. Within a Salesian Province there could be several groups of the Salesian Family. The Regulations of Apostolic Life state that there should be bonds of communion and collaboration between them and sees this as a task for the Provincial Council. One way to strengthen the bonds within the Province is to take part in its various activities, celebrations and commemorations. The Council will judge on the frequency of this participation. To strengthen these bonds, the Council needs to be present when matters of management and planning are being organised for the Salesian Family at the Provincial level.

- To decide on the convoking of meetings, assemblies and congresses.

Up to a point these activities belong automatically to individual Centres, but more often they concern all the Centres together. They should be well planned and announced in good time; and if they are to achieve their objectives they must deal with the genuine needs of the Centres. One way to spread the word is by direct contact between the Council and the Centres through joint visits of as many Councillors as possible. Such contacts need to be well organised, otherwise they could create a negative effect for future activities of a similar nature. They are necessary to create a sense of belonging. In general, they are a sign of the Association's vitality.

- To provide for the administration of the goods of the Association.

For finance, the Provincial Council depends on the contributions of the Centres, and on its own efforts for self-support. It could also be called on to administer the goods of a Centre that has been dissolved or joined to another Centre. Since these goods belong to the Church, they must be administered according to the Code of Canon Law. It is the task of the Council to examine and approve the Provincial financial balance and request that the local balances be forwarded for inspection..

II. The Provincial Co-ordinator [\[111\]](#)

The Provincial Co-ordinator is elected by the Provincial Council at its first meeting, and chosen from members who are not SDBs or FMAs. The duties assumed are the same as those of the local Co-ordinator, but must be seen in the light of the more extensive and variegated responsibilities of the Provincial Council. Below are some of the particulars related thereto.

- To convoke and chair meetings, apportion duties and check that they are carried out.

The Co-ordinator convokes meetings regularly, in accordance with a timetable agreed on by the Councillors; checks that all members of the Council are notified of meetings in good time and supplied with the agenda.; and undertakes that the decisions will be carried out.

If it is impossible to attend a meeting, the Co-ordinator must delegate one of the Councillors to take the chair.

The Co-ordinator keeps in touch with the local Councils, and when possible visits them, especially on important occasions; co-ordinates the activities of the various sectors, observing the timetable already agreed on by the Councillors; and makes sure that all members receive due notice of the next meeting and the agenda thereof.

- To keep higher authorities informed of the life and activities of the Association.

It should be noted that the Regulations of Apostolic Life state that the Co-ordinator is responsible for keeping the higher levels au fait with progress and plans, etc., since the Co-ordinator is the most informed person in the Council. In fact the Co-ordinator does not work simply in a particular sector, but must attend to all sectors, not actually carrying out all tasks, but seeing that the higher echelons are informed of what is happening at the Provincial level.

- To represent the Association.

As far as possible the Co-ordinator attends and is active in all organisations or engagements in which the Cooperators should be represented. If personal attendance is not possible a delegate should be chosen to be present. The Co-ordinator must accept this responsibility in all seriousness, otherwise the Association would seem non-existent in the eyes of many organisations. Isolation must be avoided at all costs.

- To keep in touch, in the name of the Council, with other Church bodies and other groups of the Salesian Family.

Three kinds of organisations are mentioned: lay, church, and Salesian Family, with social, diocesan or regional commitments on the part of the laity, ecclesial associations, or Councils of the Salesian Family. It is not merely a question of being present, but of some specific help the Association could possibly give at the Provincial level. Presence and collaboration in the activities and decisions of these organisations are practical signs of a genuine relationship with them.

- In cases of urgency, to make decisions (within the Council's competence), and to be accountable for such decisions.

The majority of the Provincial Councillors will not always live in the same locality and at times it will not be easy for the Council to deal quickly with unforeseen problems. In such cases the Co-ordinator is empowered to make decisions that seem opportune and according to the letter and spirit of the Regulations. The Council shall be duly informed at the appropriate time.

\* Collegial direction of the Provincial Council.

Even at the Provincial level the principle of collegial direction holds. As has been said, the Provincial Co-ordinator must inform the Council of any decisions taken in cases of urgency without consulting the Councillors, precisely because the direction is collegial.

It has been explained above how important collegial direction is at the local level; and of course it is far more important at Provincial level, since here decisions of greater moment are taken, such as for instance the ratification of admission of new Cooperators, or the possible cancelling of ASC membership for serious reasons. In all such instances, but mainly in those of greater

consequence, attention must be given that the collegial act be juridically valid. Collegial acts of the Provincial Council are regulated by Canons 119 and 166<sup>[112]</sup>.

\* The attitude of the Provincial Council Co-ordinator

The Provincial Co-ordinator needs to be someone capable of coping with unfamiliar situations that may be found in Centres not yet visited. This calls for an attitude open to the variant conditions of the Province, learning from the novelties that a Centre may offer, and viewing them in a more ample and complex context. Imposing personal ideas derived from the limited experience in any particular Centre must be strenuously avoided.

### III. Delegates

Every Provincial Council has an SDB Delegate and an FMA Delegate. These are ex officio members of the Provincial Council. Other Delegates may be members, but the total number of SDB and FMA Delegates may not exceed one third of the total Council members<sup>[113]</sup>.

### IV. Organisation of the Provincial Council and duties of the Councillors.

The Provincial Council's responsibilities are too extensive for one person to cope with, and so it is important that they be shared out in an equitable manner. The actual sectors of responsibility are not so different from those suggested for the local level. Of course, there is quite a difference between the conditions in a Centre and the far more extensive conditions at the Provincial level. Furthermore, it should be noted that the Councillors in charge of the different sectors at Provincial level will give special attention to their counterparts at the local level. Hence their training needs to be more exacting. One cannot offer help to another if there is nothing to offer, namely, no contribution in the way of animation.

To resolve this problem of animation in Provinces that are very extensive, some Councils divide the Provincial area into zones, appointing for each zone a Provincial Councillor to animate the zone in the name of the Provincial Council.. Assistance can be given by a zonal Council endowed with the prerogatives the Provincial Council confers on it according to its various competencies.

#### 2. The Secretariat

For managing an extensive entity the service of a competent secretariat is necessary so that information, projects and relationships with the Centres and the higher levels may be attended to efficiently. Other tasks do not differ from those of the local Centres, which have been outlined above.

#### 3. The Administrator

The duties of the Administrator at Provincial level are also the same as those at the local level. Still, it should be remembered that the Provincial Administrator must be an exemplar of good administration, and should encourage local Administrators to bear in mind the need to support the Association at the higher levels. This is a precious lesson they need to impart to members, for often the Association has to cope with the lack of help from the various levels.

#### 4. Planning activities.

The Provincial Council is the link between the local Centres and the World Consultancy: hence the planning of the various activities at Provincial level is of the utmost importance.

Local planning should take note of the Provincial planning; and the latter of the World Consultancy planning, and to this should be added also (if it exists) the programming the Provincial Council itself has contributed at National or Regional Conferences. Hence it is essential that the planning of the higher echelons be available in good time, so that the lower levels can be suitably guided.

The Provincial Council must see that projects, dates of meetings and various events be made known to the Provincial so as to be noted in the official calendar of the Province, and also to avoid clashing with other arrangements.

## 5. Periodical meetings of the Provincial Council

The periodical meetings of the Provincial Council are convoked by the Co-ordinator, normally in writing and with the agenda, and usually according to a calendar previously agreed upon.

Meetings are generally held at the Provincial House. They may be arranged at the SDB residence or the FMA convent, or even take turns at the various Centres. The latter system would help members to meet each other and discuss their various situations and build up a better relationship and more efficacious collaboration.

Meetings should be monthly or at least bi-monthly.

Matters to be discussed could be as follows:

- normal and extended formation courses for Cooperators and Leaders, retreats at Provincial level, attendance at formation courses and retreats for the Salesian Family, etc.;
- study of organisation in the Centres, vocational apostolate of the Salesian Family and the Association, celebrations, conventions, congresses, etc.;
- information regarding the activities of the various sectors, such as the missions, youth centres, missionary workshops, projects and communications.

## 22. National and/or Regional Conferences

### A. Nature of the National and/or Regional Conference

National or Regional Conferences are optional; they deal with organisation and incentive, not direction. Their purpose is to enthuse and enliven the Provinces of the nation or region, and increase their collaboration; convoking them is left to the discretion of the respective Provincial Councils.

### B. Setting up the National and/or Regional Conference

Provincial Councils should appreciate the value of these Conferences and see that they are well prepared. When it is decided to organise such a Conference, two juridical requirements should be attended to:

1. the Provincial Councils should meet together with the set purpose of establishing the criteria for the participants and the method for electing them; and
2. the decision of the interested Provincials should be in writing.

This joint session is most important; it requires to be planned in great detail so that the directives be clear and according to the previous decisions of the Provincial Councils concerned.

The promoter of the National or Regional Conference could be the World Consultor of the Region.

It is advisable to seek the competent advice of the World Consultancy and settle on a set scheme of essential directives that make for an efficient apostolate.

### C. Duties of the National or Regional Conference

- to be at the service of the approved directive bodies and deal with projects at the national or regional level;
- to suggest ideas for a more efficient apostolic activity, and ways of infusing them into the apostolate of the churches nationwide;
- to promote the collaboration, vitality, common purpose and united activity of the various Provincial Councils of the Conference.

To achieve these aims, the Conference must establish:

- the criteria for participation and the method of electing members;
- the statutory responsibilities for the conducting of Conferences;
- the particular tasks of the Cooperator in charge and the Delegates.

#### D. Those in charge of the Conference

Article 47 of ASC mentions only two persons at Conference level who would have this responsibility: a Cooperator elected from the members of the Conference and a Delegate nominated by SDB and FMA Provincials of the Provinces concerned. The Cooperator is elected by the special joint meeting of the Provincial Councils of the Conference.

#### E. Duties of those elected to the Conference

The Cooperator elected conducts the Conference (and for this reason is at times referred to as the 'Conductor'), and is assisted by an SDB or FMA Delegate.

The term 'Conductor' (instead of Co-ordinator) is not a random choice for National or Regional Conferences. It is used to indicate the different role entrusted to the Cooperator in charge and the different service rendered to the Association.

The duties of the Conference 'Conductor' and the Delegate are as arranged in the joint session that organised the Conference, and listed in its particular set of guidelines. These guidelines cannot in any way contradict the Regulations of Apostolic Life: otherwise they would be null and void.

#### F. Other possible groups helping the Conference

The Conference could also foresee the need of a secretariat<sup>[114]</sup>, a small committee, an administrator, or a press attaché; but these people would have no juridical standing.

### 23. THE WORLD CONSULTANCY<sup>[115]</sup>

#### A. The Nature of the World Consultancy

The World Consultancy is a collegial body at the service of the Rector Major, assisting him in the governance and animation of the Association throughout the world.

#### B. Aims, tasks and functions of the World Consultancy.

The aims and tasks of the World Consultancy are detailed in its own special Regulations approved by the plenary assembly and the Rector Major, and which are set out in the appendix to this chapter<sup>[116]</sup>.

The World Consultancy's functions are mainly animation and co-ordination of the ASC activities to do with formation, apostolic service, organisation and administration. In fact it

- determines, with the Councillor for the Salesian Family, the theme, the place and the participants for possible world congresses or international assemblies, and sees to their organisation;
- administers the goods of the Association;
- has the power (with the approval of the Rector Major) to authorise Local and Provincial Councils to perform acts of extraordinary administration and alienation when the intervention of the Holy See is not required.
- has also judicial administrative power to resolve doubts and controversies regarding the relationship of a Centre (erected near an institute of the FMA) to its particular Provincial grouping, according to the ruling of art.7 of the SDB-FMA Convention.

#### C. Members of the Consultancy.

- By right of office: The Councillor General of the Salesian Family.
- By appointment: five members appointed by the Rector Major, including an FMA.
- By election: a member from each Cooperator Region, i.e., twelve members.

The representative of a Region is elected by the Provincial Co-ordinators and from a number of SDB and FMA Delegates designated, if necessary, by the Provincials concerned. The Provincials must not exceed half of the Co-ordinators voting<sup>[117]</sup>. The procedure for election is proposed to the Rector Major by the Consultancy. This may be done by mail<sup>[118]</sup>.

The Co-ordinator General is appointed by the Rector Major from among the Cooperators of the Consultancy<sup>[119]</sup>.

#### D. Convoking the Consultancy.

The World Consultancy is ordinarily convoked by the Rector Major every two years, and extraordinarily when requested by at least two thirds of the Consultors.

The agenda of the Assembly is sent to the Consultors through the Co-ordinator General, in accord with the Councillor General for the Salesian Family.

#### E. The work of the Consultors at Regional level.

The Consultors carry out their office collegially in assemblies and also individually as representatives of their particular Regions.

Their work as individual Regional representatives is regulated by the Guidelines for Consultors, drawn up by the General Assembly and approved by the Rector Major<sup>[120]</sup>.

The Consultors present their assessment of how the Association is functioning; they do this by being part of the Centre or at least visiting it personally and summing up the situation of the Centre and the Province.

#### F. Specific offices within the Consultancy.

According to ASC, art.48, the specific offices set down for the Consultancy, apart from the Councillor for the Salesian Family are three in number. Two are obligatory: the Co-ordinator General and the Administrator; the third is 'recommended': the Central General Secretariat Administrator General. The rules for the Consultancy also make mention of a possible Central Delegate.

##### 1. Duties of the Co-ordinator General

The Regulations of Apostolic Life do not detail the specific duties of the Co-ordinator General. Actually, his task is to carry out the requirements of the Rector Major, particularly regarding the practical running of the World Consultancy; The Co-ordinator General works in strict collaboration with the Councillor General for the Salesian Family and the various tasks are set out in detail in the 'job description' of the World Consultancy<sup>[121]</sup>.

In accord with the Rector Major and the Councillor General for the Salesian Family, his tasks are as follows:

- to chair the meetings of the World Consultancy;
- to ensure that the Central Executive Secretary pays special attention to the archives and correspondence;
- to attend to the editing of the Salesiani Cooperatores, the ASC brochure dealing with articles of information and formation; this publication is the task of both the Co-ordinator General and the Central Delegate;
- to make decisions on ordinary matters, and also on matters of some urgency; the Co-ordinator General must duly inform the Consultancy of such decisions, and seek its ratification.

Furthermore, the Co-ordinator

- makes known to the various branches of the Association the deliberations of the Consultancy and the carrying out of its decisions regarding the activities of the various sectors;
- maintains contact with Consultors throughout the world, and often through them, with the National or Regional Conferences and the Provincial Councils;

- also deputises on various occasions when delegated by the Rector Major..

## 2. Duties of the Administrator.

The Administrator is a member of the Consultancy and is elected by all the members of the Consultancy[122]. The only duty required of the Administrator by the Regulations of Apostolic Life, art. 49, § 3, is to present the Consultancy with the financial report which in turn the Consultancy forwards to the Rector Major for approval. However, there are further responsibilities allotted by the Code of Canon Law regarding the administration of Church goods[123].

The annual balance sheets of the Consultancy, drawn up by the Administrator, are then passed on to the Provincial Councils.

The contributions for the support of the World Consultancy are forwarded by the Provincial Councils to the Administrator through the Central Executive Secretariat located in Rome.

## 3. Duties of the Central Executive Secretariat

The third office, the Central Executive Secretariat, seeks to add greater efficiency and smoothness to the work of the Consultancy[124]. It could comprise a number of persons, with one appointed to be in charge. The Regulations of Apostolic Life do not list further details, and so the Secretariat is able to extend its practical assistance to suit the many and various needs of the executive activities of the World Consultancy. The Central Executive Secretariat is directly dependent on the Co-ordinator General.

According to the particular rulings of the Consultancy the Secretariat is made up of a variable number of persons with one of them in charge; it performs various duties, and is directly dependent on the Co-ordinator General and closely related with the Central Delegate. It specialises in the following matters:

- correspondence with the various organisations;
- archives and documentation;
- publication of the Salesiani Cooperatores and other helpful literature;.
- various administrative tasks.

## G. Relationships with the Salesian Family and other organisations.

The World Consultancy keeps in close touch with the Salesian Family at both the Regional level (through the Regional Consultors) and the Central level (through the heads of the various groups of the Salesian Family). It will attend activities organised for the Salesian Family, helping in their preparation and execution. From time to time it will forward details of its activities to the office-bearers of the Groups of the particular level concerned.

The World Consultation also keeps in touch with the Pontificium Consilium Pro Laicis and other international organisations of the lay apostolate.

It also has dealings with international civil and social organisations that may be able to help the Association achieve its objectives.

## H. Meetings of the World Consultancy

The Rector Major presides at the meetings. In his absence his place is taken by the Co-ordinator General or the Councillor General for the Salesian Family (in that order).

These meetings formulate and check the various programmes for the organisation, animation and formation of the Association.

Decisions require an absolute majority vote; they become operative after the approbation of the Rector Major, and are promulgated, together with the other official communications of the Consultancy, in the Salesiani Cooperatores, the official organ of the Association.

I. Regional and World Congresses.

In accord with the Councillor General for the Salesian Family, the World Consultancy arranges the theme, the place and the participants for World Congresses and other international assemblies, and sees to their organisation[125]; such gatherings are convoked by the Rector Major.

J. Possible substitution of consultors.

If Consultancy members elected by the Councils do not attend (either because of resignation or other reasons), they are substituted by members who had received the next highest number of votes; failing this, the Council may co-opt members to take their place, and they remain in office until the Council's term expires. Minutes of these elections must be preserved.

K. The head office of the Association.

The head office of the Association is at the Salesian Generalate in Rome[126].

## APPENDICES TO CHAPTER IV

APPENDIX I INTERNAL REGULATIONS OF THE WORLD CONSULTANCY

APPENDIX II LAY OUT OF INTERNAL REGULATIONS FOR COUNCIL

APPENDIX III LAY OUT OF INTERNAL REGULATIONS FOR NATIONAL CONFERENCE

APPENDIX IV EXAMPLE OF FINAL BALANCE & BUDGET

APPENDIX V EXAMPLE OF CONVOCATION OF A MEETING

APPENDIX VI EXAMPLE OF REQUEST FOR ADMISSION TO THE ASC  
EXAMPLE OF DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE TO THE ASC

APPENDIX VII DECREE OF ERECTION OF AN ASC CENTRE

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### APPENDIX I

#### Regulations re the World Consultancy

##### I. Purpose and functions

Art.1. The World Consultancy, according to art. 23.2 of the Regulations of Apostolic Life, is a collegial organisation that assists the Rector Major in animating and coordinating the Salesian Cooperators at world level.

Art.2. It carries out this service by means of periodical assessments, consultations, suggestions on the functioning of the Association, and practical proposals.

Art.3. Regarding the principle of subsidiarity:

- it promotes and co-ordinates formative and apostolic initiatives (23.2);
- it assists the Association in matters of organisation and information (23.2);
- it furthers the bonds of union with the Salesian Congregation (24.2);
- it promotes communion with the other groups of the Salesian Family (44,25.2);
- it assesses the proposals and problems of the Cooperators, Councils and Conferences, and forwards them to the competent authorities;
- it administers the goods of the Association at world level.

## II. Composition

Art.4. The composition of the World Consultancy is set out in conformity with art.48 of the Regulations of Apostolic Life. Among the five members appointed by the Rector Major there will be one SDB and one FMA.

Art.5. A central executive secretariat is appointed to ensure competent service of the Consultancy (48.7).

This secretariat deals with

- relationship with the World Consultors,
- relationship with Provincial Councils;
- correspondence,
- archives and documentation,
- printing (Salesiani Cooperatores and other helpful publications),
- arrangement of administrative proceedings.

Art.6. The Councillor General for the Salesian Family is the representative of the Rector Major (Reg.23.1), and in accord with him:

- a) promotes the development, spiritual animation and apostolic formation of the Cooperators;
- b) fosters the Association's joint pastoral activities and all that regards the life of the Association (23.1), maintaining frequent communication with the Councillors of the General Council, the Regionals, the Provincials, the National and Provincial Delegates, the Councils, the Conferences and (through the FMA Councillor) the FMA Delegates.

Art.7. The Central Delegate collaborates with the Councillor General for the Salesian Family in the study of the guidelines of the Association, the ongoing formation of the 'animators', and pastoral activities for promoting vocations.

Art.8. The Co-ordinator General is appointed by the Rector Major (Reg.48.1).

In agreement with the Rector Major and his representative, the Co-ordinator

- chairs the Consultancy meetings;
- ensures the services of the Central Executive Secretariat, with special attention to the archives, correspondence, and diffusion of information. He also decides on ordinary matters of some urgency, and duly informs the Consultancy for ratification.

Art.9. In the accomplishment of its tasks the Consultancy may avail itself of the help of skilled specialists, even if they are not members of the Association.

## III Function

Art.10. Consultancy meetings. The World Consultancy is ordinarily convoked by the Rector Major every two years and extraordinarily when it is requested by two thirds of the consultors. The Co-ordinator General, in agreement with the Councillor General for the Salesian Family and with the previous knowledge of all consultors, draws up and distributes the agenda three months before the meeting is due.

The sessions of the Consultancy are presided over by the Rector Major, or, in his place, the Councillor General for the Salesian Family.

The deliberations are taken by absolute majority of those present, and will become operative after approved by the Rector Major (v.48.6).

Art.11. Official organ of communication. The deliberations and communications of the World Consultancy will be publicised in the Salesiani Cooperatores, the official organ of the Association.

Art.12. Finance. The Administrator draws up the annual balance, budget and expenditure of the World Consultancy and communicates it to the Provincial Councils.

Our sense of belonging and co-responsibility will demand that we show a practical interest in matters financial (art.21).

To carry out its activities in the field of animation and co-ordination, the World Consultancy needs the generous and amicable contribution of all our Provincial Councils. Such contributions should be sent to the Consultancy administration in Rome, just as offerings are forwarded to the Rector Major for urgent needs of other Salesian commitments.

#### IV. Congresses and Conventions

Art.13. International Congresses and Conventions. These gatherings are organised by the World Consultancy when requested by the National Conferences or the interested Provincial Councils; they are convoked by the Rector Major.

#### GUIDELINES FOR ACTIVITIES OF CONSULTORS

Consultors are called on to see that courses of animation and co-ordination are made available for the Association both at world and local levels.

Consultancy work is indicated in the Regulations of Apostolic Life. Provincial and local Consultors are free to use their own initiative; however, it would seem opportune to suggest certain guidelines regarding their activities.

- The World Consultor shall respect the autonomy of the Provincial and Local Councils.
- In consultation with the Delegates and the Local Leaders, he shall stimulate and help vitalise the Association in the various Provinces.
- He shall promote, in accord with the Provincials and Delegates, the regular founding of Centres, Cooperator meetings for the election of Councils and local and provincial co-ordinators, where they have not yet been provided for.
- Whenever possible, he shall willingly place himself at the disposition of the Provincial Councils to participate in their meetings and manifestations, to inform them of the activities of the World Consultancy and other necessary information.
- He shall see to the diffusion of the worldwide family publication, Salesiani Cooperatores and other helps organised by the World Consultancy and Provinces for distribution among the Leaders and Animators of the Association, seeking also ways and means to have them translated into the local languages.
- He shall encourage the help of a worldwide 'pen pals organisation', to facilitate the sharing of news between Provinces.
- The Salesiani Cooperatores publication welcomes articles, news, photos and other documentation.
- Such help is invaluable in the organisation of national and regional conventions and congresses.
- Close contact with the Councillor General of the Salesian Family and with the SDB Regional Councillor, should be encouraged by correspondence and periodical or extraordinary visits.

## APPENDIX II

### Model of particular Regulations for the Provincial Council

#### I. General principles

1. The Provincial Council of the Salesiani Cooperatori (PCSC) is the organ of animation, co-ordination, formation and administrative norms of the Association of Salesian Cooperators (ASC). It is subject to collegial control.(art.43.1).
2. The activities of the PCSC shall comply with the Regulations of the ASC and with all legitimate ecclesial and Salesian norms.
3. The activities of the PCSC shall be carried out according to the principles of co-responsibility and subsidiarity.

#### II. Activities

4. The most important activities of the PCSC are (art.44.1):
  - a) to guarantee, in accord with the Salesian Provincial, that all activities will follow the Association's Salesian principles;
  - b) to promote and co-ordinate the formative and apostolic activities of the Cooperators;
  - c) to preserve the bonds of union with the Salesian Congregation and the other groups of the Salesian Family;
  - d) to convoke meetings, assemblies and congresses;
  - e) to see to the careful administration of the goods of the Association.
5. Derived from the preceding principles are the following responsibilities of the PCSC:
  - a) within 45 days of election, and also in the first month of the year, to set up the annual Provincial arrangements for animation;
  - b) to arrange for representation at State functions, Episcopal Conferences and other civil and ecclesial organisations;
  - c) to introduce the Centres to the local ecclesiastical authorities in cases when Centres are erected separate from SDB or FMA Institutes (art.45.2);
  - d) to unite an existing local FMA Centre with an SDB Centre requires the consent of the respective Provincials and the agreement of the interested local Councils; the official decree of fusion is signed by the Provincial Co-ordinator (Convention, art.2);
  - e) if a local Centre is closed down for particular reasons or because the SDB or FMA house fostering it is closing down, the Provincial, (or the Bishop of the Diocese, in the case of an independent Centre), shall authorise the goods of the Centre to be passed on to the Provincial Council (Convention, art.4).
  - f) The financial balance of the Association shall be approved before sending it to the World Consultancy (art.45.2).
  - g) Local Centres shall be erected canonically and visited annually (art.45.2).
  - h) Each Centre shall have an elected Co-ordinator (art.44.2).
  - i) Each Centre shall (consultatively) nominate a Provincial Delegate.
  - j) Each Centre shall forward its annual contribution to the World Consultancy and the Rector Major (art.21).
  - k) Each Centre shall decide on the dismissal of a Cooperator who lives in a way publicly opposed to the Cooperators' Regulations (art.39.2).

#### III Structure

6. In Peru, the Provincial Council is made up of the Provincial Co-ordinator, the Councillor for Formation, the Councillor for the Apostolate, the Councillors for Organisation, the Councillors for

Vocational Promotion, the Councillor for Liturgy, the Provincial Administrator and the Council Secretary.

There is the possibility to institute new sectors of commitment and hence new Councillors in accordance with the numbers allowed by art. 43.3.

Provincial Delegates are members by right (art.46.1).

7. The Provincial Co-ordinator.

Art. 44.2 assigns his functions:

- a) to convoke and chair meetings of the Council, co-ordinate its tasks and see that its decisions are carried out;
- b) to keep the superior organisms au fait with the life and activities of the Association;
- c) to be the official representative of the Association;
- d) to maintain the Council's relations with lay and ecclesial organisations and with the other groups of the Salesian Family;
- e) in urgent cases to make decisions within the competence of the Council and to keep the Council informed of such decisions;
- f) to elect, together with the Provincial Co-ordinators and Delegates, the Regional Representative for the World Consultancy (art.48.2).

8. The Councillor for Formation is responsible, together with the Delegate, for the annual formation arrangements of the PCSC:

- a) seeing that the directives of the Formation Manual are put into practice in the local Centres;
- b) organising at Provincial level courses, seminars, and symposiums for the ongoing formation of the Cooperators;
- c) organising days of recollection and retreats that the Council arranges for its members;
- d) being especially concerned with Centres in formation, keeping up a close correspondence with them and visiting them if possible.
- e) keeping the Centres supplied with formation material.

9. The Councillor for the Apostolate co-ordinates, supports and motivates the apostolic activities of the local Centres:

- a) disseminating pastoral projects and programs for the youth clubs;
- b) being closely concerned with the family apostolate and its development;
- c) maintaining contact, in the name of the Council, with the elderly and infirm Cooperators.

10. The Councillor for Organisation draws up the plan and timetable for annual Provincial animation and activities, attending to:

- a) the management of the Council library;
- b) matters such as personnel data, pledge certificates, diplomas of canonical erections, etc.; the distribution of this material being carried out in co-ordination with the Provincial Administrator;
- c) the statistics of the Association; in cooperation with the Provincial Secretary (who is responsible for the General Register), the Organising Councillor will keep them up to date;
- d) the distribution the Salesian Bulletins, both local and central;
- e) the 'Vocation Campaigns' that are undertaken, working in union with the Councillor for Vocations;
- f) the public relations of the ASC.

11. The Councillor for Vocations organises campaigns to make known the vocation of the Salesian Cooperator;

- a) administering vocational propaganda material (pamphlets, posters, audiovisuals), coordinating the distribution of such material with the Provincial Administrator;
- b) making known the lay missionary spirit of voluntary service;
- c) maintaining contact with the Cooperators who have committed themselves to missionary activities.

12. The Councillor for Liturgy organises the liturgical ceremonies and paraliturgies of the Council:

- a) attending to the prayers and ceremonies for deceased Cooperators; and
- b) spreading the liturgical spirit.

13. The Provincial Administrator looks after the Council finances and the Association in general:

- a) co-ordinates practical fund-raising activities;
- b) presents a monthly financial statement to the Council;
- c) forwards an annual financial statement to the World Consultancy;
- d) is responsible for the maintenance of Council premises; and
- e) distributes the Bulletin throughout the Province.

14. The Provincial Secretary is responsible for the writing-up and care of the Provincial General Register:

- a) organising the archives and keeping them up to date;
- b) writing and forwarding official correspondence and documentation of the Provincial Council;
- c) administering all secretarial matters.

15. The Provincial Delegate is appointed by the local Provincial after hearing the opinion of the Provincial Council (art.46.2). The Provincial Delegate

- a) is responsible for the spiritual animation and apostolic Salesian formation in all the centres of the Province (Convention, art.11.1);
- b) is the official representative of the Provincial in Council matters (art.23.3);
- c) acts in accord with the FMA Delegate in furthering worthwhile apostolic activities with a common pastoral aim;
- d) in accord with the FMA Provincial and her Delegate, visits Centres erected in FMA Institutes, with the aim of 'conserving and developing relations' that unite the Cooperators with the Salesian Congregation (art.24.2); and finally
- e) the Provincial Delegate is a member by right of the Provincial Council.

16. The FMA Provincial Delegate is appointed by her Provincial after hearing the opinion of the ASC Provincial Council (art 46.2):

- a) she collaborates with the local FMA Delegates in their work of animation;
- b) she seeks to interest FMA communities in the Cooperator vocation;
- c) she visits FMA Cooperator Centres;
- d) she works in common accord with the SDB Provincial Delegate;
- e) she is a member by right of the ASC Provincial Council (art.46.1).

#### IV. Structure

17. Each Provincial Councillor is directly responsible for the planning, the activity and the assessment of the apostolate of the area within the local jurisdiction, without prejudice to the collegial nature of the decisions taken.

18. Apart from the functions already mentioned, any Provincial Councillor may be empowered to receive an extraordinary responsibility in a matter of emergency and at the discretion of the Council. In such a case, the chosen Councillor is provided with a written document noting the Councillor's competence and the duration of the extraordinary responsibility.

19. The Provincial Councillor must keep in touch with Councillors with similar commitments in the local Centres.

20. The Provincial Council meets weekly. The session may be confidential, depending on the nature of the matters to be discussed.

21. The validity of resolutions taken at a meeting requires the presence of at least half the Council members.

22. The PCSC shall meet monthly with the nearby local Centres. These meetings are called Co-ordinator Meetings and have as their aim to harmonise the activities of the ASC with those of the local Councils. If any Co-ordinators find it impossible to attend, either on a particular occasion or in general, they should send representatives with authority to make decisions. The PCSC may decide that the decisions of these meetings hold for the whole Province.

23. In carrying out its activities, the PCSC is assisted by the 'support group'. This group is made up of Cooperators of the local Centres nearby. Its number is flexible, and duties are appointed by the PCSC. Its members may take an active part in the meetings, but without voting power.

24. The PCSC avails itself of a bulletin for noting matters of information and formation for the Province. All PCSC decisions come into force when published in the bulletin, unless expressly declared otherwise.

## V. ELECTION AND RESIGNATION

25. The PCSC remains in office for three years (art.43.4).

26. Provincial Councillors may be elected for a further three years (43.4).

27. At least three months before the expiry of office, the PCSC convokes the Councillors of the canonically elected Centres and proceeds with the election of the new Provincial Council.

28. The proposal of a candidate requires the following:

a) The candidate must have formally made the Cooperator Promise.

b. The judgement of the proponent, that the candidate possesses the necessary qualities for the task at Provincial level.

c) The candidate must have at least the minimum time for attending to the duties required by the PCSC.

d) For obvious reasons of practicality, the candidate should live reasonably close to the Provincial precincts.

29. In the Centres where the Councils operate as electors, the following procedure is to be followed.

a) The local Co-ordinator reads to the plenary meeting of the Centre the letter of convocation and invites all the Cooperators and Cooperator-aspirants to present the names of possible candidates. A few weeks may be set aside for this.

b) When the time is up, the local Council meets to choose three candidates. The Centres far away from the Provincial residence will bear in mind what is set out in 28d above.

c) When the candidates are chosen, the Co-ordinator sends to the PCSC the names, personal data, the date the 'Cooperator Promise' was made, and the tasks and apostolic activities undertaken.

30. The PCSC then arranges the candidates according to the information supplied by the Councils; the 'official list' is then forwarded to the various Centres to be voted on.

31. The electing Councils will then choose from the 'official list' eight names. These will be written on the ballot paper, which will also carry the signatures of the Delegate and Co-ordinator. On the date of the election this ballot sheet will be presented in a sealed envelope. The signatures of the Co-ordinator and Delegate are required for the validity of the ballot sheet.

32. On the day set for the election, the electing Councillors will be present through one of their members. Postal votes are permitted. From the Councillors presenting the local votes, an 'electoral committee' comprising a president, secretary and scrutineer is appointed. The

candidates from the official list cannot belong to this committee. The task of the electoral committee is as follows:

- a) to check on the validity of each vote;
- b) to read and count the votes;
- c) to announce the candidates elected;
- d) to write up the corresponding minutes.

33. The eight candidates carrying the most votes are considered validly elected. In the case of equal numbers of votes, preference is given to whoever has been a Cooperator longer; if this too shows parity, the preference is given to the older in age.

Finally the President of the electoral Committee proclaims the eight new Councillors. These will immediately meet with the Provincial Delegates in private to appoint the Co-ordinator and share out the responsibilities (art.44.2).

34. The newly elected Council will assume its tasks immediately.

35. The Provincial Councillor accepts the obligation of his role for three years.

36. In the case of death or resignation of a Councillor, the PCSC may appoint a suitable Cooperator as substitute for the remainder of the three years. The vacancy may also be filled for the time being by a member of the Council.

37. The Provincial Councillor may be removed by the PCSC if it is judged that the Councillor's tenor of life is not in accordance with the Cooperator vocation (art.39.2). A further motive for dismissal would be constant lack of responsibility regarding the task proper to the Councillor's office.

## **APPENDIX III**

### **MODEL OF REGULATIONS OF THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE**

#### **PREAMBLE**

In conformity with art.47 of the Regulations of Apostolic Life, the seven Provincial Councillors in Spain, with the approval of their respective SDB Provincials, and in joint session held especially for this purpose, have on this day, 6 June 1987, proceeded with the Constitution of the National Conference of the Association of the Salesian Cooperators of Spain.

#### **NATURE**

1. The National Conference of the Association of Salesian Cooperators (ASC) of Spain is an organisation that deals with co-ordination, animation and representation.

#### **AIMS**

2. The National Conference of the ASC of Spain has for its principal aims:

- a. to increase the vitality of the Association in each Province;
- b. to achieve fitting co-ordination and efficient collaboration in apostolic activities and in other initiatives according to circumstances;
- c. to ensure unity of formation in the various Provinces, with due regard for a just pluralism;

d. to ensure that the Association maintain an openness to all ecclesial and social situations in which it lives and works.

## FUNCTIONS

3. To achieve these aims the Conference has settled on these arrangements:

- a. to encourage reflection on the identity of the Cooperator and subsequent influence on society;
- b. to encourage gifted Cooperators to be further professionally qualified in such disciplines as theology, spirituality (both general and Salesian), educational and pastoral projects for youth - and further areas that could help the formation of other Cooperators and the mission of the ASC;
- c. to study and promote the guidelines of the Magisterium;
- d. to study and promote also the guidelines of the World Consultancy, especially the pronouncements of the Rector Major.
- e. to represent the Association on a national level in ecclesiastical and civil organisms and authorities;
- f. to encourage the Provincial Councils to assist and co-ordinate the pronouncements (regarding animation, information and government) of the Superior of the Association, the World Consultancy and the SDB Department for the Salesian Family;
- g. to maintain contact with the Salesian Congregation, the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians and the other groups of the Salesian Family;
- h. to maintain contact and collaborate with ecclesial and secular organisations in their apostolic activities at national level, especially with the Episcopal Commission for the Secular Apostolate and the General Council of the Laity;
- i. to co-ordinate initial and ongoing formation, criteria for admissions and normal apostolic activities;
- j. to attend to information regarding the Association in general, and the Provinces and Centres in particular, making particular use of the Cooperators' Salesian Bulletin;
- k. to arrange the annual national programme of activities and the corresponding calendar;
- l. to promote exchange of reflections and experiences, meetings, discussions, congresses, when two-thirds of the voters deem such activities necessary or helpful;
- m. to approve the annual budget prepared by the Administrator.

## STRUCTURES

4. There are three structures of the National Conference:

- a. the Conference in plenary session;
- b. the Conference in partial session;
- c. the Executive Secretariat.

## CONFERENCE IN PLENARY SESSION

5. The following members belong by right:

- a. the National Co-ordinator;
- b. National Delegates;
- c. the World Consultor, when he belongs to one of the Spanish Provinces;
- d. the Co-ordinators of Provincial Councils;
- e. the SDB Provincial Delegates,
- f. the FMA Provincial Delegates.

The following members belong by election: the Secretary, the Administrator, three or more Cooperators elected to work as councillors of the Executive Secretariat, and two Cooperators from each Province.

6. The Conference in plenary session elects members in the following manner:

- a. the Secretary, the Administrator and the Councillors are elected by the members of the National Conference, with separate voting for each one;
- b. the two Cooperators from each Province are elected by their respective Provincial Council.

7. In all cases elections must be by absolute majority. If in the first vote none of the candidates receives the majority required, a second vote is taken. If again no-one obtains an absolute majority, a third vote is taken on the two candidates who had obtained the greater number. If voting is equal, the candidate who made the Cooperator Commitment first is elected; if this too is equal, then the elder by age is elected.

8. The members elected by the Conference remain in office three years and may be re-elected for another consecutive three years - but not normally for a third triennium.

9. The members of the Conference who represent the various Provinces are elected by their respective Provincial Councils, separately voted in for each plenary session.

10. The National Conference meets at least once a year, and will always deal with matters of importance as deemed by the National Co-ordinator or by a third of the Conference members.

11. All the members of the National Conference have the right to vote. For the decisions to be valid, at least half plus one of the members must be present.

12. The decisions of the Conference are in the nature of guidelines. Nevertheless, the Conference has the power to propose matters of a binding nature, in which case the approval of two thirds of the members present is required.

13. Conferences are convoked by the National Co-ordinator.

14. It is up to the Conference to interpret these internal Regulations. Any modifications require the approval of two thirds of the members present.

#### CONFERENCE IN PARTIAL SESSION

15. Members of these smaller sessions are the Executive Secretary, the World Consultor, if he belongs to a Spanish Province, and the Provincial Co-ordinators and Delegates. The meetings take place once a year, normally mid-year, and their function is to assess the worth of the decisions adopted in the Conference in plenary session and to render more efficient the co-ordination between the various Provinces.

#### EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

16. The National Conference of the Cooperators is helped by a permanent Executive Secretariat made up of the National Co-ordinator, the National Delegate, the Secretary, the Administrator and three or more Councillors elected by the Conference in plenary session for this purpose.

17. Within the collegial nature of the governance of the ASC, the National Co-ordinator is the one most responsible for the functions and activities entrusted to the Executive Secretariat and the other members shall act in accord with him.

18. The Executive Secretariat is responsible for:

- a. drawing up the agenda of the Conference meetings and forwarding the information to the Provincial Councils in good time;
- b. checking on the fulfilment of the decisions taken in the meetings of the Conference, and if necessary taking the proper steps to see they are put into practice;

c. maintaining contact with the members of the Conference in matters of animation and co-ordination of the Association.

19. The Executive Secretariat meets at least once a month and always so that the National Co-ordinator or whenever one third of the members consider it opportune. The Secretariat is convoked by the National Co-ordinator.

## FORM AND FUNCTION OF THE MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

### National 'Leader' (Conduttore)

20. From amongst its members, the National Conference shall elect a National Leader (Conduttore) who will see to its efficient functioning.

21. The National Leader is elected from the candidates presented by the Provincial Councils. All the members of the Conference have the right to vote in this election.

22. The election follows the pattern outlined in no.7 above.

23. The national Consultor remains in office for four years and can be re-elected only for another four consecutive years

24. The functions of the National Consultor are those attributed to him in this set of Regulations, the particular functions being to represent the Association in the various national domains, and to co-ordinate and animate the meetings of the Conference.

25. In the case of a justified absence of the National 'Conduttore', the Conference shall elect from the members of the Executive Secretariat a substitute for the particular occasion.

### The National Delegate

26. National Delegates will be appointed according to the Statutes of the Iberian Conference for the National Delegation of the Salesian Cooperators.

### Secretary

27. The Secretary will write up the minutes of the sessions and carry out the other secretarial tasks.

### The Administrator

The Administrator will draw up the financial balance, the expenditure and the annual budget, and administer the finances of the National Conference, presenting them for approval at the plenary session of the Conference.

### Councillors

29. The Councillors attend to the various sectors appointed to them by the National Conference, and the National Co-ordinator entrusts to them their special functions in accordance with the practical situations and sundry activities of the Association.

#### Administration

30. The National Conference has at its disposal certain assets made up of contributions made by the Provincial Councils and other possible sources.

a. The material goods of the Association are administered by the Administrator in agreement with the National Co-ordinator and the Executive Secretariat.

b. The annual budget and expenditure must be duly presented and approved by the National Conference in plenary session.

c. The cost of travel, board and lodging of each member of the Conference summoned to meetings officially noted in the Regulations, will be paid by the Conference.

#### APPROVAL OF THE INTERNAL REGULATIONS

31. The national Conference must approve these internal Regulations, and revise them in three years' time.

#### STATUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT OF THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE

##### 1. Executive Secretariat

The Executive Secretariat of the National Conference is composed of members as set out in its internal Regulations. Requisite functions are carried out according to these statutes.

##### 2. Co-ordinator

The Co-ordinator is in charge of the management of the Executive Secretariat.

The functions of the Co-ordinator are as set out in the internal Regulations for the National Co-ordinator.

##### 3. Delegate

The Delegate is the SDB or FMA member who, in union with the Co-ordinator, organises the functioning of the National Conference.

The functions are:

a. to undertake with the Provincial Delegates the spiritual animation of the Cooperators, with special attention to Salesian and apostolic formation.

b. to collaborate with the Councillors of the Executive Secretariat in their specific spiritual and Salesian formation and animation.

##### 4. Substitute Co-ordinator

This member of the Executive Secretariat substitutes for the National Co-ordinator in the circumstances foreseen in the internal Regulations.

Functions:

The substitute Co-ordinator performs the same functions that belong to the National Co-ordinator; also all other tasks that may be delegated from time to time.

#### 5. Administrator

This member of the Executive Secretariat administers the finances of the National Conference and also the finances of the Salesian Cooperators' Third World Account.

In carrying out this task the Administrator should be especially aware of the particular character of the ecclesiastical goods that the Association possesses and administers.

Functions:

- a. to draw up the annual balance, expenses and budgeting for the National Conference;
- b. to present this information to the Conference in plenary session for official approval;
- c. to draw up also the annual balance, expenses and budgeting for the Cooperators' Third World Account and present it to the Conference in plenary session for official approval;
- d. to collaborate with the Third World sector of the Salesian Cooperators in the collection campaign and distribution of funds.

#### 6 Secretary

The Secretary is responsible for all the normal and permanent tasks that belong to the Secretariat.

Functions:

- a. to write up the minutes of the meetings of the Conference in plenary session, of the National Conference in partial session, and of the Executive Secretariat, and forward them to the Provincial Councils;
- b. to maintain in order and up to date the archives of the National Conference and the Executive Secretariat;
- c. to organise the filing system and attend to other ordinary services;
- d. to keep the library in good order;
- e. to assist the members of the Executive Secretariat in matters concerning documentation, dossiers and correspondence, etc.

#### 7. Councillors' areas of responsibility

The Executive Secretariat establishes within itself the necessary sectors for furthering the services proper to the Association. These are the following: formation, youth, Hogares Don Bosco ("Salesian Family Movement"), Salesian Cooperation & The Third World, and information.

#### 8. Formation Sector

A member of the Executive Secretariat is responsible for the Formation Sector.

Function:

- a. to encourage the Provincial Councils to promote the formation of Cooperators, according to the guidelines of the National Conference;

- b. to maintain contact with the respective Formation Sections and the Provincial Councils; to be aware of conditions and initiatives that will be of use for the National Conference;
- c. to urge the Provincial Councils to train Cooperators to become skilled in spirituality, Salesianity, etc.;
- d. to carry out what the National Conference demands regarding formation programmes: preparation of books, pamphlets, etc.;
- e. to make practical contributions to the formation content of the Cooperators' Bulletin.
- f. to collaborate with the National Delegation of the Cooperators in helping local and Provincial Delegates to organise get-togethers for formation.

#### 9. Youth Sector

A member of the Executive Secretariat is responsible for the Youth Sector:

- a. by keeping in touch with the Youth Sectors of the Provincial Councils;
- b. by organising and co-ordinating the National and Sector meetings arranged by the National Conference;
- c. by giving enthusiastic help in the vocational promotion of the Young Cooperators, and acting as go-between by sharing ideas and experiences in this area;
- d. by setting up and developing SALCO services and projects;
- e. by collecting and forwarding to the corresponding Provincial Sectors all the information possible regarding youth, groups and movements within the Church and the Salesian Family and other experiences of a similar nature.

#### 10. Hogares Don Bosco (Don Bosco Family Movement)

A member of the Executive Secretariat assumes this responsibility.

Functions:

- a. Maintains contact with the Councillor of the Hogares Don Bosco in the Provincial Councils.
- b. Enthuses the Provincial Councils in the promotion of the Hogares Don Bosco groups.
- c. Sees to the formation and support of the groups.
- d. Encourages the Provincial Councils to present the Cooperator vocations to Hogares Don Bosco couples.
- e. Carries out the tasks the National Conference requests regarding the preparation of formation material: providing books or other helps.
- f. Promotes and organises National Conventions or other get-togethers approved by the National Conference.
- g. Maintains relations with other family movements at national level.

#### 11. Salesian Cooperators and the Third World.

A member of the Executive Secretariat is responsible for this sector.

Functions

- a. Make known the activities and projects of the Salesian Cooperators and the Third World to other Cooperators and the Local Centres, through the corresponding Provincial Councils.
- b. Maintain contacts with the respective sectors of the Provincial Councils regarding the encouragement of this apostolate.
- c. Build up a greater awareness and sympathy regarding the practical problems of the Third World.

- d. Arrange collections and distributions of funds for the Third World apostolate, and maintain relations with the SDBs and FMAs to further the financial and practical help of the Salesian Cooperators' Third World apostolate.
- e. Encourage the Cooperators to gradually undertake a voluntary lay missionary movement of their own, and to organise it in co-ordination with the SDBs and FMAs.
- f. Build up relationships with other initiatives and movements of a similar nature.

## 12. Information sector

A member of the Executive Secretariat assumes the responsibility of this information sector.

Functions:

- a. to be a channel of intercommunication between Provincial Councils, the Conference and the Executive Secretariat;
- b. to undertake the publication of the Salesian Cooperators' Bulletin, collaborating with the National Co-ordinator and in accord with the specific guidelines set out in the Formation Sector;
- c. to keep up to date regarding lay movements and their activities.

## 13. Supplementary Article

The functions of the Executive Secretariat and the various Sectors are subject to revision if and when it may seem opportune for greater efficiency in the judgement of the Conference in plenary session.

### Appendix IV

(Suppressed in the English edition: see now the document, Animating Economic Solidarity)

### Appendix V

Suggested form for calling a meeting

Date

Members invited to meeting

Purpose of meeting

Date and place of meeting

Agenda of meeting

For example:

1. Fr Martinelli's document re blueprint for laity. (When a formative theme is set for discussion, a copy of the document in question should be forwarded so that members can come to the meeting well prepared.)
2. Agenda of the Congress.



AN EXAMPLE OF A DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE INTO THE ASC  
(as used in Bilbao, Spain)

The undersigned office-bearers  
hereby declare that

at ....., on the ..... day of ..... in the year..... ,

..... (name)

was accepted as a SALESIAN COOPERATOR

and member of the ..... Centre.

The Cooperator's fidelity is strengthened and sustained by  
the affection and solidarity  
of fellow Cooperators  
and indeed by all other members of the Salesian Family.  
(RAL art.39)

On behalf of the Association: .....

On this day, (date).....,  
through the goodness of God,  
who inspired my free choice,  
I was accepted as a Salesian Cooperator.

Signature of Cooperator: .....

APPENDIX VII

DECREE OF ERECTION OF AN ASSOCIATION CENTRE

The Provincial Council of the Cooperators of .....,  
with the written consent of the Provincial, Rev. Fr .....,  
and (if Centre is attached to FMA House) Sr Provincial FMA .....,  
(or if Centre is not attached to SDB or FMA foundation) the local Ordinary,  
Most Rev....., Bishop of ..... on (date).....,  
in accordance with art. 45 § 2 of the Regulations of Apostolic Life,  
and with the present Decree of the relevant Co-ordinator.....

ERECTS

THE COOPERATORS' CENTRE

attached to the SDB foundation .....  
(or) if attached to the FMA foundation .....  
(or) if attached to the parish of .....  
in the diocese of ..... (address, city, nation).....

under the aegis of the SDB Provincial Group of .....

In fide,  
Place and date.....

Signed, Provincial Co-ordinator .....

Signed, Secretary.....

PS: The Centre was set up in the year.....

## CHAPTER V

### WAYS AND MEANS OF ANIMATION<sup>[127]</sup>

24. Introduction

25. Method of animation

- A. Accommodate your help to the personal circumstances of the Cooperator.
- B. Listen and be resourceful.
- C. Involvement and participation are important.
- D. Develop the sense of belonging to the Association.
- E. Encourage communion and collaboration.

26. Means for animation

A. Meetings

- 1. Meetings at the various levels.
- 2. Preparation for the meetings.
- 3. Basic elements of meeting.
- 4. Attitude and role of the council.
- 5. Attitude and role of the each office-bearer in the meeting.
- 6. Meetings dealing with plans and assessments of Councils and Centers
- 7. Meetings of Councils and Centres dealing with financial matters.
- B. Meetings, conventions, conferences, symposiums.
- C. Development of the spiritual dimension.

1. Prayer.

2. Prayer meetings.

3. Reconciliation and Eucharist.

I - Celebration of these Sacraments essential.

II - Suitable preparation for these Sacraments.

D. Spiritual direction.

E. Group study of Faith: monthly recollection days; spiritual retreats.

1. Monthly day of recollection: programme.

2. Yearly Retreat.

F. Family Spirit (festive celebrations).

G. Planning initiatives.

APPENDIX I    HOW TO GET THE BEST OUT OF MEETINGS.  
                  SOME PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR THIS PURPOSE  
                  SOME IMPORTANT ELEMENTS RE MEETINGS.  
                  FIXED COMPONENTS FOR MEETINGS.  
                  VARIABLE COMPONENTS FOR MEETINGS.

## 24. INTRODUCTION.

All office-bearers and animators, as well as their specific duties, have the responsibility to assist in the smooth running of the Association. They should also care for each and every member of the ASC, endeavour to respect the needs of all, and wisely adapt the more specific formative obligations to the duties of the apostolate. This will create and maintain among all Cooperators that family unity so dear to our Founder.

The method adopted for animation is of the utmost importance: its aim is both personal and group development<sup>[128]</sup>, assisting all to achieve an adequate understanding and practice of the aims of the Association. The method must be in accordance with Don Bosco's Preventive System, with all its qualities of love, action, charity, affability, communion and friendly dialogue.

## 25. METHOD OF ANIMATION

The office-bearer's presence among the Cooperators must reflect the Salesian style and method, that is, the method of togetherness - which means approaching members with offers of necessary help so that they become aware of the various proposals that are made. This joint collaboration leads to self-understanding, self-formation, discernment and maturity. It is an aid to vocational growth and the dispositions required for developing a personal mission. After the example of the Lord, the formator, by helpful attention and encouragement with projects and meetings, takes individual 'pupils' in hand, heeding and sharing their concerns and aspirations.<sup>[129]</sup>

Method involves the following:

### A. Taking the cooperator in hand.

This close attention is given to the Cooperator as part of the theoretical, practical, spiritual, human, Christian and Salesian formation, and continues during the various phases of youthful, adult and advanced years.

This 'taking in hand' has to be made together, and at a pace suitable for both parties - which is not always easy. It demands from both 'teacher' and 'pupil' adequate intuition and response regarding the challenges that result from environment and circumstances. What is required is a great spirit of service and charity that is both pastoral and dynamic.

Furthermore, this 'taking in hand' also becomes a formative experience for the formator. Theillard de Chardin wrote, I am a great believer in the principle that the non-teacher stores up an enormous quantity of truths that are only half-developed. My experience is that, by teaching, the whole truth is learned.

### B. Be a good listener and be resourceful.

Good method requires that the formator be constant y vigilant and attentive so as to be able to respond to the expectations and spiritual, formative and apostolic needs of the Cooperator.

For this the formator must be a good listener, able to anticipate requirements, and well aware of daily life situations, so as to be able to respond to the variant needs of the Cooperator.

Method also requires a well developed inventive imagination that is characteristic of the Salesian spirit - indefatigable, enterprising and creative.

### C. Involvement and participation.

A further requirement of the formator is to seek from every Cooperator some active participation. This demands that the formator exercise a deep interest in the Cooperator, assessing, suggesting, encouraging, heeding, and consequently being personally acquainted with all members - interested in their problems and sharing their joys. This is to truly follow in Don Bosco's footsteps.

#### D. Development of a sense of belonging to the Association

Method includes the nurturing of a lively sense of belonging to the Association, cherishing the bonds of fellowship, coordinating projects, experiences and proposals, and developing a sensitivity regarding the various levels: local, provincial, national, regional and worldwide. This will help the Cooperator to be assured of belonging to an Association that is widespread and closely knit, such as Don Bosco wanted to organise on a worldwide scale, in the service of the family, the Church, the Salesian Family and civil society.

Thus, dear friends in Don Bosco, the Cooperators will leave their impress of respect, friendliness, joy, esteem and affection.

#### E. Developing communion and collaboration

Finally, method will endeavour to train the Cooperator in communion and collaboration, not only within the Salesian Family and other ecclesial organisms, but also in civil, social, cultural, professional and political, situations - and in matters regarding trade unions, youth activities and philanthropic projects.

This practical interest should result in a genuine understanding of the Salesian life, a life that accepts commitment to the youth apostolate and the working classes; a life that leads to mutual endeavour in the light of Don Bosco's *Da mihi animas*.

In short, in using the means of animation as outlined in this presentation, the formator must imbue them with a constant close companionship; this is an indispensable condition for success.

## 26. MEANS OF ANIMATION

There are many ways to encourage animation. Some of these are explicitly indicated in the Regulations of Apostolic Life and are essential for the coherent life and growth of the Association and the general lines of reference befitting an organisation with a unique identity respecting methods and means.

It is clear that there are certain elements of animation that must always be part of the life of the Association; and other elements that belong to different cultures and locations. Circumstances may arise, of course, and then activities and projects not expressly belonging to the specific identity of the ASC may be undertaken when their aim is to fulfil objects proper to the ASC.<sup>[130]</sup> Such cases need to be coherent with the spirit of the ASC ethos and faithful to the characteristics Don Bosco set out for the Association.

The following paragraphs deal with the factors considered indispensable for the identity of the ASC - what should be characteristic of the distinctive nature of the Association - and of course there may be other elements that could be added to the list. Such factors develop the sense of belonging; they help to further the commitment and the spiritual life of the Cooperators and their effective participation in the life of the ASC.

#### A. Meetings<sup>[131]</sup>

## 1. Meetings at various levels

### \*Council Meetings

Council meetings are convoked by the Co-ordinator who also forwards the agenda.

The number and frequency of meetings vary according to activities and needs.; but it is advisable to have them at least once a month for the local Councils and at least bi-monthly for Provincial Councils.

Qualified consultants and others may be invited to participate, but without right to vote.

They are invited to be seated next to the chair-person.

The Secretary is responsible for the minutes at all meetings. Such minutes are to be kept in an appropriate file.

Validity require that the members with right to vote are present in absolute majority.[\[132\]](#)

### \*Meetings at Local Level

Cooperators at Local level also have their meetings. What has been said regarding the convocation, agenda and frequency of meetings, should be applied also to the meetings of Cooperators of a Centre. In fact, at the time of writing, the means most frequently used in the Centres and at formation and organisational level are still monthly meetings, which could become even fortnightly in the interests of greater stability and effectiveness in the formative activities of the Centre.

In the interests of profitable animation and formation, it should be borne in mind what is said in the preceding paragraphs, which in general is applicable to both local meetings and Councils at the various levels.

## 2. PREPARATION FOR MEETINGS

All meetings must be organised in good time. Requirements for meetings are as follows:

- Date, place and time (if possible times for beginning and ending) should be sent to members with detailed information and in good time.
- Notice should be sent to all concerned, not overlooking those in charge of SDB and FMA Salesian Communities where the meetings are to be held. The same holds for the Provincials, if meetings are held in Provincial Houses.
- The agenda should be precise, withholding nothing; there should be clear indication of the purpose of the meeting and the matters to be discussed.
- The meeting should be run so that all present are encouraged to be active and creative[\[133\]](#); (for instance, if a formation theme is to be discussed, the necessary documents should be made available).
- Whatever organisation is running the meeting (generally it will be the Council), it should insist that all treat matters with sincere earnestness, since meetings are the only way to attain results.

## 3. FUNDAMENTAL ELEMENTS OF MEETINGS

The following elements must never normally be omitted.

### I. Council Meetings

- pause for prayer and recollection;
- reading and acceptance of minutes of previous meeting;

- presentation of agenda by the Co-ordinator;
- discussion of each point and possible decisions;
- group reflection on some ASC formation theme;
- practical decisions and possible tasks assigned to individuals or groups.

## II. Local Meetings

\* Meetings (normally monthly and dealing with formation)

- The theme, which is the keynote of meetings at local level, should occupy most of the time, and its presentation and development can be varied. After a short introduction, the principle of 'see, judge and act' could be used, and various experiences discussed.
- Further elements of this kind of meeting:
  - prayer at beginning and end;
  - communications
  - practical decisions, possible tasks appointed, etc.,
  - date of next meeting and possible theme thereof.

Appendix I (at the end of this chapter) should be read attentively regarding the above matters.

\* Meetings for assessing and planning

These can take the place of the preceding meetings. They follow the method proper to these types of meetings.

In both Council meetings and local meetings, the following two recommendations are important:

1. Meetings should be friendly and carried out in a family spirit.
2. Meetings should begin punctually. and finish the time appointed.

## 4. ATTITUDE AND ROLE OF THE COUNCIL

The collegiality of the Provincial and Local Councils demands from all Councillors the following attributes:

\* Reliability, sincerity and candour;

\* Genuine affiliation and co-ordination.<sup>[134]</sup> 'Taking sides' must be avoided; there must be collaboration; all contributions should be welcomed and 'choral' aspects fairly assessed. All activities should be considered as communal efforts; and final decisions taken should reflect the thinking of the whole Council.

\* Co-ordination. The Council, through its Councillors, organises, assesses, makes known and co-ordinates its activities, studying and coping with problems according to their Gospel values, and promoting fidelity to Don Bosco and the specific identity of Salesian apostles in the world.

\* Practical action: the Council operates according to its nature, that is, as a sign of communion and Salesianity, and using the means its nature provides, namely, to carry out a service of animation. The Council is not merely a referee sought occasionally to adjudicate on various matters that may occasionally crop up; it acts according to definite directions; it is fully aware that its responsibility is personal guidance and formation according to the Regulations of Apostolic Life, suggesting and directing activities at Local and Provincial level, singling out specific objectives and offering clear guidelines.

## 5. ATTITUDE AND ROLE OF EACH LEADER AT THE MEETING

Leaders should always be profoundly aware of their free acceptance of the personal responsibilities entrusted to them, tasks that are not simply to be delegated to others. This requires preparation according to the agenda, punctuality, active participation with expression of personal ideas, careful attention to other opinions, and good knowledge of personal roles. Leaders should get to know other leaders and listen to their comments, co-responsibly sharing the results of their specific apostolates and their various skills and options. They must read the signs of the times, since they live in the present with the experience of the past and with the future in mind, which calls for anticipation and preparation. They must be able to discern what Salesian principles should be applied to the situation in hand; they must promote and defend human Christian values in social affairs, and prize the specific values of the lay situation, extending them throughout the Salesian Family.

## 6. MEETINGS OF COUNCILS AND CENTRES IN ORDER TO PLAN AND ASSESS.

The following meetings are of particular importance.

\* The first meeting of the year: for discussing annual projects and deciding on the practical activities for the year, the basic themes to be pursued, the matters that call for priority, the programme of the yearly activities, and the discussion of what affairs should be initiated or continued.

\* The final meeting of the year, in which the work of the past year is assessed, and plans for the following year discussed.

## 7. FINANCIAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILS AND CENTRES

Also important are the meetings in which are discussed the next year's budget and the financial account of the past year; these are drawn up by the Council treasurer, who gives a complete and understandable explanation.

## B. ANIMATION AIDED THROUGH MEETINGS, CONVENTIONS, CONFERENCES AND SYMPOSIUMS

In an effort to develop for the Cooperators at the various levels<sup>[135]</sup>, a more active life in the local Church, and a formation that is more human and professional, Christian and Salesian, doctrinal and apostolic, the Provincial and local Councils organise the following activities - suitably geared to the possibilities of the different levels:

\* meetings, conventions, assemblies, conferences, rallies, study seminars, encounters, round table discussions, pilgrimages, prayer sessions - on an 'all-day' basis; and

\* study camps, sessions for married couples, for formation, for retreats, for various courses - lasting several days.

It is evident that in order that these activities be successful, all details must be carried out attentively and accurately.

The period chosen must be suitable, the get-together made known to all who may be interested, and presented as attractively as possible.

Organisers should take into account all necessary details, anticipate problems, carefully choose the animators, set out the objectives clearly, and seek to involve the different groups of the Salesian Family; they also need to co-ordinate well the various tasks, assure a warm welcome to all, and arrange the times of prayer, the group responsibilities, the recreational and rest periods. It is well to make a group responsible for each sector.

Experience shows that these activities create a great sense of belonging, rendering the ASC more vital and perceptive - which is just what good animation aims at.

### C. Probing the spiritual dimension

The Salesian Cooperator vocation is an eminently apostolic one, and engages us all in a strong commitment to the service of the Kingdom of God. To live this vocation calls for a deep spirituality, a profound relationship with God. The success of the lay apostolate depends on our lively union with Christ.<sup>[136]</sup> Don Bosco wanted the spirituality of the Cooperator to transform our work and life itself into a prayerfulness that in turn transforms all duties, occupations, relationships and apostolic activities into occasions to be in contact with the Lord whilst remaining occasions of contact with our neighbour.

Listed below are the means of animation that are considered essential for acquiring a profound spirituality that alone is capable of urging us to greater genuine commitment. It is thus that Cooperators find in themselves the energy to attain the ends for which they became Cooperators.

#### 1. Prayer.

Cooperators must cultivate prayer that is simple, trusting, joyful and creative, imbued with intense apostolic ardour, and indeed part of their very lives that give it continuance.<sup>[137]</sup>

This is the kind of prayer that is offered to Cooperators by their ASC education and formation. Office-bearers must encourage such prayer in the life of the Association, so that Cooperators will have direct experience of it and make it an essential element in their daily lives. Every meeting, even of an organisational nature, should begin and end with a prayer: it will ensure openness to the Holy Spirit and the gift of his guidance.

Even if the prayer is brief, it should never be hastened or distracted; it is the way the prayer is said that matters: concentration, recollection, tranquillity - these qualities help us to realise that we are all together in dialogue with the Lord.

Prayer should begin with a moment of silence to prepare the soul for this dialogue.

It is wise to add a reading of the Word of God - even if just a few verses, chosen to suit the occasion and followed by a short pause for reflection.

When we pray, what we say to our omniscient God is important of course; but more important is what he says to us, if only we give him an attentive ear.

When we pray, we should not only speak of ourselves: we should listen to what God has to say to us - hence the importance of silent pauses.

#### 2. Prayer is an encounter with God.

Prayer is an all-important component in the formation of a Cooperator, and so these encounters with God should be specific, and deal with matters of deep interest to us.

On such occasions the reading could well be amplified by opportune selections from documents dealing with the Magisterium of the Church and of significance in Salesian spirituality. Personal thoughts could be added, together with spontaneous prayers, hymns, or symbolic gestures as personal or group creativity may suggest.

It would be helpful too to make use of the liturgical prayer of the Church (Lauds and Vespers) that help to develop the ecclesial sense of prayer.

#### 3. Reconciliation and Holy Mass

## I. The necessity of these Sacraments

Reconciliation and Holy Mass are two pillars essential to the spiritual life of Cooperators.

Don Bosco recommended frequent use of these Sacraments; they are the foundations of spiritual life.

In the Eucharist, the Cooperator draws from the font of pastoral charity<sup>[138]</sup>, and receives the spiritual nourishment of the Body of Christ, who communicates his life and the ardour of his love.

In Reconciliation the Cooperator experiences the love and mercy of the Father, who, freeing us from sin, infuses energy to live the new life of the Gospel.

It is especially during the period of 'aspirantate' that the future Cooperator is guided to discover the spiritual wealth of these two Sacraments and through them increase the life of faith.

In regard to the Sacrament of Reconciliation, it is important that the Cooperator become increasingly aware of the fact that it is more than the accusation of sins and the receiving of pardon. It also includes a 'revision of life', an assessment of our Christian living, of fidelity to our vocation; it is an occasion for realising personal limitations, interior obstacles that impede the life of faith, the determination to further spiritual progress and make full use of the grace necessary to draw closer to God.

All Cooperators need the regular use of these two Sacraments for their personal spiritual progress along the path of faith, and thus the local Council must arrange the yearly programme with reference to Eucharistic Celebrations in retreats and other assemblies; preceded by opportunities for the Sacrament of Confession.

## II. Suitable preparation for such celebrations

The active and attentive participation in the liturgical and sacramental life of the Church<sup>[139]</sup> should not be mere subjective celebrations: their fruitfulness will largely depend on the amount of care which is put into the preparation of such liturgical celebrations.

It is the task of the Councillors of the Centre to carefully arrange these Eucharistic celebrations, beginning with the grouping of the participants around the altar. Indeed, encircling the altar helps a lot to create a sense of friendly communion in the presence of Christ.

An expression of welcome could be arranged for the beginning of the ceremony; special attention being given to the Liturgy of the Word. A Cooperator or an ASC aspirant could do the reading (which should be enunciated clearly and expressively).

The Prayers of the Faithful could be enriched by spontaneous intercessions expressed simply and informally.

The ceremony could be made more impressive with symbols and gestures. For instance, joining hands at the Our Father, or adding (in addition to the bread and wine) further gifts at the Offertory, with a clarification of their significance. But let the gift be a gift, not a symbol later taken back.

Singing too is important, for it strengthens the feeling of unity. Words of the hymns should be made available.

Most important is the overall spirit of the celebrations. Whilst it should be , festive and joyous, it should also be profoundly meditative. It should be realised that the sacramental efficacy of the celebration does not depend on organisation, and that the elements we add to the celebration must not become a distraction or merely a pleasant exhibition.

Regarding the Sacrament of Reconciliation, there could be an occasional communal ceremony of the Second Rite, arranged to demonstrate our fidelity to our common Salesian vocation. Questions asked could be about how our apostolic charity is progressing; how we practise and give witness to the Salesian System in our families and in our relations with others; how we deal with the poverty, needs and pastoral exigencies of those about us and others within our zone of activity.

#### D. Spiritual Direction

All Christians are personally responsible for the life of faith that they live and the spiritual path they tread relating thereto.

They have the obligation to ponder the Word of God and better understand what God desires of them; they are individually responsible for fidelity to their personal vocations and the fulfilment of their personal missions.

However, Christians are not alone in these responsibilities. Within the Church there are many good souls who through their specific ministries, are ready to help and sustain others in their need for spiritual discernment (which is at times not an easy task).

This discernment in fact is not just to understand what God's general expectation is from us and what he desires from us from day to day, but also to understand ourselves, the difficulties we encounter in our following of Christ, the choices we have to make and the steps we have to take to make spiritual progress. To succeed in all this by ourselves is at times not easy, and at times difficult indeed.

Hence the importance in our modern age for the Church to be available to cope with the increasing need of people for spiritual direction.

To make genuine progress in serving the Lord, and to fulfil one's own apostolic commitment, the help of a spiritual leader is definitely called for.- the help of one more mature in the faith, who will put things into focus and provide suitable guidance.

The spiritual leader is not a 'take-over' person, and does not exonerate a person from the task of making or changing decisions. The spiritual leader helps people to assess personal situations with greater clarity and awareness, and in the light of faith.

It is obvious that spiritual direction is not Confession, even though a priest- confessor may also be the priest-spiritual-director. Of course Confession can be an occasion for spiritual direction, if the sufficient time required is available.

Actually, however, Confession and spiritual direction are two distinct functions. One priest may be chosen for Confession and another priest for spiritual direction; and furthermore, an habitual confessor may be consulted as a spiritual leader quite apart from the Sacrament of Confession.

Naturally the spiritual leader who is also the confessor of a person, would know his client better and thus be better able to assess and discern.

It is preferable to choose the same priest as both confessor and spiritual leader. Thus for a Cooperator it would seem better that the priest chosen be a Salesian, for both leader and directed would have in common the same vocation. This could make for better understanding of the spiritual needs and problems of the Cooperator, and result in better help along the path of faith.

A Cooperator seeking advice or suggestions in the matter of faith, could also approach a lay Cooperator or a Salesian Sister or a Salesian past pupil.

E. Group reflections: monthly recollection days and retreats.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is an occasion for revision of life; and so too, for the Cooperator striving to progress in the apostolic life of faith, are the so-called key periods - periods of special spiritual impact : Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter... These are periods, in a fitting environment, for calm, profound, and leisurely assessment of one's own personal 'salvation journey'.

Don Bosco used to counsel his Cooperators to make an annual retreat of a few days, and each month a day of recollection with Confession and Communion.[\[140\]](#)

The Regulations of Apostolic Life repeat these suggestions of Don Bosco in article 34, recommending a monthly day of recollection and an annual retreat as important periods for discernment.

These occasions have the twofold objective of assessment and conversion: they are opportunities for illuminating one's personal life of faith and discovering the 'positive' and 'negative' in the light of the Gospel and the Regulations of Apostolic Life; they are periods for seeking to discern the call of the Holy Spirit, to refine and renew with greater fervour that love of God and neighbour that results from living close to Jesus in the two Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist.[\[141\]](#)

It is clear that these periods of special impact greatly influence the Cooperator's spiritual and apostolic life and thus cannot be left to chance or improvisation; they must be prepared in detail.

It is the task of the Councillors and Delegates of Centres to organise the monthly day of recollection according to the method suitable for the Cooperators of the particular Centre.

#### 1. The monthly day of recollection: the programme

Many will assuredly ask whether it is possible to keep up these monthly days of recollection. It would be possible if adjustments could be made with the monthly meetings. Some Centres will be able to hold both events separately; others will manage both together; or the recollection day need not be held according to a strictly monthly timetable, and important liturgical celebrations could be used to programme for a whole day, or half-day, or a few hours.

The set-up of the recollection day could vary from time to time, but the following elements must always be included:

- a reading of the Word of God;
- a meditation or instruction given by an appropriate person;
- a period for Confessions;
- a Eucharistic Celebration;
- a quiet atmosphere for the interior listening to God.

Silent periods are important for personal meditation; and times for discussion and the sharing of reflections.

There should also be a time for friendly conversation at the end of the day; it could be helpful to talk about the spiritual benefit that each Cooperator has experienced.

#### 2. Annual Spiritual Retreat

This is an activity of the utmost spiritual importance, and hence should never be neglected.

The spiritual retreats of a few days' duration often exceed the availabilities of a local Centre.

Such retreats could be organised by a number of Centres in the same zone. Suitable times and programmes could be chosen in a collaboration that could be most beneficial. The Provincial Council could propose and offer opportunities for one or more such gatherings, organising them to suit the conditions of the various groups.

It goes without saying that the meeting of Cooperators from different Centres is helpful for all. Their various spiritual and apostolic experiences would strengthen communion and unity within the Association and help to open up new perspectives.

In the greater opportunity and time allowed by the spiritual retreats, the Word of God can be examined in the light of the Magisterium and the injunctions of the Bishops - especially in matters more pertinent to the Salesian spirit; and thus the retreat becomes an occasion for growth and development in fidelity to one's personal vocation.

#### F. The Family Spirit and Festive Celebrations

Don Bosco was a tireless founder. Not content with founding the Congregation of St Francis de Sales, he gave further thought to a twin Congregation that would take on the education of girls - and with Mother Mazzarello he founded the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians.

He also understood the notable contribution the laity could make to the Salesian mission and instituted the lay branch of Cooperators. Indeed, his aim was the institution of an Apostolic Family that could unite persons of diverse ways of living, and carry on in the Church the same helpful mission in favour of the young and the working classes. These diverse classes of apostolic missionaries he united into a closely-bonded family. After the death of Don Bosco, the Family developed further branches and groups that fostered the same spirituality and had the same apostolic aims.

The Family Spirit consists, in short, of different groups with an awareness of a special spiritual relationship - possessing the same spiritual Father and the same mission in the Church (even though the various groups have diverse living structures, autonomous organisation, and personal rules and statutes).

This awareness results in particular bonds of friendship and communion that are expressed in various practical forms of association, service and collaboration..

The Family Spirit is thus a spiritual dimension that gives rise to practical initiatives with a common purpose, and is sustained and consolidated thereby.

Just as in a family, if the members do not meet, there is no dialogue, and if there is no vital communication, family companionship weakens, and the result is spiritual impoverishment of the family members.

The Family Spirit is characteristic of the Salesian Spirit, and the Regulations of Apostolic Life recommend that the Cooperators should foster friendly communion and collaboration with the other Groups and members of the Salesian Family through reciprocal acquaintance, information, spiritual and formative help and involvement in common apostolic commitments.<sup>[142]</sup> Here are some clear and practical suggestions how to build up this Family Spirit. the Councils at the various levels (especially the local level) have the obligation to try to carry out these indications with the conviction of the important reality of the Family of which they are members.

\* Some of the more significant liturgical feasts (such as Don Bosco, St Francis de Sales, St Mary Mazzarello, St Dominic Savio, Mary Help of Christians) could be organised and celebrated in common by members. Such celebrations could be used to meet together and deepen the understanding of the significance of these saints in the development of Salesian history.

\* Formative and spiritual gatherings of the various groups could be arranged, such as a day of recollection, or a general meeting, etc.

\* Cooperator Councils and other groups could meet in common to share information, get to know each other, and plan apostolic initiatives to meet local pastoral needs. At local level, too, a Salesian Family celebration could be organised.

#### G. Planning activities.

One of the results of the Family Spirit is to that the Cooperator Councils at the various levels realise the great advantage of planning activities in common with the whole Salesian Family.

Cooperators, and mainly the leaders, shall be available to participate, at the various levels and in the most opportune way, in the structures of intercommunication and collaboration agreed on by the leaders of the various Groups of the Salesian Family.[\[143\]](#) This availability should not be merely passive (waiting to be called on by others), but active (volunteering to take on responsibility).

## APPENDIX I

### HOW TO RUN A GOOD MEETING

#### A FEW PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

#### SOME IMPORTANT ELEMENTS IN A MEETING

1. The agenda must always be available and clearly defined; typed rather than hand-written; with a copy for each member; and preferably distributed before the meeting.
2. All members should be informed of the meeting
  - in good time;
  - with clear instructions of the purpose of the meeting;
  - avoiding last minute changes.
3. Meetings should start punctually:
  - members arriving in time for the call to order;
  - starting late annoys those who are punctual;
  - participants should know when the meeting will close.
4. Meetings should end at the time appointed:
  - members should seek to avoid wasting time;
  - members should be encouraged to act as persons with definite aims in view;
  - members should know the time they will be free to leave for home.
5. The atmosphere of the meeting should be frank and open:
  - with proper respect for all members;
  - with respect for the point of view of others;
  - with opportunity for each member to speak up;
  - with awareness of the importance of understanding matters well, without insisting on 'being right'.

6. There should be the minimum of formality; hence:

- meetings should be structured so that things can really get done;
- minutes should be simple and limited to essentials (legal language is not called for);
- copies should be kept of the reports, the liturgy, and documentation of activities, etc.
- there should be an archive for photographs, etc.

## INTEGRAL COMPONENTS OF MEETINGS

- \* prayer
- \* formation
- \* mutual sharing
- \* mission

### 1. PRAYER

- well prepared
- not hurried
- based on the Scriptures
- with periods of silence
- real prayer, not just 'prayers'

### 2. FORMATION based on the Regulations of Apostolic Life

Sources of formation material:

- the Salesian Bulletin
- Salesiani Cooperators magazine
- Rector Major's messages
- Discourses of the Holy Father
- Bishop's pastoral letters
- Books and articles of the Salesian spirit, Don Bosco, etc.

These sources should be used in a systematic manner, not simply as mere 'last-minute stopgaps'.

### 3. SHARING TOGETHER

- All must always be made welcome, not only the new arrivals.
- Members should be seated in a comfortable way, preferably not as in a classroom.
- Any excuses for absences should be received from those present.
- Special mention of the sick, the absentees, and for members with personal or family hardships.
- All members should be treated with the same courtesy.

### 4. MISSION APOSTOLATE

- Reports to be given on the apostolate.
- Assessment of each one's activities.
- Assistance for those with particular difficulties.
- Group planning for apostolic activities.
- Frequent checking on 'what needs our special attention'.
- Assessment, planning, more assessment.

## VARIABLE COMPONENTS OF MEETINGS

At times the following elements are possible:

- Invite a special speaker.
- Make use of videos or tape recorders.
- Listen to a report on a particular subject.
- Draw the members' attention to some new book or review.
- Discuss an approaching liturgical season.

- Organise the meeting with another Centre.
- Give young people an opportunity to voice their ideas.
- Group preparation for a special feast that is approaching.
- Celebrate a feast for some special event with a solemn liturgy.

It is not necessary to have something extraordinary at every meeting, but it is good to make the effort from time to time. It is important that such specialities be well planned and carried out with style.

## THE BEST WAY TO ENSURE A GOOD MEETING

Meetings can be structured and organised in whatever way that will make for success; but since we cannot expect infinite resourcefulness and creativity, the following points are generally advisable.

### 1. OPENING

- Prayer or Eucharistic celebration.
  - Minutes of the preceding meeting; matters arising from the minutes.
- (Personal greetings before the opening prayer rather than formal greeting after the prayer.)

### 2. MAIN PART OF THE MEETING

- formation
- planning and assessment of the apostolate
- special address specific to the meeting
- discussion of other matters to be attended to

### 3. CONCLUSION

- recommendations, special notices, announcements...
- date and matters for next meeting
- concluding prayer

### 4. DISPERSAL

- refreshments if possible

(Adapted from Cooperator meetings in Australia)

## CHAPTER VI

### NATURE AND PLANNING OF THE COOPERATOR'S APOSTOLATE

#### 27. Introduction

#### 28. Apostolate of the Cooperator

##### A. Personal apostolate

##### 1. Apostolic commitment

2. Zones of the individual apostolate. Social and political apostolate
  4. Apostolate of the Youth Club
  5. Apostolate of the local Church
  6. Apostolate of the media
  7. Apostolate of the defence of human values
  8. Apostolate of the family
  9. Apostolate of the sick and elderly Cooperators
  10. Apostolate of daily Christian witness
  11. Energising the ASC - a kind of apostolate

#### B. Group apostolate

1. Cooperators' activities
  2. Activities within the structures
  3. Public witness of certain Christian values at times neglected
  4. Group apostolate of the media
  5. Missionary apostolate; voluntary personal service
  6. Apostolate of promoting vocations
  7. Apostolate in ecclesial matters
29. Planning the Apostolate
- A. Necessity of planning
  - B. Planning of particular apostolic activities
  - C. Assessing the apostolate

## APPENDIX I

### EXAMPLES OF THE APOSTOLATE

#### 27. INTRODUCTION

Don Bosco wanted the Cooperators to be recognised among the Third Orders for their practical charity. He wanted them to be genuine apostles. This is echoed in the Italian title of the Regulations of Apostolic Life (Regulations for the Apostolic Life). Hence it is unthinkable that a Cooperator could not be involved in some sort of apostolic work.

Still, it could be asked what kind of apostolate are Cooperators involved in; in what particular area is their apostolate and ecclesial commitment to be found. This chapter clarifies what activities are proper to the apostolate of the Cooperators.

#### 28. THE APOSTOLATE OF THE COOPERATOR

##### 1. Apostolic commitment

The Cooperator can tackle this apostolic commitment in two ways: as an individual and as a member of a group of Cooperators who work together to carry out their apostolate.

##### A. The individual apostolate of the Cooperator.

###### 1. Apostolic commitment

In so far as the Cooperator is a Christian and a Catholic, there is the responsibility of nurturing the faith both personally and ecclesially.

Becoming a Cooperator makes this commitment even more specific, since with the Cooperator's Promise, there is the obligation to belong to an Apostolic Association whose precise scope is the profound concern for the young and the working classes.

The Cooperator, having assimilated the spirituality of *Da mihi animas*, should not overdo the individual apostolate, since the Cooperator's apostolate is carried out primarily in the duties of every-day living.<sup>[144]</sup> The Regulations of Apostolic Life list the various areas of apostolic involvement:

- \* the family;
- \* the spouses' matrimonial duties;
- \* living conditions and the work-place;
- \* social situations.

In fact, the Cooperator can claim to be always and everywhere an apostle (or at least be able to make this claim).

## 2. The boundaries of the individual apostolate of the Cooperator

The boundaries of the Cooperator's apostolic activities are vast, but the fact that the Regulations of Apostolic Life refer explicitly to certain areas makes it clear where the Cooperator must pay special attention in regard to the future of God's creatures. Thus a Cooperator cannot be indifferent to what happens in these human life situations.

This means that an integral part of the Cooperator's apostolate is to gain adequate information and a solid knowledge regarding these matters, in order to act intelligently, apostolically and 'Salesianly'. In this sense, it is opportune that close attention and study be given to articles 8-11 of the Regulations of Apostolic Life.

It is evident that the Cooperator's activities in these areas must be in full agreement with the Salesian charisma: The Cooperator's attention must focus closely on the environment and situation of the young and the working classes.

## 3. Social and political apostolate

These areas should be studied so that suitable suggestions may be made for solving whatever problems are noted. These suggestions need not be grandiose or dazzling, but none the less necessary.

The Cooperator should be aware that often what really matters is to influence structures rather than particular cases.

Consequently the Cooperator should seek to deal with organisations and structures that have general influence on society and in particular on the young and the working classes. These are the areas specific to the apostolate in the political and social fields. Active and direct political pressure calls for a certain personal talent, but this must not and cannot preclude the Cooperator (as an individual or a member of an association) from such a serious and incisive commitment in this important area. Unfortunately, in these days, the involvement in politics of many Christians, including Cooperators, is of little account. Perhaps the Cooperator's involvement will not be direct; but there are lots of ways to be politically forceful, and every Cooperator should feel obliged to do something in this area, according to personal capability. In the face of the great importance of this opportunity, it is emphasised that it is indispensable to have some influence where decisions are made. It is futile simply to wait for things to change for the better without making a serious personal effort with a qualified presence among the decision-makers. Mere regrets are of little avail and will achieve nothing.

## 4. The apostolate of youth clubs

Practical involvement in youth organisations is always close to the heart of every Salesian. Even at the individual level, Cooperators can seek involvement in this kind of work. For instance,

making their homes or other places available as meeting places for the young, or receiving-centres for various things that can be of help to them in need.

Another form of this apostolate for the individual Cooperator consists in being present in organised 'oratories' (youth clubs with religious content) in Salesian environments (parishes, houses, etc.). Occasionally the two forms can coexist or be united.

#### 5. The apostolate of the local Church

Parochial involvement is part of the Cooperator's vocation, especially in those activities that affect the recipients of the Salesian mission. Some of these activities could be catechesis, help for young people in trouble, preparation for marriage, etc., and of course assistance to the poor.

#### 6. The apostolate of the media

This is an apostolate the Cooperator should always have in mind. It is more than the publishing and distribution of good books and reviews; it includes, when possible, participation in the production and creation of such material. Cooperators involved in the media in any of the various levels have the opportunity to be modern Don Boscós. We all know how the mass media influence the young and the ordinary people. Hence the Regulations of Apostolic Life recommend involvement in social communication that creates cultures and preaches living standards to the public.<sup>[145]</sup> It is futile to simply lament our inability to be of influence in this area; especially if we just leave things in the hands of those who propose and incite values and life standards contrary to our convictions.

#### 7. The apostolate of the defence of human values

There are particular aspects that offend morality and good living, and at times are a profound affront to human dignity and the right to life. Such things as pornography, abortion, various forms of cohabitation, all have a very negative effect on the young; and to these could be added the various forms of exploiting the poor.

The Cooperator cannot simply take refuge in sterile criticism and useless condemnation (that is often counter-productive). Practical and positive action must be taken - action that is based on love and understanding and offers alternative values.

#### 8. Apostolate of the family

It is necessary that decent couples must be seen and looked up to as appropriate and attractive models of family life, and infinitely better than selfish and divided families. If their good qualities are not obvious, it will be difficult to recognise them as worthy of imitation. In these days, it would seem that the most important apostolate for the Cooperator, whether married or not, is to give witness of a good life within either the family or society, a life that is attractive because of its exceptional values that are seen in happiness that is truly genuine. Indeed, nothing can substitute the influence of the 'apostolate of good example'.

#### 9. The apostolate of Cooperators who are ill and elderly

Cooperators who are ill or elderly, home-bound or hospitalised, and unable to take part in apostolates that require outdoor activities, are still able to exercise a genuine apostolate. They can give wonderful Christian example of profound faith and prayerfulness, and an edifying acceptance of their physical disabilities.

Don Bosco used to say that the harvest was gathered at the end of life. It could be added that life's harvest was not gathered only after death, but also before, if the values are still actively lived out that were practised in the earlier years of life. In this way, with their example, the infirm and elderly can be of great help to those whose merely marginal life values impede their peace of mind and happiness, and also to the young who are chasing the winds of pseudo-values.

#### 10. The apostolate of day-to-day witness

The genuine Cooperator knows that it is not important to look like an apostle, but rather to really be an apostle. It is not a case of carrying out apostolic activities but a willingness to find a

thousand ways, in daily living, to be practical about it. These days there is a general tendency to worship mere action. People speak of 'being engaged in': 'being engaged in politics', 'being engaged in charitable works', etc. This attitude gives the importance to pure activism, in which the sense of apostolicity is missing. Such 'mere activism' flows from a reduced vision of things and is blind to surrounding situations and circumstances. It can happen that even a Cooperator can make the mistake of preferring action to essence - and the consequence is hardly noticed. After a while, such people become wearied and seek out other experiences, just like those who have to keep doing things and are incapable of interior depth, and have the need to be always turning to new things.

Thus there are those who begin well, make the Promise, and then... gradually fall away..

#### 11. Energising the ASC - a kind of apostolate

The various forms of apostolate must necessarily include the important element of energising the Association itself. This involves a specific kind of formation and naturally calls for careful and dynamic preparation.

It is indispensable that this activity be carried out in the best way possible, and leaders have no need to seek other forms of apostolate for the fulfilment of the Cooperator vocation: it is sufficient for Cooperators to dedicate themselves earnestly to this service to the ASC and other Cooperators. It is a magnificent choice of apostolate!

#### B. Group apostolate

What has been said regarding the individual apostolate can also apply to the apostolate of Cooperators as members of the ASC in collaboration with other Cooperators.

It is important to note that when Cooperators act as an ASC group, they are not acting simply as private persons, but in the name of the Church. The ASC is a public Association of the faithful, and hence its members involve the Church in whatever they do as an ecclesial group.

It is important to be well aware of this fact, and thus avoid errors that could have negative repercussions against the Church.

#### 1. Activities of Cooperators

Although the ASC does not speak explicitly of activities that are proper to Cooperators, this is no reason why the Cooperators cannot organise apostolic works and human development, either at Centre level or involving one or more provincial levels. Obviously this always refers to activities that are apostolic and not for monetary profit. When an activity is judged good and suitable to be undertaken, a careful assessment must be made as to whether the Cooperators will be able to carry it through, and not have to close it down later for want of personnel able to continue its management.

When the ASC wishes to assume personal responsibility for an activity, care must be taken that the activity is in keeping with the ethos of the Association, and arrangements made for the undertaking to become a registered body. The requirements of both the civil and ecclesiastical law should be studied; and in accordance with our family spirit, the local SDBs and FMAs should be consulted to make sure there is no doubling up of the proposed activity, and no infringements of any kind.

There are already many gratifying instances of Cooperators who are competently carrying out educative tasks that used to be done by SDBs and FMAs and were transferred to ASC members. Naturally such members are well qualified for such work and doing a fine job. The ASC abounds with such possibilities. Of course such members should be confident that the work will be continued - and this is often a problem. Considerable thought and good judgement are necessary before taking the plunge.

#### 2. Working structures.

Both group and individual apostolates are generally carried out according to structures already in vogue and preferred by the Regulations of Apostolic Life.

It is important to note the particular order of preference the Regulations set up for the activity contemplated:[\[146\]](#)

1. Civil structures; 2. Ecclesial structures; 3. Salesian structures.

The Regulations of Apostolic Life expect the Cooperator involved in a group or individual apostolic activity to act primarily within the structure of civil authorities; then the ecclesial requirements and finally the Salesian. This order of preference is clearly the prerequisite of the Regulations.

It is certainly essential that in the civil structures the presence of Christian values are seen to be genuinely applied. It is in these civil structures that Cooperators (in group or individual commitments) must give the priority to what is coherent with 'genuine Salesians in the world'.

3. Public witness of certain Christian principles that are sometimes ignored

At times, in certain regions or nations, the Association may be called on to witness to Christian principles that in one way or another are rejected.

The Regulations of Apostolic Life note this possibility<sup>[147]</sup>: when they refer to the directives of the local Church to promote and defend human and Christian principles. Furthermore, the ASC enlightens and urges each Cooperator to carry out responsibly all individual commitments in society.<sup>[148]</sup>

It is also possible that even at world level the Association may interest itself in similar situations and be called on to give a clear Christian witness to these principles. These interventions will be an expression of the ASC apostolate. In some cases this witness could be effected by being present at certain manifestations.

4. Group apostolate in the media

The mass-media present a special field for the Cooperators' apostolate, especially as a group activity. They are called on to take on suitable initiatives such as the spreading of good literature, involvement in radio and television programmes, and journalism. These activities generally call for the collaboration and talents of a number of persons.

The Association produces a good number of magazines that are forwarded to individuals and various bodies and associations connected with the Cooperators and the Salesian world in general. We should seek to further this activity with articles in local newspapers and periodicals and other informative means. This is an area still requiring exploration by the Association.

5. Missionary apostolate - volunteers

There is also the possibility for Cooperators to volunteer for missionary work abroad. Married couples or individuals may travel to mission lands with the help of their Cooperator Centres or Provinces. These days, volunteer work in under-developed countries is a well known activity. Perhaps it is time for us to discuss the idea of a special Cooperators' 'Volunteer Group' to assist in evangelisation and human development in mission lands.

At the moment there are similar groups such as the Mamma Margarita Workshops, who organise activities for collecting funds for the missions.

Activities of this kind can be carried out by individuals, but succeed much better when undertaken by a group.

Our apostolic zeal can find a wonderful outlet by seeking material help (personal or group) funding charitable activities and sustaining works that belong to the Salesian missionary endeavours.

6. Apostolate for promoting vocations

Very dear to the heart of Don Bosco was the apostolate of promoting vocations to the priesthood and the religious life. When such a call is personal, it is best that a Cooperator deal with it at personal level.

The apostolate in general, however, is tackled with greater efficiency by a group rather than by an individual - and better still, by a Centre. Indeed, at times candidates need to have financial support, especially in mission countries; and occasionally even our 'home' vocations require help that can be more appropriately given by the Centre than by a single Cooperator.

Vocational help to a candidate aspiring to be a Cooperator claims the involvement of everyone without exception, both individual, group or Centre. More specific information on this matter is available in chapter IX of this document: Proficiency and expansion.

## 7. Ecclesial apostolate

The Cooperator offers responsible collaboration to the bishops and parish priests.<sup>[149]</sup> The official Commentary explains that this expression stresses the new kind of relationship between the lay and ecclesiastic members of the Church promoted by Vatican II. It is no longer a relationship between the active clergy and the passive laity. It is a responsible relationship between two active bodies each with a specific ministry and office: the bishops and pastors as presidents, and the laity as responsible collaborators offering their specific competence and gifts of the Spirit.<sup>[150]</sup>

This collaboration can extend to all areas; but the Cooperator will give preference to what regards the young and the working classes. It is certain, however, that Cooperators, being members of the Church, cannot be indifferent to the commitment they owe to the ecclesial apostolate.

## 29. Planning the apostolate

We know how changeable human nature is. People deal with this tendency by scheduling their work so as to carry out the greatest number of activities in the shortest possible time. This methodology, this strategy, makes their goals the more easily achievable .

### A. Planning is necessary

The Salesian Cooperator must accept the logic of careful planning, and will only succeed in carrying out an efficacious apostolate by such planning at both individual and group levels. This in no way negates what is affirmed regarding the innumerable daily occasions demanding apostolic action.

It is indispensable to plan the best way for carrying out the apostolate one has chosen to help. If, for in stance, a Cooperator wishes to assist in some parish activity, the first thing necessary is to analyse the situation carefully, and draw up a careful program of times and tasks necessary to begin and continue the work. In Spain the Cooperators have a famous motto: No more Cooperators lacking formation; no more Cooperators without an apostolate. There is much wisdom in this slogan, and if Cooperators do not programme their apostolate, that is all many of them risk being left with: nothing else but a simple slogan.

### B. Planning apostolic activities

Quite often planning apostolic activities will entail some activity or other already included in the particular work or zone. This does not mean that there is no need to proceed with the planning; indeed, in this case planning is even more important and necessary, for it will bring to light certain aspects that have greater need of attention, and thus need further thought and more appropriate solutions for problems encountered.

This small effort will greatly help in the practical work of the apostolate in the many occasions that crop up in our daily lives.

It should be remembered, of course, that the planning of the apostolate is more meaningful when it is a group occupation. Problems call for solutions regarding their nature, the members appointed to deal with them, the method chosen, the means used, the beneficiaries, and so on; and such matters are better dealt with by a group. The only successful way to focus on the objectives and the means to achieve them. is by proper planning.

### C. Assessing the apostolate

Meetings should be held in each Centre at least once a month. They will help to assess the apostolate with accuracy, and encourage the continuance of the particular activities. Indeed, the sharing of all the various areas of the apostolate carried out by the different members of the Centre will make the meetings more lively and attractive, since discussions will deal with practical living and not with merely abstract theories.<sup>[151]</sup>

When the apostolate is a team event, assessment is more than ever necessary for better co-ordination and continual revision of the work of each member's contribution to the objectives chosen in the planning.

## APPENDIX I

Examples of apostolic activities

Possible apostolic activities, areas and commitments

Catechesis in parish, school, family.

Formation work for groups, associations, movements.

Family apostolate, pre-marriage and catechetical help, Hogares Don Bosco, educating the young.

Apostolic activities in educational and scholastic centres, educating for freedom and love, etc.

Social work (charitable assistance, medical, cultural [literacy], care of the sick).

Help for 'street kids', education for the poor, raising living standards of the masses, the fringe-dwellers, the drug addicts..

Mass media, journalism, spreading of good books, radio, TV, preparation of programmes for these media.

Pastoral work, promotion of vocations, financial help for 'indigent vocations', prayer groups for vocations.

Helping the missions financially, practical presence in missionary countries, local missionary apostolate.

Socio-political, mayoral, governmental, community influence; education for the common good, study of the social teaching of the Church.

Personal and group prayer, days of recollection, spiritual retreats, sacramental gatherings.

Parochial service and ministry, ministry of the Word, the Eucharist, Parish Council, liturgical preparation, singing.

Diocesan activities, diocesan Council, Caritas organisation..

Parish youth work, school camps, help with free time, recreation.

Youth club activities run by Cooperators or in collaboration with others (parish, institutes, etc.).

## **PART II**

### **CHARACTERISTIC WAYS OF ACTING SO THAT THE MAGNIFICENT EXPERIENCE BEGUN BY DON BOSCO MIGHT BE PRESERVED AND DEVELOPED**

#### CHAPTER VII

##### HINTS FOR THE ANIMATION OF GROUPS

SECTION A THE 'WHY'

SECTION B THE 'HOW'

#### CHAPTER VIII FIDELITY

#### CHAPTER IX THE ASSOCIATION BEARING FRUIT AND GROWING

#### CHAPTER VII

##### **HINTS FOR THE ANIMATION OF GROUPS**

###### SECTION A

###### THE THREE DYNAMIC ELEMENTS WHICH MAKE A GROUP WORK

30. Premise

31. The three elements and their necessity.

32. The three dynamic elements in the Regulations of Apostolic Life

33. FORMATION

34. ACTION

- A. The need to be involved
- B. Action alone is not enough
- C. Programmed action
- D. Action always has a purpose

## 35. EVALUATION

- A. Why we evaluate
- B. Evaluation provides the basis for programming

## 36. Conclusion

APPENDIX I: EVALUATION OF A CENTRE BY ITS MEMBERS

APPENDIX II: EVALUATION OF THE COORDINATOR

APPENDIX III: EVALUATION AT COUNCIL LEVEL

APPENDIX IV: Evaluating the work of a Delegate  
As regards the Formation  
As regards the mission  
As regards the organisation  
As regards Salesianity

APPENDIX V: PROGRAMMING, EXAMPLE 1: THE "ANNUAL PROVINCIAL PLAN"

APPENDIX VI: PROGRAMMING, EXAMPLE 2: "PLAN FOR PROVINCIAL ANIMATION"

## 30. PREMISE

Daily experience teaches us that Cooperators can easily forget the things that make their group work better and cause its activity to be valid and adequate. In this way, it can sometimes happen that a Cooperator group/Centre loses consistency, exhausts its vitality, and ends up disappearing

This Chapter proposes to examine the elements that make a group work, and assure that it will be dynamic, and lasting (Cf Section A), and to offer some practical things to do to animate a group. These keep in mind a number of psychological and educative aspects (Cf Section B)

## 31. THE THREE DYNAMIC ELEMENTS THAT MAKE A GROUP "HAPPEN"

The three essential elements for any group/Centre to function well, if carried out regularly and systematically, can assure their vitality and continuing existence are;

1. FORMATION
  2. ACTION – PROGRAMMING
  3. EVALUATION
- in continual relationship.

### ***A. Necessity of the presence of all three together***

These three dynamic elements are indispensable, because without their mutual presence the group sooner or later will fail.

In fact, sometimes one finds groups with fine formation programs, which succeed also in developing a strong apostolic commitment. Yet even a group of this kind often finishes up losing its vitality, little by little tiring and falling apart. Their could be varying reasons for this: friction, antagonism, conflicting personal interests (always a trap in any organisation at any level), which come to occupy centre stage. At other times, interest could flag, so that members begin to fall away from the group, which then breaks up and is lost. Before leaders become aware of what is happening, the situation is already beyond remedy and the life of the group is irreparably compromised.

All this happens because there is no evaluation. If in fact this third element is lacking, or not in an ongoing relationship with the other two, then we are unaware of the necessity of facing internal or

external problems, and the group, even if it had been well formed under various aspects, will finish by breaking up.

But evaluation alone cannot guarantee the progress of a group: the same sort of thing happens if one of the other elements is lacking, because all three elements are equally necessary. The THREE DIMENSIONS ought to be present together in every group, in every organism which wants to survive the passing of time.

## 32. THE THREE DYNAMIC ELEMENTS IN THE REGULATIONS OF APOSTOLIC LIFE

RAL dedicates the whole of Chapter II to apostolic activity (= dynamic element 'action'), and the whole of Chapter V to formation (= dynamic element, 'formation'), but these two dimensions constantly re-appear in the Regulations.

The Regulations also propose moments of spiritual audit during the highpoints of the year: not only the monthly Day of Recollection and the annual Retreat, but also the sacramental- and prayer-life which is capable to bring the Cooperator to a personal audit with the Lord, always present in human life (= dynamic element, programming)

RAL introduces the programming element when it speaks<sup>[152]</sup> of the principal duties of Councils at the various levels, even if it does not do so explicitly, from the moment that it is only through programming that they can "assure...the functioning of the Association so that its objectives may be achieved, (convening) meetings, assemblies and congresses, foster and co-ordinate ...formative and apostolic activities...maintain bonds of union with the Salesian Congregation and with other members of the Salesian Family"...etc. (44.1)

RAL therefore has in mind the three dimensions, even if naturally, it does not set them out as we do here, speaking only of the animation of groups, nor does it concern itself with establishing their mutual relationship. But it is not enough just to know about them: they should become constant and normal practice at the local, Provincial, Regional and International level, knowing that only in this way one can expect to work seriously at whatever level

## 33 THE DYNAMIC ELEMENT – FORMATION

Formation is considered here insofar as it is an essential element for a group to function; formation as a response to the perceived needs of the group's life, or of the individual in the life of the group.

We simply presume that basic formation is happening. Here we are considering the formation which makes one able to respond to the demands of living of the group and of the activity it carries out.

If, for example, the Cooperator who belongs to a group which is dedicated to catechesis, becomes aware that the group neglects the ongoing formation and renewal of the members of the group in the matter of their apostolate, that they are not doing the job satisfactorily, will rapidly become dissatisfied and discouraged personally, as will their students. Formation needs attention here.

One can become aware of the same thing in the life of the group. If relationships among the members are not going well, and one becomes aware of the need of doing something about it, using the techniques of group dynamics – something which can be an enriching experience of Christian life and family spirit, it is necessary to have already developed a formation process specifically for this.

The same thing can be said regarding all the aspects, dimensions, fields of action. It is important to be aware that if each Cooperator and the Centres are not formed according to perceived requirements, whether regarding apostolate, or the life of the group, by means of serious evaluation, the group or even the Centre becomes very fragile.

## THE DYNAMIC ELEMENT – ACTION

ACTION is understood as meaning the activity of the members of the Association with individual or group.

#### A. Action always has a purpose

Human groups come together to do something together. In other words, people act with an objective in mind. This is fundamental

Coming together with no purpose will not last long. The same thing happens in our Association: we come together to achieve something together, or to be supported by being together. Meeting for some sort of theoretical formation, which does not result in action or in concrete goal to achieve, simply cannot last. Inevitably, people will begin to ask why they are meeting, what concrete result is being achieved, why in fact does the group exist at all?

#### B. We have to get involved

For a group to exist it is necessary to involve all of its members in some sort of activity, and to keep up each one's interest in that activity.

It is well known that generally speaking, people who leave a group are those who do not feel involved, or who are not in fact involved in some activity or other. It is necessary for each one to feel part of the group, so that they can contribute to some activity in a real and constructive way. This necessarily means that each one should be esteemed, and should want to make a personal contribution.

#### C. Action alone is not enough

But action cannot ignore the other two dynamic elements. It cannot go on without constant contact with the other two essential elements in the life of the individual and of the group.

Evaluation, strictly carried out, reveals both the usefulness as well as the level of satisfaction found in acting, so that it can be improved in future programming.

This applies also the single activities of the group, to the meetings, to the sacramental and prayer life, to the functioning of the Council, and so on.

If activities are carried out without reflecting on them, without a strict connection and interchange with evaluation and programming, and the subsequent formation process, very quickly dissatisfaction will set in.

#### D. Programmed Action

When all is said and done, there must be ACTION, but PROGRAMMED ACTION, continually evaluated and re-programmed, at least annually.

Where there is no programming, you cannot have proper evaluation whether personally, or group-wise

Programming which is well done and put into practice is the key for efficient action. It includes an examination of the present situation, and the analysis of the basic factors, the definition of the project to be carried out in the light of that analysis, the search for possible solutions so as to arrive at an action-programme to adopt.

### 35. THE DYNAMIC ELEMENT - EVALUATION

The dynamic element, evaluation which you could also call DISCERNMENT is illustrated in the Bible by the parable of the king who considers the strength of his forces vis-à-vis those of his enemy, before deciding his next move.

We are dealing here with an element frequently overlooked in the Church, as well as the A.S.C. People sometimes fear evaluation because it can expose our weaknesses, so that it becomes easier to let events carry us along, rather than submit to the fatigue of an evaluation of our forces and a change of pace when that is seen to be necessary.

But this is the key to improvement, to continuing renewal. At group level, not unlike the struggle for life, what is not renewed, dies.

#### A. The object of evaluation

Evaluation requires a certain maturity and we must not let ourselves be overcome by the fear of undergoing one. It is clear that an evaluation does not imply or consist of a comprehensive

judgement on the person as such, as if we would want to discuss their capability or merit, but simply the action of the group altogether, according to the dynamics of “see, judge, act”.

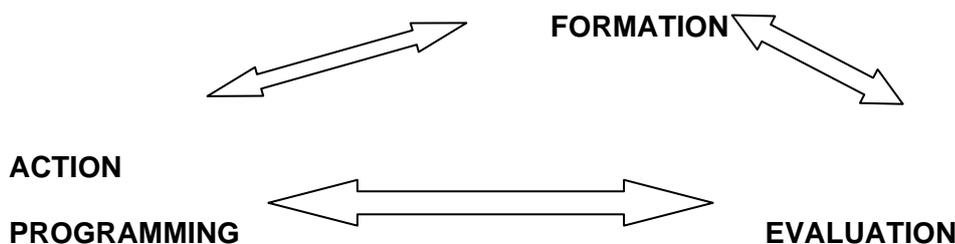
Just as a doctor examines a patient to seek the cause of the ailment so as to decide what to do, so one who evaluates searches for the good and the bad in the way the system is running. For example at group level, so as to be able to improve what is not working well, or to strengthen and give a boost to what is already going well.

#### B. Evaluation basis for new programming

In this way the dynamic element of evaluation prevents programming being divorced from reality. If the evaluation is effective, one can take in hand the positive elements, bearing in mind the negative ones, with the causes and motives of both one and the other. The new program then will have some new elements which will lead to growth; this will prevent the group from exhausting its energies, in fact it will stimulate them, increase them so as to be able to meet the needs and objectives which gave rise to it.

### 36. CONCLUSION

Here is a graphic representation of the relationship and interaction, which needs to exist between the three elements for the life of the group.



Formation, action, evaluation – programming are three inter-related realities. Each one influences the other. Keeping the three in relationship will guarantee the necessary base for adequate programming, and attaining of the objectives of any group.

All of this relates to the ASC at each level of its journey towards ongoing renewal. The absence of these three dimensions or even of one of them would result in a lack of vitality in the Association, and in the Centres would lead inevitably, sooner or later, to the group's breaking up

## APPENDIX I

### ***(i) EVALUATION OF A CENTRE CARRIED OUT BY ITS MEMBERS***

1. Has the Centre grown this year? In numbers? In quality?
2. How is this growth shown? List the elements
3. If 'no', what are reasons?
4. How has the Council functioned? Does it meet periodically? Does it have a program? Does it animate? Does it follow-up Cooperators in difficulty, or who have fallen away?
5. Which of the year's activities come to be evaluated? At individual level? At group level?
6. Are these activities the result of a programme, or because 'we have always done this'?
7. How have the formation programs for members with the promise gone? The initial formation for aspirants? What was done? Who carried it out?
8. What are the strong points of the Centre? The weak ones?
9. What has been the Centre's contribution to, and its participation in, the life of the Province?

10. What influence has the Centre had in its area, has it been present in the political and social life? What are the main areas of its activity?
11. Does a detailed program and an assessment of it exist in detail?
12. If not, why not?
13. Now to a new programming based on the strong and weak points, which have emerged from this reflection!

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## APPENDIX II

### **(ii) EVALUATION OF THE COORDINATOR**

1. Has the C. understood the role, the duties, the specific responsibilities?
2. Does the C. call meetings of the Centre at the programmed times? Occasionally? When asked?
3. Does the local Council meet according to a set program? Occasionally? Only on request?
4. Communications with the Provincial Council – frequent? Occasional? Rare?
5. Sends information on the life and activity of the Centre: always? Rarely? Never?
6. In relating to the various lay, ecclesial and Salesian organisations in its are, does the C represent the Centre directly, through others? Does not?
7. Does the C. prepare and chair the meetings personally? Together with the Council? Through the Delegate? Or improvises there and then?
8. Relations with the members of the Centre are continuous? Occasional? Non-existent?
9. Does the C create a climate of calm and enthusiasm in the meetings and activities of the Centre? Does she/he remember important dates and events – birthdays, tragic moments, etc?
10. Does the C. esteem each member of the Centre?

## APPENDIX III

### EVALUATION OF THE COUNCIL

The Monthly Meeting is held:

on a fixed day

with sufficient time to carry out the business of the day

with a fixed agenda

at a time previously advised.

The Meeting:

is called and presided over by the Coordinator

sufficient time is set aside for prayer

and formation

During the meeting:

the atmosphere is truly Salesian

there is mutual support, serenity, no rivalry

decisions are made co-responsibly

In general, the meetings have the aim:  
of putting into practice articles 44 and 45 of RAL  
of studying and adapting the programs prepared by the higher levels  
of planning  
of evaluating programs and activities  
of examining the current situation of the group  
of assuring the fidelity of the group to RAL

Meeting also serves to get a deeper understanding of one's personal duties.

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## APPENDIX IV

### EVALUATION OF A DELEGATE

Formation:

1. Does he work according to the annual program of formation?
2. Is the formation offered mainly spiritual ( a good exhortation), or apostolic (aimed at creating a commitment in the Church, in society, in the Salesian Project?)
3. Is the Salesian Spirit assimilated so as to be able to be applied to life?
4. Is Salesian loving-kindness taught via her/his attitude and personal interest in each member of the group?

Mission:

1. Is contact with the Cooperators limited to meetings only?
2. Does he/she inspire apostolic enthusiasm in the Cooperators?

Organisation:

1. Is the Delegate truly part of the group, taking part in the meetings with well-prepared formative input?
2. Does the Delegate contribute to the running of the Association, as Delegate, without interfering in the responsibilities of the other members of Council?
3. Is the Delegate perceived as animator and formator?

Salesianity:

1. Does the Delegate live in a Salesian way, and transmit Salesianity by her/his presence and way of acting?
  2. Does the Delegate favour communication between the Salesian community and the Association?
- 

Note: Appendices V and VI of the original have been omitted from the English translation. They concern evaluation and programming at Provincial level.

It is assumed that Provincial Councils would be capable of preparing their own instruments.

If not, see pp 137, 138 of the Italian original, or contact the Central Delegate.

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## CHAPTER VII

### SECTION B

#### *Sezione 1.02 ELEMENTS OF GROUP DYNAMICS*

##### *Premise*

##### *The makeup of a group*

- A. The internal dynamics of a group
- B. The external dynamics of a group

##### *Important Principals of Group Dynamics*

- 1) The Presence of an Animator
- 2) Three important phenomena
  - A. The interpersonal reaction phase
  - B. When the group turns in on the animator
  - C. When the group comes to centre on the group
- 3) Tensions within a group
- 4) The need for genuine interpersonal relationships
  - A. Comprehension – acceptance
  - B. Communication
  - C. Collaboration
    - 1. The attitude of the animator towards the group
    - 2. The attitude of the group towards the animator
- 5) Techniques of Participation
- 6) Meetings – Discussions
- 7) How the animator carries out his role
  - A. Ideas for meetings
  - B. Things to be aware of in the process of animation
    - 1. Concerning oneself
    - 2. Concerning the members of the Group
    - 3. Concerning objectives and themes
    - 4. Concerning external conditioning

### C. Elements which show one's capacity for animating

#### APPENDIX ONE: Some types of meeting

### 37. PREMISE

This second part proposes to present some psychological and educational elements which dictate how groups operate. Two things need to be said at once, in order to understand the point of view from which they arise, and from which they should be read.

1. The matters treated of are not unambiguous, nor universally accepted. No one principle is more 'sure' than another.
2. The things set out here should not be understood as "rules" or strict norms, which will of themselves guarantee the good working of a group. They are rather valid tools to help animate a group in practice. They are general guidelines.

The purpose here is to furnish some concrete and easily – accessible pointers, which along with our experience, can be a useful help to carrying out the task of animator.

This means that it is senseless to think that to know and be able to use to perfection the psychological and educational mechanics of a group is a guarantee of good animation. Bear in mind first of all that there are always those "variables" – individual and collective – in the situation in which one finds oneself from time to time, and that also the animator has her/his own personality.

The principal scope an animator has is not that of "creating" a group, but of animating it.

Therefore the essential is not knowing what, but how. There are animators who know that animation means developing those beginnings, that potential that is in people, who do not always know how to develop and nourish them. Then there are animators who have the theory at their fingertips, but their way of acting is totally negative. Then there are those animators who are convinced that act by common consensus, but the reality is quite different.

Certainly, many animators have been fascinated by certain techniques to the point of using them like a magic formula. But it just not like that.

The animator of Cooperators knows the techniques, but also knows when and how to use them.

In this chapter we will try to present certain key elements of group dynamics, insisting mostly, if not almost exclusively, on the more important concrete mechanisms which can rule the life of a group rather than on more theoretical matters.

### 38. THE MAKEUP OF A GROUP

Any group comes together and lasts for two fundamental reasons, one psychological, the other sociological.

Psychologically, the group comes together to satisfy the needs and expectations of each person. Psychologically, in order to meet some need outside of itself. Both motivations exist in any group, but one generally predominates. This in fact happens in the ASC, despite the fact that being a member is the result of a free choice.

#### A. The internal dynamics of the group

The group exists and functions to the extent that each one sees it as satisfying their needs and expectations. When this happens, the group has a strong sense of 'belonging' in itself, and among its members. The needs and expectations may also arise from a sense of vocation, as is the case with Cooperators.

The cohesion of the group is based on the sense of belonging, and follows on from regular participation in its activities. The capacity of the group to satisfy needs and expectations of the individual, its cohesion, the way authority is exercised, etc., give rise to a certain style of group. However, the general principle remains the same: a group functions adequately as such only and

on condition that each member – animator included – feel that it satisfies their needs and personal expectations.

#### B. The external dynamics of the group

No group exists in the abstract, but in a very real social context, in the case of the Cooperator also an ecclesial context, differing widely, which has its influence not only on the individual, but also on the group itself. The group is constantly being required to take into account the demands of the outside environment, and to respond to it, keeping in balance its own internal dynamics. It would be mistaken for a group to close in on itself, on its own needs. Having to live in contact with reality, needing in fact to be able to respond to all kinds of demands coming from the social and ecclesial environment, it is clear that the internal dynamics of a group will be constantly adapting and renewing themselves, a fact the animator must bear in mind.

Every human group is made up of relationships, and these can cause conflict and tensions, but they can also help the maturing process. This is why the psychologists have developed group dynamic techniques

### **39. PRINCIPAL MEANINGS OF GROUP DYNAMICS**

- A. Knowledge of the specific phenomena of small groups, and of the rules which govern them.
- B. Methods of intervention with individuals in the group situation, in order to bring about “change” in the personality or profile of the group. In this second case, one carries out a therapeutic function.

These two meanings help us understand that there exists a true possibility of intervening and influencing the behaviour of individuals and groups, and so help them run better, to grow and mature. In the bad sense, one can see here the occasion for group control.

### **40. THE PRESENCE OF AN ANIMATOR**

It should be noted well that in every human group, as soon as it comes together, “leaders” appear at once. It is also true that any human group wishing to have a dynamic life and aspires to a certain vitality, needs to be animated, so that inside the group there needs to function continuously a stimulus-mechanism, an awakening, an opening to new horizons. When leaders are not good animators, the group dozes off. The truth is, every group gets the leaders it deserves, that it is capable of producing.

Christian formation and service groups are not exempt from this law, and so they need to constantly reflect, become aware of what is going on whether inside or outside the group, so as to be able to go on renewing itself.

### **41. THREE IMPORTANT PHENOMENA**

Inside any group things habitually occur which the experts know and describe, and the knowledge of which is useful for a group animator. One can observe that when a group is in active relationship, the following phases occur:

- A. interpersonal reaction. This consists in the fact that the members reflect each other, and via the reaction and behaviour of others, can understand their own behaviour and modify it.
- B. polarisation of the group members towards the animator or leader, who can unite in his own person the expectations of all, as a model of behaviour. Sometimes the animator, especially if imposed, can be rejected. It is important to know how to live one’s authority.

- C. the group centred on the group, accompanied habitually by aggression and defensiveness among the members, by the verbalisation of conflicts, of chain reactions according to the notions, the inclinations of spontaneous sub-groups.

#### **42. TENSIONS WITHIN THE GROUP**

Every group has to face certain fundamental problems, which can threaten its existence, its operation, and its efficiency. For this reason one must try to achieve an adequate identification of the members with the group, so as to form a mature “us” which gives rise to a deep sense of belonging.

However, even if it is going well, every group has to face difficulties, and tensions, which arise within it.

*1. Some may arise from the fact that the organisation of the group may be seen as something which reduces personalities to a common denominator, and takes no account of the legitimate aspirations of the individual.*

*2. Others may originate in possible differences concerning the purpose of the group, how certain people see it, and how ‘visible’ they are in the organisation.*

*3. A third group of tensions may arise when the group is immature, centred on the egos of the members, of their wish to dominate.*

*4. Many tensions arise from the way authority is exercised by the animator. Among present day religious structures, not a few are still organised about a concept of authority which follow a model of paternal authority which is attributed to a person who is put before the others, and “guides” and “animates” them because they are considered practically incapable of guiding themselves, of deciding, of collaborating in the search for the good of the individual and the group. The attitude that arises from this is called “paternalistic”. This does not only depend from the persons who assume this style of behaviour, but very often is conditioned by the very structure of the organisation.*

*The Cooperators have suffered, and still suffers, from this style of authority. This is why good group dynamics are so necessary.*

#### **43. THE NECESSITY OF AUTHENTIC INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS.**

One might ask then, what is the best method of intervention one may use, in the context described already, to get the best value from what psychology has to offer.

Experience, as well as scientific enquiry, shows that the one way to live dynamic of a group authentically, and to overcome the tensions that may arise in its life, is the creation of a system of interpersonal relationships, which being authentic, makes communication possible in all directions, and at the same time make easier the establishment of a system of group animation able to promote cohesion or efficiency. There are three interrelated aspects to be taken into account.

- Comprehension – acceptance
- Communication
- Collaboration

Comprehension – acceptance

Everyone has a self-concept, and through this we see reality, we judge the merit of what we do, and what others do. As a result, we tend to accept and assimilate those experiences that fit in with this self-concept. On the other hand, we tend to distort, deny, refuse those experiences and behaviours that do not readily fit that frame.

Defence mechanisms, as they are called, create a kind of interpersonal relationship that result in an attitude we could call “diplomatic”, by which each one tends to avoid those things that could cause discomfort, by working alone, so as to avoid confronting others.

There is however another way of doing it based on authentic personal relationships. The problem is these do not come automatically, they must be built up. The way to do this is to put into practice certain psychological teachings without which working together in a group becomes difficult if not impossible

The possibility of establishing truly authentic human relationships is strictly tied to the capacity to offer and receive neutral feedback.

Feedback is the verbal or non-verbal reply others offer concerning a person’s conduct. The value-free response is that by which, whilst expressing freely and spontaneously one’s thoughts or one’s feelings, we do not express – even interiorly – a judgement, positive or negative, on the person before us.

Getting into contact with another person, and in the face of his/her behaviour, whatever it may be, being capable of “sending back” a reply, verbal or no, which is frank and sincere, without its carrying any judgement on the person, means communicating unconditionally with that person.

A part of our behaviour, reasoning, attitudes, stands, even when they are more or less rational, are only reactions or counter-reactions to the fundamentally critical atmosphere in which we find ourselves, which makes us feel insecure and which brings us to defend ourselves, and take fixed positions. Only with difficulty will we find a valid solution unless we stop pretending that the others be the way our schemes tell us they should be, and unless we give up the rigidity we show in the face of the need to change something in ourselves. It is simply not possible to educate or animate in the context of a human relationship unless we are completely open and ready to be changed by that relationship.

The capacity for dialogue is strictly dependant on how secure we feel within ourselves with the accompanying lack of the need to defend ourselves. The more defensive our attitude, the less capacity we will have for creating the conditions for getting feedback – objective and value-free feedback.

The more open our attitudes, the less critical and defensive, the more others will drop their defensive postures.

#### A climate for growing

Human maturation and the growth of the group can proceed only in a climate in which there is progressively growing the capacity:

- to give and receive reactions – non critical ones;
- to feel (and help others to feel ) as our own, the feelings, the ideas, the values that human experience offers us (without masks, or formalism);
- to be open to new values, attitudes and feelings, and help others to be similarly open;
- to know how to evaluate with serenity and objectivity (and help others do the same) new ideas, attitudes, and to know how to take risks when we think something is worth trying, leaving to others however the full freedom to accept it in their own way.

We may conclude this discussion saying that an attitude of comprehension – acceptance necessarily includes mutual communications of the fundamental element, unconditional acceptance and esteem.

Without doubt every animator will feel the urgency of reflecting on what has been said here and this will certainly help her/him to understand the reasons for past failures.

## Communication

Communication is another element, which may lead to further discoveries, which will help in the task of animation.

By communication is meant a procedure, which puts people in contact with each other, and consists of transmitting from one to another an idea, some information, a state of mind. Communication is a relationship between people, a contact which aims at helping others know something.

The fundamental condition for any communication between people, are authentic interpersonal relationships.

When people show and receive mutual esteem, other values can be freely communicated and properly received. If basic communication is lacking, various defensive behaviours will arise, and any matter, ever so simple and undemanding, runs the risk of being deformed, distorted, or even ignored or denied.

There are other matters concerning communication touching on the suitability or the very possibility of communication.

The members of a group tend to feel emarginated and unsure of themselves when there is not easy communication of ideas and sentiments (you don't know what the animator thinks, who does not know what the others are thinking).

When a changed of attitude or behaviour needs to be brought about, the formal and informal occasions of communication must be multiplied.

A member of a group collaborates and renders more when he/she feels they have full access to the information regarding them, particularly when it is a matter of ones person or role.

A group feels more united and efficient when the members feel they have a say in all the elements, which influence decisions and directions.

If the lines of communication, of personal encounter are reduced, the possibility of information being passed along is reduced, which tends to isolate the group members among themselves.

### C. Collaboration

The third element making for effective communication is collaboration. Here the manner of exercising authority is at stake.

Groups will experience difficulties, not only because of specific and contingent circumstances, but related to the very nature of the authority of the animator. We all know that dependence on another tends to inhibit spontaneous conduct.

The more authority comes to be seen as domination, to the same extent the liberty and authenticity of communication is inhibited, and so much more the members tend to dump the responsibility on the animator, and take an attitude of gregarious passivity in reacting. To avoid this polarisation it is important to pay attention to the attitude of the animator towards the group and vice-versa.

#### I The attitude of the animator to the group.

Acceptance and unconditional esteem of the animator regarding the group means that he believes it to be capable of responsibility, capable of fidelity, capable of constructing for itself a plan of action capable of realising the aims of the group. The animator should not feel the need to do, to decide, to organise everything himself as if they were "his" plans. His position as animator and at the same time member of the group, having certain skills (but not all the skills) can help the internal cohesion of the group and the carrying-out of the common plan.

## II The attitude of the group towards the animator

Acceptance and unconditional esteem of the animator by the group is shown above all in recognising him as person worthy of esteem, and in accepting the fact that the animator has a responsibility before God and the Church for the group, and has his own conscience to face. It also means accepting the animator as one of US, where he makes his own contribution according to his position and his competence .

It is worth emphasising that as long as, in the relationship animator-group, the vertical dimension is not overcome, and a genuine horizontal dimension is not reached, you cannot have real animation.

This means going beyond a facile "togetherness", in which the question of authority is almost avoided, but one must truly overcome purely 'vertical' communications, so that we may work together with our different tasks and responsibilities, known and recognised, all at the same level.

### 44. TECHNIQUES

The animator should clearly understand that what has been said responds to human needs, that each one need to feel responsible of her/his own destiny, and worthy to be considered, realities that are well expressed in the concept of participation.

Participation in fact, is a psychosocial attitude that is more and more recognised today, and which is recognised more and more among the most important objectives of education and social life. It is an element of growth of prime importance for a group, if it is conscious and desired. Participation is the capacity to take part actively and responsibly in the decisions, which regard each one in living together as a collective. Every mature member of a group needs to know he/she counts, and this is expressed clearly through participation. It would be fatal for the growth of a group not to take into consideration all these aspects and give them their due importance

### 45. MEETINGS - DISCUSSIONS

What has been said till now can be applied immediately, if not exclusively, to the meetings and discussions which are essential to the life of the group. There follow some ideas from group dynamics concerning them.

#### i) The number taking part

Experience shows that the optimum number for a group discussion is from 5 to 10.

#### ii) The material conditions

These must also be taken into account. A welcoming locale, free from interruptions, the lack of pressure groups around the working group, sufficient time (from 90 minutes to three hours on the average) are all factors favouring the good running of a meeting.

#### iii) Management of space

This is important: round or oval tables favour interaction, everybody being face to face with each other. If there are no tables, sitting in a circle can have the same effect.

#### iv) Interaction

An important element of meetings and discussions, vital for the group, is the interaction between the members of the group. Long silences, initiatives that evoke no reaction, are sign of lack of vitality within the group. Sometimes, one member stands against the group, or it happens between two and three, as the rest witness the mutual outbursts. The silence of the group is a sign of its incapacity to react. Nor should the gathering be limited to a dialogue between the animator and the group. It is important that each one can have their say, because this favours participation and interaction.

In a group, each member has a role to play, like it or not. One who claims to be neutral because he/she says nothing is in fact playing the role of brake or silent opposition.

## 46. THE ANIMATOR'S ROLE

### A. *Suggestions for conducting meetings*

A lot of what the animator says, such as summing up the various ideas expressed, or a first synthesis of that part of the discussion happens then and there. The animator needs to draw attention every so often to where the discussion is at.

In negative situations, the input needs tactics that are more difficult, and account should be kept in making them of the following.

Negative tension (underlying conflict, hidden anxiety, discomfoting inhibitions need to be analysed, otherwise sooner or later they will paralyse the group.

It is not for the animator to voice the analysis, but rather to observe it, pointing it out to the group asking it to express an opinion on the subject under discussion.

One must choose the moment for this intervention, choosing the moment when the tension is sufficiently spread or prolonged to have been seen and felt by all. It is important that from time to time the animator should do an attentive 'read out' of the group's activity, helping every one to realise what is happening both at the verbal and non-verbal levels.

When the group remains passive, the animator will seek to stimulate participation by asking questions, with brief announcements, forming small subgroups, if the main group is large.

In the case of someone who monopolises the group, the animator will politely guide the group back to the subject under discussion, and will invite someone else to speak.

The same procedure can be followed when someone tries to focus interest on a personal or marginal fact.

### B. Elements for Animators to bear in mind.

- I. Personally, the animator should constantly be aware of her/his own attitudes, reactions, hi/her role vis-à-vis the kind of meeting, or the particular moment. The animator has the duty to maintain a neutral stance in front of the various ideas and proposals; but will stimulate the others so that points of view are clarified and a solution arrived-at.
- II. In relating to the members of the group, attention will be paid to its makeup. Their attitudes, to the significance of their attitudes and of their silences, to the dynamics of the group, its interaction, to the psychological and affective features of the group, and its difficulties. Balance among the members will be fostered, efforts to monopolise and dominate discouraged, and the group will be kept free of emotional outbursts.
- III. Concerning the objectives and the theme, the animator will bear constantly in mind the objectives of the work and of the group, its purposes, the development and summarising of the theme. She / he will see to it that nothing is done to avoid the theme, or the purpose of the meeting, and will point out the attempt, which generally is not intentional.
- IV. Regarding external conditioning, the animator will be attentive to the conditions in which the meeting is held, to the use of time, the agenda...  
The animator should be sensitive to the needs and difficulties of the group and of the individual.

### C. Elements which highlight the capacity of the animator.

\*The ease of guiding a meeting, which comes from self-confidence, from a lack of fear of the group, from faith in the group's capacity.

\*Perceptions of the dynamic of the group united with the capacity to discover and analyse psychological phenomena, understand the interaction, the attitudes, the roles, etc within the group.

\*When to intervene. The intervention of the animator should always happen at the right time  
– it is not always best to jump in the minute things go badly.

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## APPENDIX I

### VARIOUS KINDS OF MEETING

#### Colloquy

Dialogue between 3-4 experts and 3-4 representatives of the group in the presence of the whole group

#### Forum

Discussion between one or two experts and the whole group

#### Panel

Debate between experts on a topic in the presence of the group, which may intervene in the latter stages

#### Conference

Talk by an expert to the group

#### Symposium

Brief inputs by several experts without the intervention of the group

#### Rapid Consultation

Breaking into small subgroups for a short period to prepare questions, make a proposal, evaluate what has been said

#### Brainstorming

Gathering views and ideas on a precisely-determined point for a limited period (5-10m.) The interventions are received without comment.

#### Question Time

For a limited period (5-20m.) the group asks questions of an expert, who will reply.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE DUTY OF THE LEADERSHIP TO SUSTAIN THE SENSE OF BELONGING TO THE ASSOCIATION, AND THE RENEWAL OF FIDELITY TO THE DUTIES ASSUMED

#### Premise

Those responsible for maintaining belonging and the renewal of fidelity of the Co-operators.

An indispensable itinerary for formation to fidelity.

An effective personal witness.

The leadership vis-à-vis cases of those who have ceased to be members, or of systematic unfaithfulness to the duties taken on.

One who leaves the Association

One who 'drifts away' from the Association

#### Conclusion

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#### 47 PREMISE.

A leader, in accepting the service of animation in the Association, becomes responsible, not only with regards to the Association as such, but also for the individual Co-operators, at least as far as regards their sense of belonging and fidelity.

This does not mean – according to RAL 38 – that each one does not have the prime responsibility for her/his perseverance in the duties they have assumed.

In the formation process of the Cooperator, belonging and fidelity should not be understood as static realities, rigid, attained once for ever, but dynamic realities going ever deeper, always being renewed. The Promise is not a point of arrival, but of departure, in the personal history of belonging and fidelity which being a human story, is made up of victories and defeats whether at the level of the Association, or that of the individual.

#### 48 THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR SUPPORTING THE BELONGING AND THE RENEWAL OF FIDELITY OF THE COOPERATOR.

The commitment to perseverance is supported, as well as by the grace of God, by the fraternal help of the other Cooperators, and particularly by the leaders at various levels.

#### A. An indispensable process of formation to fidelity.

The Association leaders already during the period of initial formation should help the Cooperator to place their formation path in the context of permanent formation: to live every day the commitment to fidelity to their vocation and mission.

Formative communication and dialogue should never remain at the surface, but draw from interior experience as a response to the call of God.

The leader, in order to educate to a sense of belonging and to fidelity, ought to call upon the involvement and personal responsibility of the Cooperator.

The leader ought to commit her/himself to creating a climate of communion, of family spirit, of loving kindness, indispensable elements for living out the joy of belonging and the commitment to fidelity of the Cooperators as a reply to the questions and to the new horizons of activity which are integral to the life of the Association.

The leader should pay special attention to the big moments in the life of the Association (spirituality days, retreats, etc) and the celebrations of the mysteries of the Lord throughout the liturgical year, which reinforce the will to belong and the commitment to grow personally.

#### B An effective personal witness

The leader offers an effective witness to fidelity and belonging when she/he works and gets others to work for the Association and its works: when they show at all times and places a real preoccupation for each one before each thing, and when with sacrifice, knows how to be faithful to the undertakings assumed, even those less gratifying.

### 49. THE LEADERSHIP IN THE FACE OF THOSE WHO NO LONGER BELONG, OR WHO SYSTEMATICALLY IGNORE THEIR OBLIGATIONS

#### A. When one leaves the Association

First of all, it should be noted that prolonged absence from the activities of the Association should not be considered at one a case of abandonment, even if the sense of belonging is weakened, and no contribution is made to the life of the Centre.

Every Cooperator of the centre should be involved in a discreet and silent process of: prayer, understanding, personal contacts, support in difficult moments, communication, invitations to special occasions and feasts.

Leaders, with Salesian fraternity, will evaluate cases of abandonment, and the motivations for estrangement, and will offer possibilities for reflection together, and even support in coming to a decision.

If a person really decides to leave, leaders will ask that this be made known to the local Council, and they will inform the higher authorities.

#### B. The case of estrangement from the Association

The ACS is a public Association of the faithful and as such is required to observe Canon Law regarding dismissals.

This is not only a juridical act, but also involving as it does the human and Christian responsibility of leaders and those involved, involves serious discernment.

#### What to do

Identify in the light of canon 308 and 316 the lifestyle which does not accord with the fundamental duties set out in RAL 39.3, which are a counter witness at the level of a church association.

Establish the exact state of infidelity in a spirit of charity.

Make certain with evangelical discretion the facts of infidelity to the Christian and Salesian responsibilities made clear by unmistakable, notorious and proven conduct, which constitute a scandal.

Help the person understand the gravity of the situation.

Make brotherly/sisterly offers of help.

If all else fails, declare that the person is dismissed from the Association, confiding this task to a friend or a person who can do it well.

Communicate to the superior bodies.

### 50. CONCLUSION

Evidently, what the Association has most at heart is the perseverance of its members. Every effort animators might make with this scope is a sign of a high sense of responsibility.

## CHAPTER IX

### EXPANSION IS A SIGN OF FRUITFULNESS

Premise

Necessary conditions for expansion

“From their fruits you will know them”

What to do in practice to make the Association grow.  
Concerning possible “candidates” to the Association  
Concerning groups: divide and grow.  
When we should create a new centre

Mass Media & Expansion

Involving ecclesial organisms and other useful activities

From simply coming together to the developing and maturing of a personal vocation

Conclusion

#### 51 PREMISE

This chapter will indicate the conditions necessary for the Association to grow and expand. Just as a childless family will one day be no more, just so an Association without new members. However, for an Association to grow, it must have the capacity to regenerate. We are convinced that this capacity exists in the ASC, but the question is, does it make use of it?

#### 52 THE CONDITIONS NECESSARY FOR THE EXPANSION OF THE ASSOCIATION.

The vitality of an organisation is not something that comes automatically. Expansion demands effort and serious commitment. To make it happen there needs to be between the individual and the group a lively exchange by which the group satisfies some of the needs and aspirations of the individual, who in turn, finds in the group a way of self-expression. Therefore, for growth to happen:

- The individual must identify with the group, must have that is, a strong sense of belonging (no one makes an effort regarding something having no real meaning).
- Consequently, the individual must find in the group satisfaction of some of her/his needs and aspirations, even just spiritual ones. This is what the “sense of belonging” is all about – the one

thing capable of bringing the individual to want to share experiences with others, and invite them to join in. ("Come and see. Perhaps you can have the same experience as me")

One who finds satisfaction and a sense of belonging loves the Association, and will do whatever she/he can to make it grow. On the contrary, one who does not love it will do nothing in this regard.

But to make all this happen, it is essential that the Association be incarnated in the reality of people.

- One who comes into the Association should have made a conscious choice: joining should have had solid motivation, be the fruit of a truly adequate discernment.

### 53 "BY THEIR FRUITS YOU WILL KNOW THEM"

Centres, Councils, the Association should often take a hard look at what they are doing, to discover just how we belong, how we live together, how authentic is our call

From the facts they will recognise the greater or lesser vocational fruitfulness that have achieved.

The light cannot remain hidden. If it exists, it will shine. The Cooperator, who has the good of the Association at heart, will make this known by word and example.

Certainly, some of the people the Cooperator mixes with will ask why they are so joyful, why they want to bring others to Christ, why they are committed to others.

The Cooperator, who lives in contact with a lot of people, cannot but meet this sort of situation, unless her/ his life is without meaning. There are many occasions for telling others about the lives we live. The one who listens, invited by the Cooperator to share this experience, will surely not be lacking.

### 54. WHAT TO DO IN PRACTICE TO MAKE THE ASSOCIATION GROW.

#### A. Concerning possible "candidates" to be Cooperators

The following suggestions may help discover a Salesian vocation.

1. An invitation to "come and see" what the Centre does, how it lives. The condition of course is that they will find a Salesian environment, a genuine welcome, and an accompaniment in the search these folk are making, or might make. Inviting a new candidate to come into contact with a Centre that is unattractive, that is not lively, and lacks deep communion among the members, causes serious difficulties.
2. Invite possible candidates to meet with formation personnel of the Centre (Delegate, Formation Councillor, experienced Cooperators, etc)
3. An invitation to a Salesian feast, as a first contact with the Salesian world. The sort of welcome they get will determine the reaction of the candidate.
4. Presenting a life of Don Bosco and some leaflets that the person may find useful, which speak of the Salesian life in an attractive way.
5. Invite the person to an apostolic activity with other Cooperators.
6. Invite them to become involved in a particular apostolate, making sure personal contact is maintained.
7. Invite them to meetings, seminars, and gatherings at which the vocation of the Salesian Cooperator is explained.

#### B. Regarding the Cooperator group. Dividing for growth

According to the laws of group dynamics, it is not possible to be effective in formation and the apostolate if the group is too numerous.

If expansion leads to a large number in a Centre, the original group should hive-off into sub-groups, so that relationships may be more personal, and the work with and by the group can be more effective.

When a group becomes too numerous, it is only the inner circle which works which has vitality. The others remain in the margins, and becoming integrated only with difficulty.

Subdividing can bring more depth and efficacy to the original group, which will see to it that these sub-groups meet every so often, as a single Centre. The other meetings, whether for formation or

otherwise, can go on independently. Each group will see to its own growth, but always with the knowledge of the core group.

The leaders of the one Centre may be selected from among the members of the various groups, giving account of the work and that of the sub-group, at the monthly Council meeting.

It is clear then, that those who, in the case of an SDB group and a FMA group, oppose the existence of two groups, are being short-sighted.

We should make sure there is no rivalry between groups, but rather a family spirit, which will help all groups carry on the Salesian mission in the area. Each member of each sub-group should seek to make their sub-group grow.

C. When expansion counsels the creation of an independent Centre.

It may happen that expansion be such as to render advisable the creation of a new Centre, elsewhere in the city, as long as there are sufficient Cooperators to form the Centre, and that there are people capable of setting it up.

The local Council should be happy at being able to give life to a new Centre, which in due course will become independent. (see RAL, Ch. IV)

When a Cooperator who lives some distance from the Centre, sees the possibility of forming a certain number of Cooperators, may proceed – always with the understanding of the Centre – with this apostolic work, to the point of the Centre's recommending the formation of a new Centre. We cannot overlook this process of expansion if we accept as prophetic Don Bosco's words: The work of the Cooperators will spread all over the Christian world...It will be the Cooperators who will promote the Catholic spirit. (BM XVIII)

## 55. MASS MEDIA AND THE EXPANSION OF THE ASSOCIATION

We should not overlook the mass media when considering the dynamics of expansion

Throughout the world the Association produces at least 100 bulletins or like publications, whether at Province or local level. Often these publications are directed at the members only. One could perhaps think of sending copies to the Bishop, to Parish Priests, to other persons or Associations. There are also various aids, pamphlets, Salesian literature of different kinds, which can be distributed, and made known in various ways.

Articles could be sent to selected newspapers or reviews, that would make the Association and its activities known.

This kind of information service is needed today inside and outside the Association. Certainly, if it is done well, the fruits of expansion will be reaped.

## 56. INVOLVEMENT IN CHURCH ORGANISATIONS AND OTHER OPPORTUNE ACTIVITIES

Something often neglected by the Association is our presence in local Church organisations. Making ourselves known at Church level is not an indifferent factor in the growth of the Association. This dimension must therefore be attended-to.

The same thing must be said concerning just causes (e.g., world hunger, abortion, schools, and so on.) which demand the presence of the Association and its involvement.

We must come out more into the open and be aware of ourselves as being standard – bearers of history, also as an Association.

## 57. FROM JUST BEING TOGETHER TO THE DEVELOPMENT AND MATURING OF A PERSONAL VOCATION,

What has been said so far in this chapter shows that we must pass from a static view of the Association to a vision that is more dynamic, and for that reason, more binding.

We must not think of the Association as composed of persons without a well-defined vocational identity, knowingly taken on. Various kinds of human groups exist. One of these is grouping together (It. 'raggruppamento'). Its greatest danger is anonymity.

Individuals are brought together, and often, lose their individuality, hiding themselves behind the facade of the group. Now, unless the group has a strong identity its influence in the area is practically nothing, as if it did not exist.

This kind of group cannot hope to expand – it does not possess the internal dynamism that might cause it to expand.

For this reason, the ASC must know how to overcome the colourless kinds of Centres, which have no vitality. And change can happen only if the Cooperators themselves, as persons, are mature in their vocations.

'Unknowing' must be conquered so as to arrive at true development, at the flowering of all the vocational resources of the individual, of the Centre, of the Association.

The Association should not deny in any way the apostolic urges of the members. On the contrary, it will be its great merit to have brought to maturity and developed all the potential, whether of persons as of the group . All this means that the Association has as its scope that of bringing people together, but of helping them to develop all their potential from the Salesian point of view. It will be proud of having such people. We come together to grow. It is not a question then of having more people, but that of being more Salesian, more apostolic.

It is clear, then, that the reason why this aspect of fruitfulness and growth has been included in this manual. Only people who have this quality will be capable of saying why they are Cooperators, capable of attracting others to share their experience. Only truly vital groups can think of growing.

Should we think of centres crowded with people? It depends from our vision of the Association – is it dynamic or static?

The General Chapter of 1883, Don Bosco being still alive, certainly did not have a static vision. A single paragraph says it all: If in a parish a number of decurions (=Centres of today) can be set up, the Parish Priest will be the chief, or Director... Where there is a Salesian House, the Rector will be the chief of the decurions and Cooperators of that place...The decurions, according to our Regulations, are the heads of ten or more Cooperators of the area. (BM XVI)

As you can see, Don Bosco was not thinking of a limited expansion in an area!

## 58. CONCLUSION

To have children, you need parents. Every Cooperator can be father or mother to another Cooperator. No one should go through life without having made the contribution of having someone enter to be part of the Association.

"From their fruits you will know them", from the fruits will be recognised the vitality and relevance of the Association today. We should not hide behind the excuse that it is difficult have the Association grow today. If this were valid, no ecclesial association would grow. But the facts are different. In fact, there are today associations in continual growth, because they have something to offer to the world of today.

For our Association to be fruitful or not depends on each individual personally, and on all those who seek to live this vocation in the Church with coherence and enthusiasm.

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<sup>[1]</sup> MB XVI 448-453.

<sup>[2]</sup> G.Favini, *Il cammino di una grande idea*, LDC, Turin, 1962,98,105-108.

<sup>[3]</sup> E.Ceria, *I Cooperatori salesiani. Un po' di storia*, SEI, Turin, 1952, 67.

<sup>[4]</sup> G.Favini, *op.cit.*, 198-9.

<sup>[5]</sup> E.Ceria, *op.cit.*, 67.

<sup>[6]</sup> E.Ceria, *op.cit.*, 68.

<sup>[7]</sup> E.Ceria, *op.cit.*, 73.

<sup>[8]</sup> G.Favini, *op.cit.*,119.

<sup>[9]</sup> E.Ceria, *op.cit.*, 81.

<sup>[10]</sup> E.Ceria, *op.cit.*, 86.

<sup>[11]</sup> Regs., arts.5 & 24.

<sup>[12]</sup> Regs. art.23.1.

<sup>[13]</sup> v. AA 19 in particular.

<sup>[14]</sup> Regs., particularly arts. 23,24,42.2,46,25.1, and art.11 of the SDB & FMA Convention held 16-8-86.

<sup>[15]</sup> v. Regs, art. 2.2.

<sup>[16]</sup> v. Regs., art.15.

<sup>[17]</sup> Regs, especially arts.3,8,10,11.1,16.1,18.1,19,20.2,22.1,24.1,26,31.2,33.2,34,38.

<sup>[18]</sup> Regs.,art.41.

<sup>[19]</sup> Regs.44,45.1.

<sup>[20]</sup> Regs., arts.46,25.1. *Convention* 11.2 and 12.

<sup>[21]</sup> Regs. art. 42.1.

<sup>[22]</sup> Regs., arts. 44 and 45.2

<sup>[23]</sup> Regs., arts. 46,25.1; *Convention* 11.2 and 12.

<sup>[24]</sup> *Convention*, 1.2.

<sup>[25]</sup> Regs., art.23.2.

<sup>[26]</sup> Regs. art.23.2.

<sup>[27]</sup> Regs. art.23.1.

<sup>[28]</sup> The ASC Regions are 12 number: Italy-Middle East; Central Europe; Iberian Peninsular; English-speaking nations; Atlantic; Brazil; Pacific-North Caribbean; Pacific South Caribbean, Asia, India, English-speaking African nations; French/Spanish/Portuguese-speaking African nations.

<sup>[29]</sup> There are many practical references in the Regulations, particularly arts. 1.1;9;15;29.2;31.2; and 7;9;12;18;26;28;31;33.3;40.

<sup>[30]</sup> v. Reg. art.30.

[31] v. Regs. art. 31.2.

[32] *Lay animators*: treatment rather theoretical: practical aspect in Chapter IV.  
*Delegates*: the two aspects are treated almost entirely in this chapter.

[33] Regs. art. 43 § 1.

[34] Regs. art. 23.

[35] Regs. arts. 8, 11.2, 13.2, 16.1, 17, 37.2.

[36] Regs., arts. 4.2, 10, 32.3.

37 Regs., arts. 3, 11.1-2, 12, 14.3, 16.1, 50.

[38] Regs. arts. 11, 17.

[39] Regs. arts. 11.1, 12, 16.1, 17, 29.1.

[40] Regs., art 43.2.

[41] Regs. art. 43.3.

[42] Regs. art. 44.2.

[44] Re this paragraph, v. Chapter VII.

[45] Commento ufficiale al ASC, pag.269,

[46] Regs, art. 46.

[47] Can. 317.2.

[48] Regs., art. 46.2.

[50] Regs. SDB, art.36.

[51] Regs. art. 23.3.

[52] Regs. art. 46.2

[53] Convention 13.

[54] v, also Chapter IV, Appendix 1 *Regolamento interno della Consulta mondiale*.

[55] Regs.46.3 and RDB V 5.

[56] Regs, chap. V, arts. 36-40; AA chap.VI, Arts. 28-32; *Christifideles Laici*, chap. V, arts. 57-63. For what regards the necessary requisites for *formators*, v. *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis*, Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 6-1-1970, art.30.

[57] *Christifideles Laici*, art. 60.

[58] v. all of art.37 re formation.

[59] AA 29e.

[60] Regs., art. 47.2.

[61] Regs., art. 44.1.

[62] Regs., art. 45.1.

[63] Since the translator cannot think of a suitable English equivalent to the Italian *Chi fa da sè fa per tre*, he dares to offer the following:

*O give me some pity, I'm on a committee  
Which means that from morning till night  
We contend and amend, we contest and defend,  
Without a conclusion in sight.*

Perhaps a possible translation could be: *A loner does the work of three.*

[64] Regs., art. 10.

[65] Regs., art. 37 § 1.

[66] ASC 41.1

[67] ASC 21,36,41-45.

[68] ASC 41§ 1

[69] ASC 44 § 2

[70] ASC 43 § 2

[71] ASC 49 § 3

[72] ASC 43 § 2

[73] It may be considered preferable to list members willing to accept the duties of leader; but the matter is open to further suggestions.

[74] v. Official Commentary on ASC, art.43§1.

[75] v. Official Commentary on ASC, P.420.

[76] v. Official Commentary on ASC, pp.425-427 (Italian edition).

[77] For further comment, v. Chapter V.

[78] v. Official Commentary on ASC, p.430.

[79] v. Regulations of Apostolic Life, art.43.1.

[80] Official Commentary on ASC p.419.

[81] ASC Regs. art 46. v.chapter describing role and Delegate.

[82] The number of sectors is larger than the number of Councillors permitted. Hence some Councillors will have more than one assignment.

[83] ASC 37,38,22.1,23.2,24.1,44.1,46,1.

[84] ASC 8,9,11.1,13.2,16.1,17,37.2.

[85] ASC 13.2,16.1,18.1.

[86] ASC 16,17.

[87] ASC 16,20,36.

[88] ASC 3,6,11,17,18,22.1,27.2,37,40.

[89] ASC chapter VI.

[90] Canon 1282.

[91] ASC, art.38.3.

[92] ASC, art.46.1.

[93] ASC, art.41.3.

[94] v.chapt.V for specific treatment of meetings.

[95] ASC 45.

[96] ASC 45.2.

[97] ASC 36,45.

[98] For contents of the formation course, v. ASC 36.1.  
[99] ASC 45.1.  
[100] ASC 39.  
[101] ASC 41.3.  
[102] ASC 21,  
[103] ASC 42,43,44,45,21.  
[104] ASC 41.1.  
[105] In this case consult art.7 of the Convention.  
[106] ASC 43§ 1.  
[107] v. *Atto collegiale* n.1.02.9.  
[108] ASC art.49 § 3.  
[109] v. nos 1.02.12.1 et seq. and Appendix II (Draft of internal Regulations of a Provincial Council).  
[110] ASC ART.44 § 1.  
[111] ASC 44.2.  
[112] v. Official Commentary, p.420.  
[113] ASC Art.43 §§ 3 and 5.For further information re Delegates, v.also arts. 46,25.1,38.2,and 48.2.  
[114] v. Appendix III.  
[115] ASC 23.2, 48,49.  
[116] v.Appendix I.  
[117] ASC art.48 § 1 (modified).  
[118] ASC art.48 § 3.  
[119] ASC art. 48 § 1.  
[120] v. Appendix I of present chapter.  
[121] v. Appendix I of present chapter.  
[122] ASC art. 49 § 3.  
[123] v. Canons 1281-1289.  
[124] ASC art.48 § 7.  
[125] ASC 48.5.  
[126] ASC 6.2.  
[127] ASC Regs. C  
h.III, arts.19-25; Ch VI, arts. 41-49.  
[128] For 'animation' see Ch. 1; for group dynamics, see also Ch. VII  
[129] cf. GC 23, no.93.  
[130] Meetings are a normal part of an association - meetings with specific times, places, schedules, discussions, administration, practical results, active involvement of members, pragmatism, efficiency and co-ordination. These are indispensable elements. Every Association requires meetings with these characteristics . The ways these attributes are actuated are susceptible to variation and may change from time to time.  
[131] v. also Appendix I.  
[132] Half plus one, according to Canon 119; v. Official Comment, ASC Regs., pp.420-1, 428, et seq.  
[133] ASC Regs. 20.1.  
[134] v. Ch I and SCA Regs. III (*Communion and collaboration*).  
[135] In accordance with ASC Regs. 1,2,and 3.  
[136] AA 4.  
[137] SCA Regs. 32.2.  
[138] ASC Regs. 33.3.  
[139] *Christifideles Laici* , no.16.  
[140] RDB VIII 2.  
[141] v. Official Comment to the ASC Regs., p.350.  
[142] ASC Regs. 22.1 and RDB VI 1.  
[143] ASC Regs. 22.2.  
[144] ASC Regs. 7.  
[145] ASC Regs. 16.1.  
[146] ASC Regs. 17.  
[147] ASC Regs. 11.2.  
[148] *ibid.*  
[149] ASC Regs. 17; MB XVII 25; Canon Law, 305.  
[150] *Official Commentary on Regulations of Apostolic Life*, p. 209.  
[151] For further information on this matter, v. the pertinent chapter of the Regulations of Apostolic Life  
[152] RAL 44.1