

Office of Information and Research
Report 13

**Studies for the
Commission on Mission
and Organization**

Seventh-day Adventist Church
North American Division of the General Conference
12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring MD 20904

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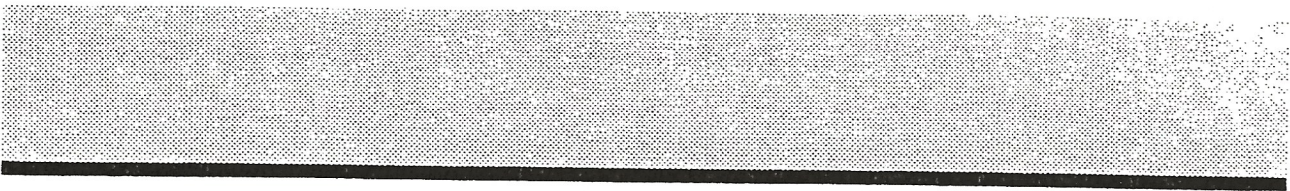
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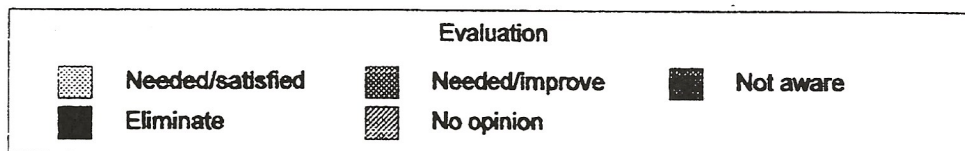
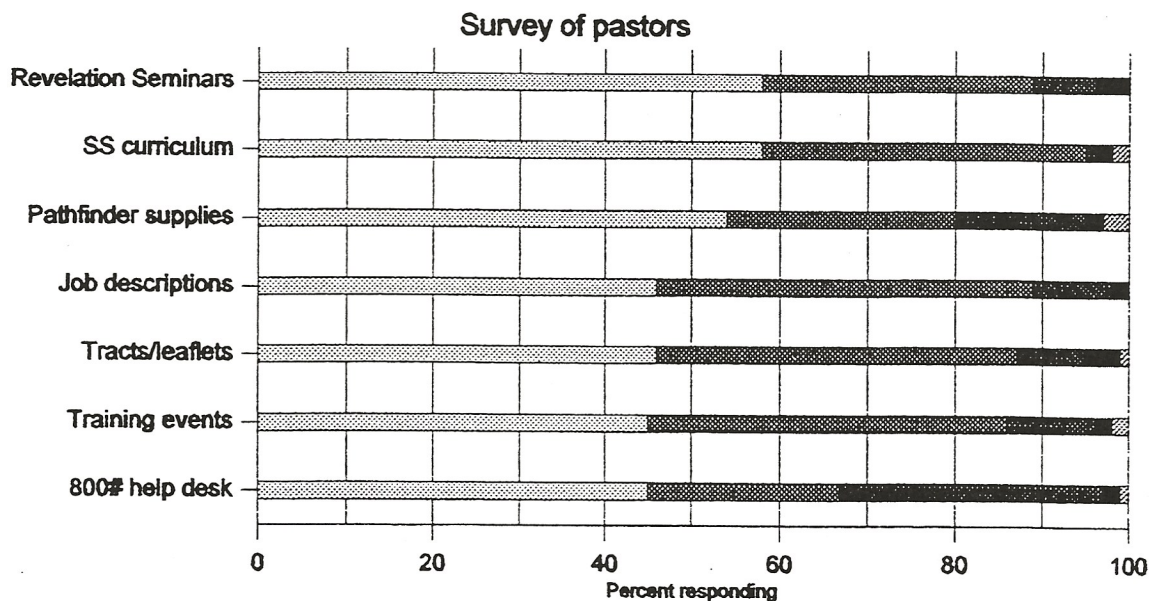
The Needs of the Local Church
and an Evaluation of the
Denominational Delivery System

Needs of the local church

Pastors are unwilling to have the denomination quit spending money on any of the 21 kinds of resource materials and services mentioned in this study. Two items were flagged for defunding by 8% or 9% of respondents. Among the rest, only 1% to 4% of respondents indicated that the denomination should consider no longer spending money in that category.

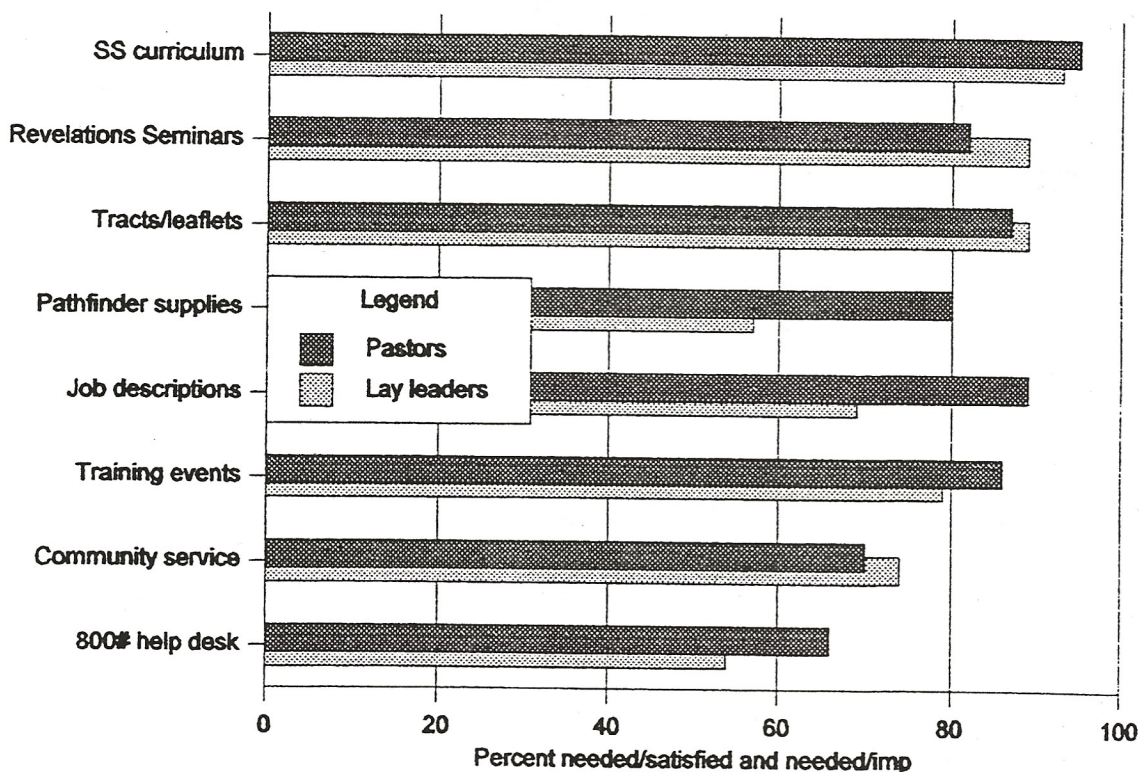
Some resource materials and services are highly valued. The majority of pastors are satisfied with the eight different versions of Revelation Seminar materials available, the Sabbath School curriculum materials for all age levels and the materials and supplies for Pathfinder Clubs. About 45% of pastors gave the same response to four other kinds of resources. (See chart below.) These are items that the local church depends on and does not want disturbed.

Most needed services



Lay leaders have much the same views as do pastors on the most needed services and materials for the local church. They rank Sabbath School curriculum materials as more important than Revelation Seminar resources. They include Adventist Community Services (ACS) among the most needed areas. And they are more satisfied with the available Bible lessons for non-members as well as the tracts and other literature for witnessing. They are more likely to believe that Pathfinder Club supplies need improvement.

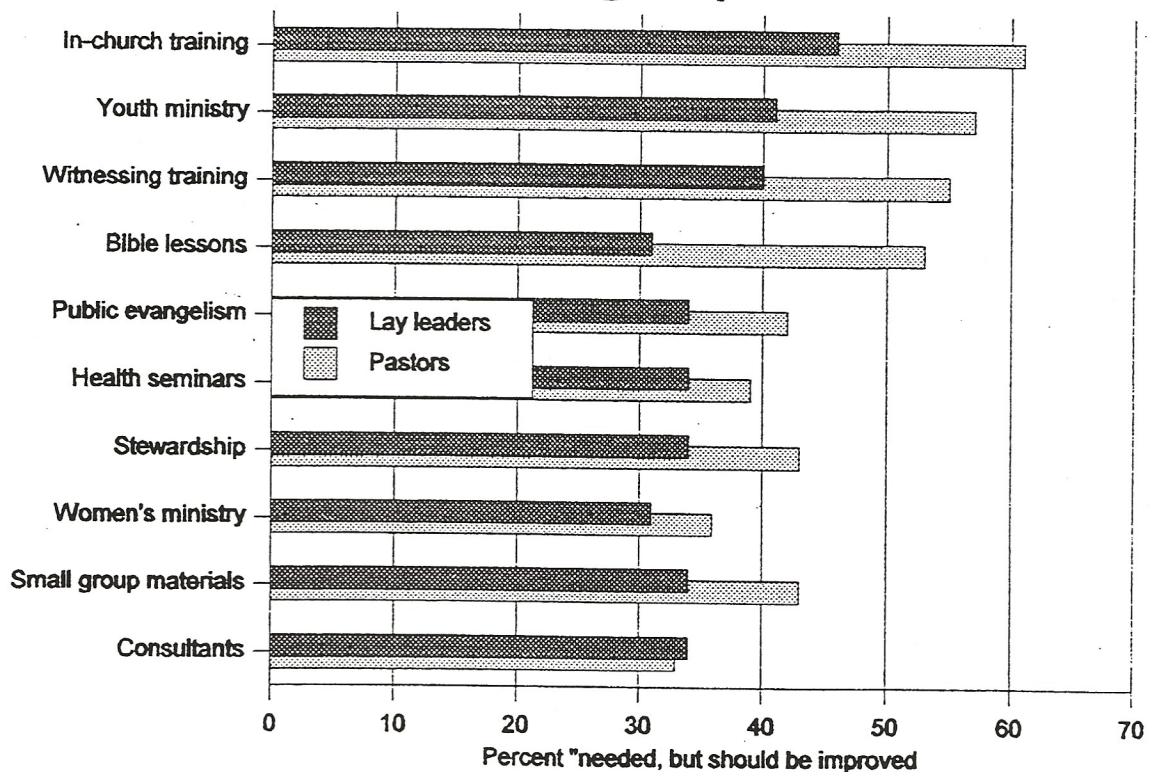
Most needed services



Other resources and services are clearly seen by pastors and lay leaders as needed by the local church, but current denominational activities in these areas are seen as needing improvement. Nearly two out of three pastors see a need to improve the training events provided in the local church. Nearly half (45%) of lay leaders agree. A majority of pastors see a need to improve resources for youth ministry, training church members to witness, and Bible lessons for use with non-members. The largest portion of lay leaders (40%) agree with the need to improve youth ministry resources and witness training systems, but the majority are satisfied with currently available

Bible lessons. Seven other areas of resource materials and services need by the local church are seen as needing improvement by the largest number of respondents in each case; 31% to 43% of the pastors and lay leaders interviewed. (See chart below.) These are the "weak spots" in the support system provided by the denomination to local churches that need attention.

Services needing improvement



There are a few needed services and materials for the local church about which most pastors and lay leaders say they are not aware. They do not know enough about it to evaluate it. Training videos for local church officers, how-to books for local church officers and curriculum resources for family life seminars are in this category. All of these are new services that have begun to be developed in recent years. Information about them has yet not filtered out to the majority of pastors and church board members. As many as 8% of pastors are willing to save money by eliminating training videos and 4% see no need to fund family life resources, but only 1% are willing to do without how-to books for church officers. Among lay leaders, only 4% to 6% are willing to eliminate these three services.

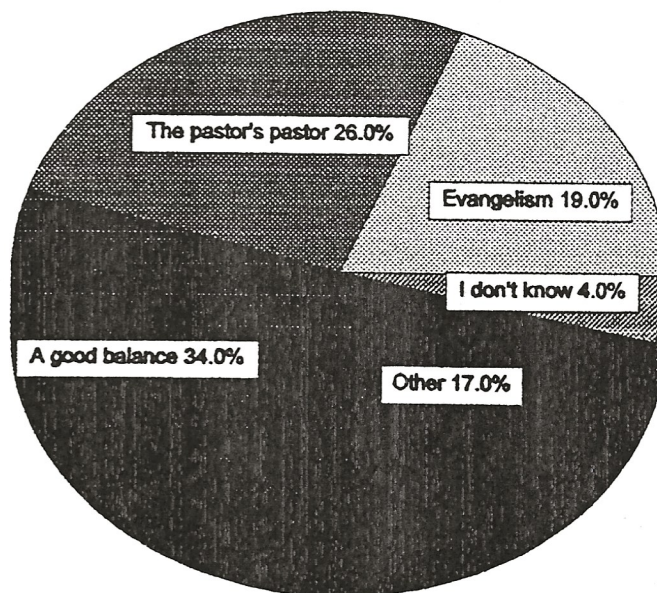
The Ministerial Association and Pastoral Morale

The staff function in the local conference that most directly serves pastors is the Ministerial Association. Only a third of pastors (37%) indicate that their conference has a full-time ministerial secretary. Another third (34%) report that their ministerial secretary also has other departments to direct. Equal numbers indicate that the conference president (14%) or another conference officer (14%) also serves as ministerial secretary.

There is anecdotal evidence that pastors feel some ministerial secretaries focus exclusively on the promotion and coordination of public evangelism. Only one in five respondents (19%) indicate that the focus of their ministerial secretary is primarily on evangelism. A the majority (60%) indicate that the focus of their ministerial secretary is primarily on being "the pastor's pastor" or a good balance of the two foci.

Focus of your ministerial secretary?

Survey of pastors



Nonetheless there is a pronounced level of dissatisfaction among pastors with the overall functioning of the Ministerial Association in their conference. Only one in five (22%) evaluate it as "excellent." Nearly half (47%) rate it as needing improvement or "bad." One in three (30%) say it is "OK."

Would a stronger staffing of the Ministerial Association office at the union conference level better serve pastors than the current arrangement where most local conference ministerial secretaries have other assignments as officers or departmental directors? There is clearly little interest in this arrangement, and strong support for transferring resources from the union level to the local conferences.

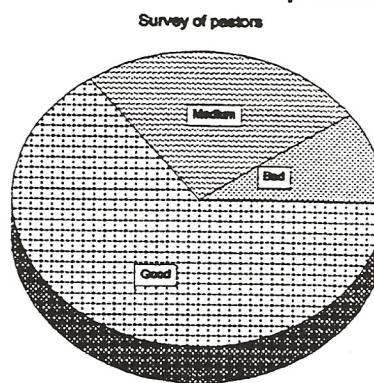
- 73% prefer to have a full-time ministerial secretary in each local conference and do away with the union ministerial office
- 14% feel there is a need for a ministerial secretary at both the local conference and union conference levels
- 7% prefer two or three full-time people "with the right skills" in the union Ministerial Association office and doing away with local conference ministerial secretaries
- 3% prefer a full-time ministerial secretary at the union level and no ministerial secretaries in the local conferences

Unlike many other questions asked in this research, less than 2% of the respondents indicate that they do not have an opinion on this topic.

Is there a morale problem among pastors? It is often asserted in the discussion of denominational structure that current arrangements impact negatively on the moral of local pastors. One of the difficulties with this discussion and analysis of the following data is the lack of an objective standard as to how much negative response is acceptable as "normal" or unavoidable.

Two out of three pastors (65%) indicate that morale among the pastors in their conference is good. Only one in ten share the perception that morale is bad, while a quarter (24%) indicate a neutral evaluation.

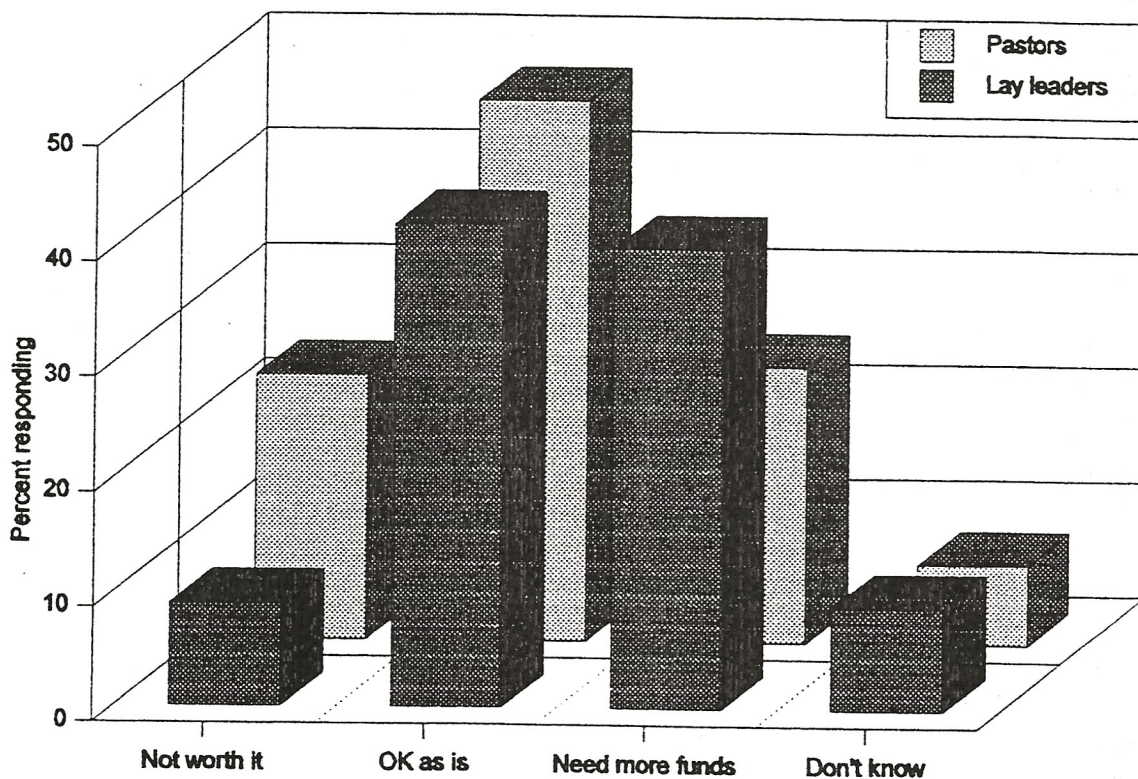
Rate the morale of pastors



Do We Need Departmental Services?

In general, how important are the services provided by the various departments to the local church? The largest number of both pastors and lay leaders interviewed (47% and 42%) feel that the departments are "doing OK for the funds they get." Lay leaders are almost twice as likely as pastors to believe that departmental services "need to be better funded" (40% as compared to 24%), and pastors are twice as likely as lay leaders to state that departments "take a much bigger share of the budget than they are worth" (23% compared to 9%). Overall there is a clear demand for the resource materials, information, training and consultant services provided by the departments that support local-church ministries.

Are departments needed?



The pastors were asked additional, more detailed questions about the departmental staffing in their local and union conference. The majority of pastors indicate that there are two to eight departmental staff in their local conference. The average for all respondents is 8.2. Only one in five pastors (21%) is of the opinion that this is "too many," while a slightly larger number (26%) feel that their conference has "too few" departmental staff. The majority (53%) are satisfied that the current staff is about the right number.

How many of the total departmental staff in each local conference is assigned specifically to help local churches and not in the education, publishing, trust services, treasury or legal offices? The majority of pastors indicate one to five staff. The average for all respondents is 4. Nearly half of pastors (46%) feel that is not the right balance, although almost as many (44%) are of the opinion that it is the right balance. The difference is not statistically significant.

There is significant evidence that pastors are not well informed about departmental staffing patterns. Some gave obviously wild guesses as to the number of staff in their local conference (for example, "99"). As many as one in five admitted that they did not know how many of the staff in their conference office were assigned to support local-church ministries. The majority (60%) indicate that they do not know how many departmental staff are assigned to their union conference office, although surprisingly nearly half (48%) feel that it is about the right number. Only two in five (38%) are of the opinion that the union conference has "too many" staff.

Trust Services and Auditing

Pastors are very supportive of having a trust services department in their local conference. Three out of four (77%) prefer that to a trust services department at the union or division level that would serve a larger area.

Pastors are equally supportive of the auditing services provided to their local churches and schools by the conference. Two thirds (69%) see it as a much-needed service that should be maintained at current levels. Only a third (29%) are willing to have audits less often and save money so that it can be used on other programs.

What About the Resource Center Concept?

Two trends have been at odds with each other over the past decade. The denomination, at all levels, has been reducing departmental staff. At the same time the areas of specialized ministry for which local churches seek support and resources have

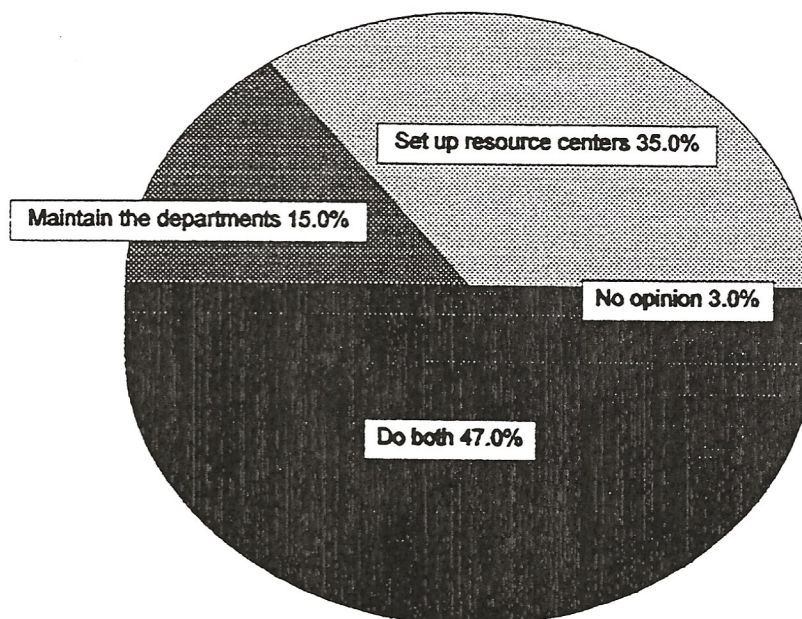
been increasing. To fill the gaps, a number of resource centers have been established across North America to provide information, materials, training and a network of consultants. Each serves the entire division in a narrow, specific program niche; a specialized area that is largely unserved by the traditional departments.

Seven out of eight pastors, but less than half of lay leaders (47%) indicate that they have heard of the resource center concept. The majority of pastors (56%) have had personal contact with one of the resource centers, while only one in five lay leaders (22%) have done so.

Three out of four lay leaders (74%) like the idea. Pastors are even more likely to support the establishment of resource centers, but nearly half (47%) also want to maintain the departmental staff in the local conferences.

Which option do you prefer?

Survey of pastors



Technical Appendix

The information in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted with 417 church board members and 409 pastors during a 10-day period in January, 1995. The interviews were conducted by Adventist Information Ministry (AIM) at Andrews University. The questionnaire script was developed by BBMRC Research Services at the direction of Monte Sahlin from the NAD staff, and the interviewers were trained on-site to use the script.

The two random samples were selected by Nth name select from the database maintained by the NAD Distribution Center using the latest conference directories. All except five of the 58 local conferences have submitted 1994 directories; in the case of those five conferences directories from earlier years have been used. The sample of church board members was drawn from first elders, treasurers, Sabbath School superintendents, personal ministries leaders, youth leaders and community service directors.

Because of the length of the interview with pastors, it was divided in half and 201 pastors were interviewed utilizing one part, 208 utilizing the other part. Thus, no more than 208 pastors answered any given question.

The interview results were recorded electronically at terminals from which the interviewers worked. The resulting data files were analyzed under the supervision of Dr. Gerald Thayer, director of statistical research at Andrews University, using the Statistical Program for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

In reading this report, please note that all survey research is subject to sampling error. The results may differ from those that would be obtained if all Adventist pastors and all church board members of Adventist churches in the North American Division had been interviewed. The error factor in this study ranges from five to eight percentage points, plus or minus. This is the expected range within which the results of repeated samplings in the same time period might vary 95% of the time, assuming the same sampling procedure, interview scripts and data collection methods were used.

On the next two pages are tables displaying the demographic profile of both the pastor and lay leader samples. They are generally representative of the overall membership and denominational employee group in the North American Division, as compared to available information from both statistical records and previous surveys conducted under the auspices of the NAD Office of Information and Research.

Project Director, Monte Sahlin; Project Coordinator, Paul Richardson; Data Collection Supervisor, John Hood; Statistics Consultant, Gerald Thayer.

Table 1
Demographic Profile of Pastor Sample

GENERATION	Frequency	Percent
Born in 1945 or before	198	48.5
Born in 1946 or later	210	51.5
 BORN IN A NATION OTHER THAN WHERE NOW RESIDENT		
Yes	104	25.4
No	305	74.6
 REGIONAL CONFERENCE EMPLOYEE		
Yes	66	16.1
No	343	83.9
 DISTRICT SIZE		
1 church	163	40.1
2 churches	163	40.1
3 churches	72	17.7
4 churches	8	2.0
 LANGUAGE OF MINISTRY		
English	291	71.2
Spanish	57	13.9
Other	61	14.9
 GENDER		
Male	396	98
Female	8	2

Table 2
Demographic Profile of Lay Leader Sample

	Frequency	Percent
GENERATION		
Born in 1945 or before	256	61.4
Born in 1946 or later	161	38.6
BORN IN A NATION OTHER THAN WHERE NOW RESIDE		
Yes	92	22.2
No	321	77.0
CHURCH OFFICE		
First Elder	105	25.2
SS Superintendent	55	13.2
Personal Ministries Leader	52	12.5
Youth Leader	75	18.0
Community Service Director	53	12.7
Communication Secretary	52	12.5
Health-Temperance Leader	25	6.0
LANGUAGE OF CHURCH		
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GENDER		
Male	183	44.1
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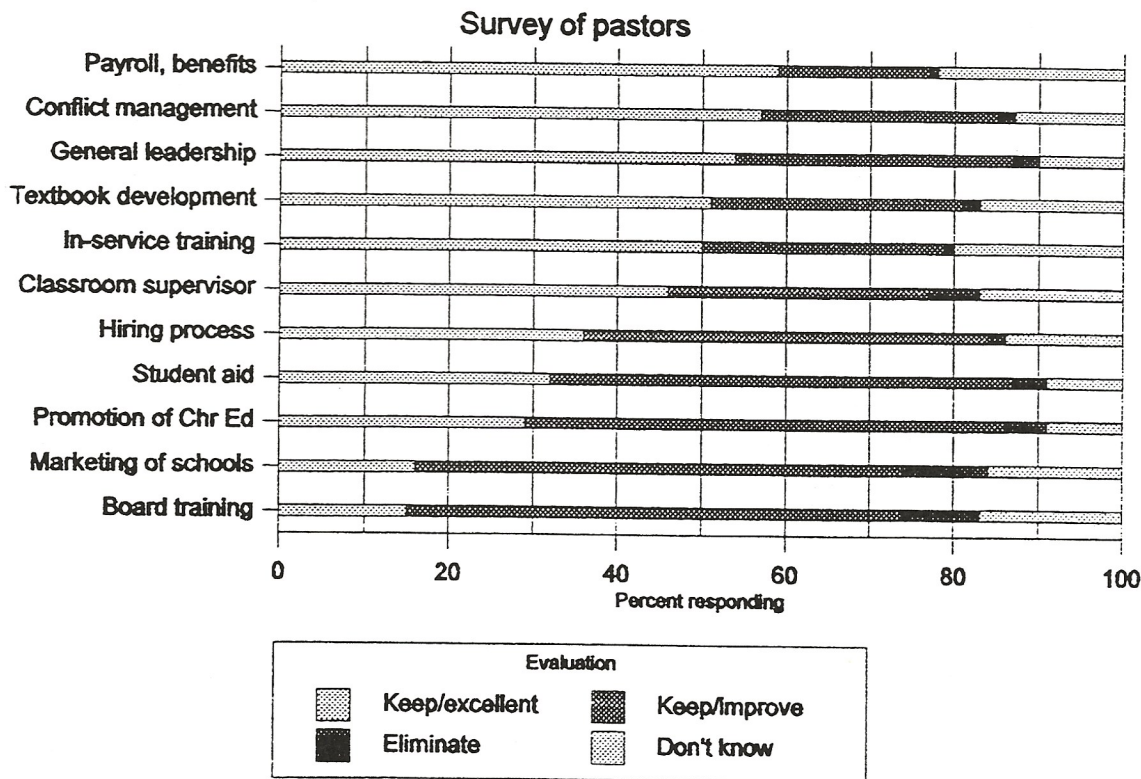
The Needs of Adventist Schools
and an Evaluation of the
Denominational Support System

What are the Needs for Education Services?

Four out of five pastors see a need for the support services provided to church schools by the denomination's Education Department. Of 11 specific services mentioned in the interviews, only two are seen as unnecessary by 9% or 10% of the respondents; six are seen as unnecessary by only 1% or 2% of the respondents.

The majority of pastors indicate that improvement is needed in five Education Department support services – marketing of Adventist schools, promotion of Christian education among church members, student aid, the hiring process for teachers, and training for school board members. These are the areas in which the Education Department must improve in order to meet the needs in the field.

Needed services - Education

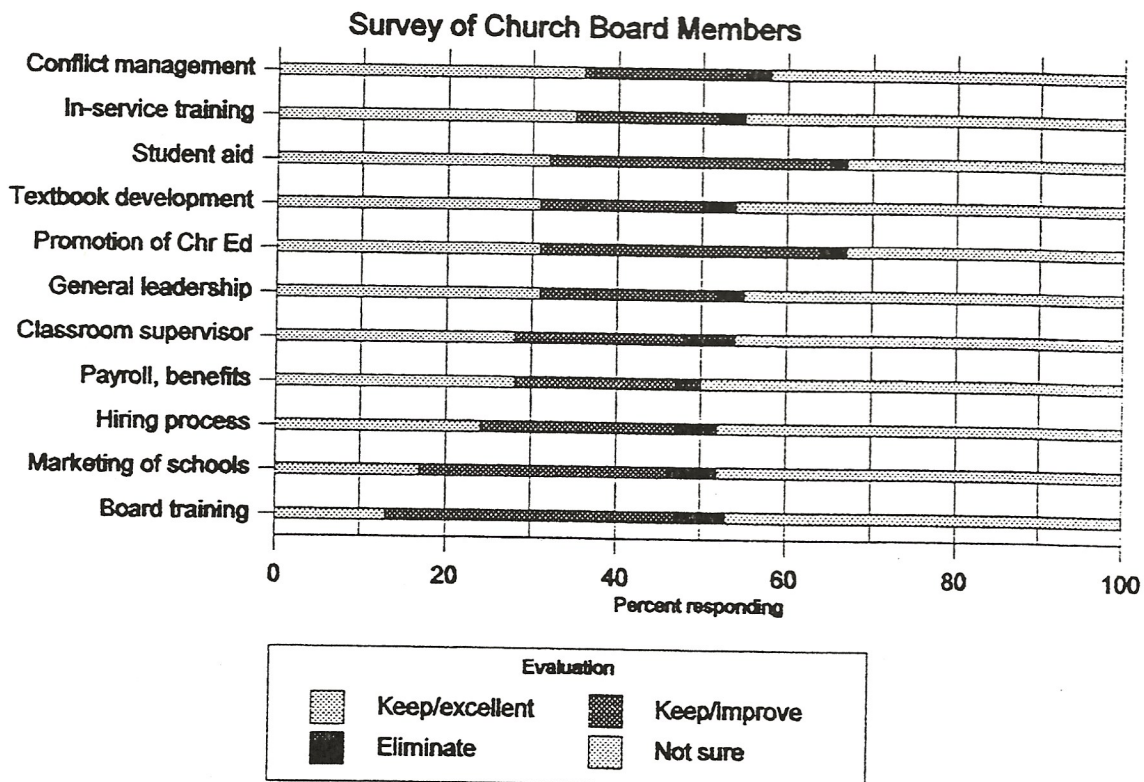


Church board members are more ambivalent on this topic. In nine out of the 11 specific services mentioned, nearly half of the respondents indicate that they are not sure how to evaluate the need. An equal or slightly larger number in each case see a need for these services.

Two out of three lay leaders express a definite need for two other specific services mentioned; student aid to enable every Adventist youth who wishes to do so to attend an Adventist school and promotion of Christian education among church members.

Among the half of church members who express an opinion, there is strong support for the services provided by the Education Department. Only 2% to 6% indicated that any one of the 11 services mentioned should be eliminated.

Needed services - Education



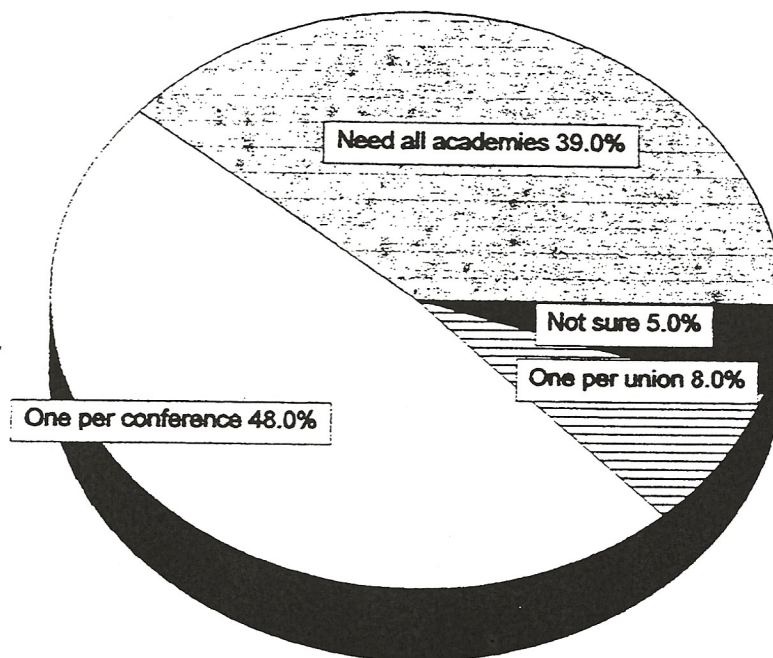
Consolidation of Secondary Schools

There is little support for a reduction in the number of secondary schools, except where a conference may have more than one boarding academy. Less than one pastor in ten indicates that "we do not need more than one boarding academy per union." Two in five say "we need all our academies to serve our young people." Nearly half agree that there is a need for only academy per conference.

What if a decision were made to have only one boarding academy in each union conference? Only one pastor in four would be willing to see the boarding academy in their conference closed.

Save money, consolidate academies?

Survey of pastors

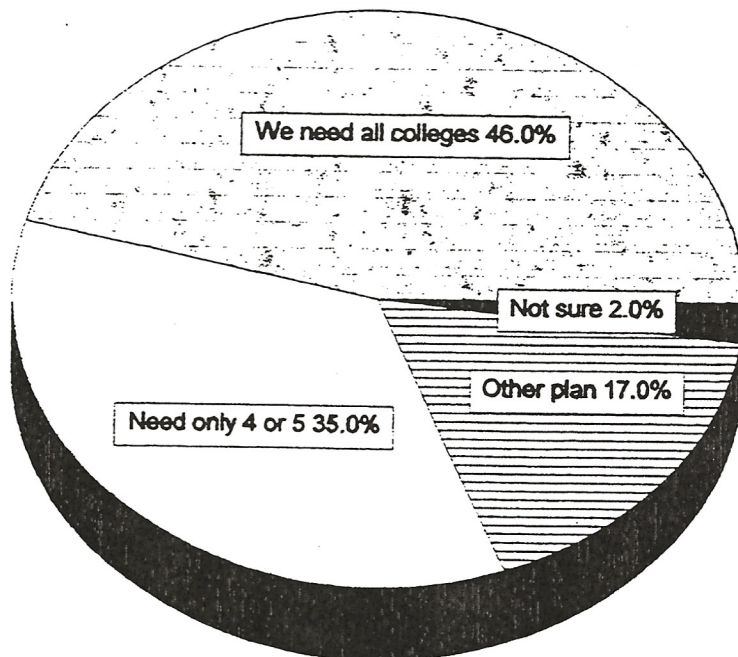


Reducing the Number of Colleges

There is more support among pastors for consolidation of the number of Adventist colleges and universities than for a reduction in the number of secondary schools. Half of the respondents (52%) agree that "we only need four or five colleges" or prefer some other reduction plan. Nearly half (45%) would be willing to see the nearest Adventist college closed or merged with another institution if a decision were made to reduce the total number.

Save by consolidating colleges?

Survey of pastors



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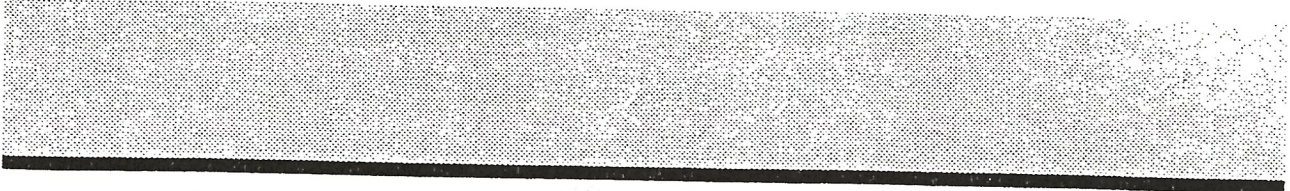
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Opinions of Local Church Leaders
about Restructuring and Cost
Reductions

What Restructuring is Preferred?

If the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America is to reorganize its structure in order to be more effective and more cost-efficient, what alternatives do pastors and lay leaders prefer? Four options were tested in telephone interviews with a random sample of pastors and church board members.

- A. Build up the staff of specialists in the local conferences and decrease staffing in the union conferences.
- B. Provide a strong staff covering all departments and specialized ministries at the union conferences and reduce local conference staff.
- C. Make sure there is a strong team of specialists at the division level and not increase staffing at either the local or union conference level.
- D. Do away with departmental staff in the Adventist Church and simply encourage our people to use acceptable non-Adventist resource organizations like Youth Specialties, Fuller Institute or David C. Cook.

Three out of four pastors and two out of three lay leaders (62%) recommend the first option. Opinion is divided on a second-choice alternative. Pastors are almost equally divided between Option C and Option B, while lay leaders more clearly prefer Option B.

"I am going to read four options to you. They relate to discussions about restructuring the denomination so that money can be returned to the local level. Please select the one that you would recommend. What is your recommendation? Which option would rank as a second choice for you?"

	RECOMMEND		2nd CHOICE	
	Pastors	Lay Leaders	Pastors	Lay Leaders
Option A	75%	62%	14%	15%
Option B	10%	13%	31%	36%
Option C	12%	16%	35%	26%
Option D	3%	3%	11%	3%

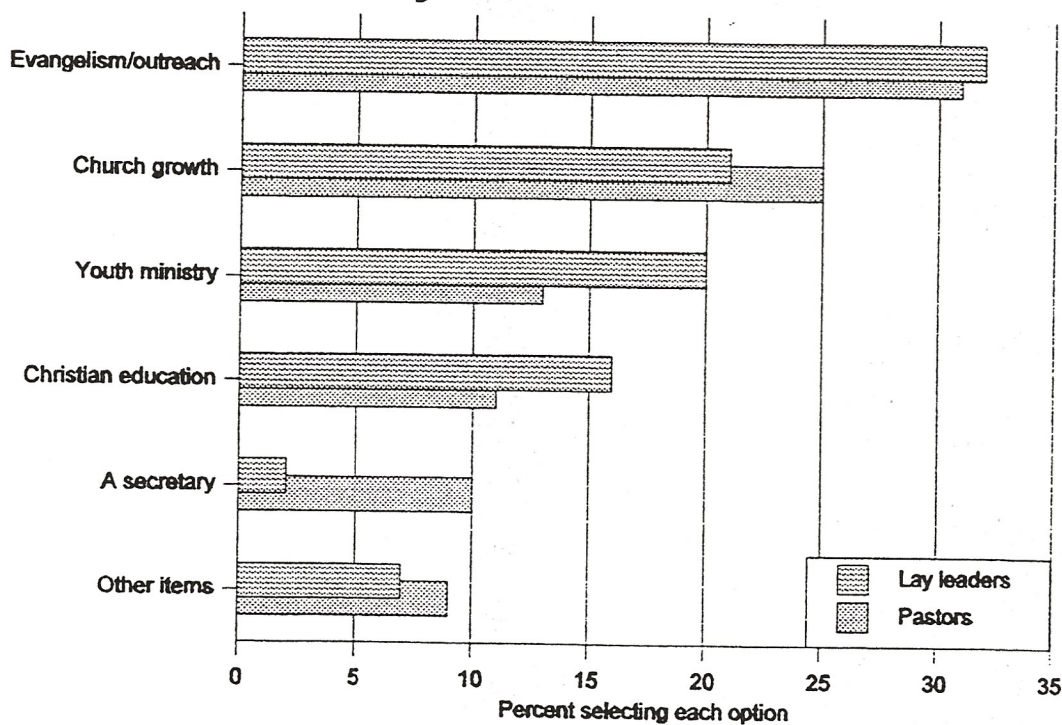
How Would Extra Funding be Used?

If there were increased funds available to pastors and church boards, how would they utilize those resources? Based on recent comments by pastors gathered by the NAD Office of Information & Research in its weekly, open-ended interviews with pastors, five alternatives were listed as possible answers to this question, and respondents were encouraged to list other possibilities.

One in three pastors (31%) and lay leaders (32%) would spend extra money on evangelism and outreach. One in four pastors and one in five lay leaders (21%) would use it to develop an overall strategy for church growth. The combined responses clearly indicate that a majority of local church leaders feel that more funding is needed in the soul-winning and compassion ministries of the local church.

Although some lay leaders prioritize youth ministry and Christian education more highly than do some pastors, there is remarkable lay-clergy unity on the funding needs of the local church. Four out of five pastors predicted that their church board would have the same priorities they expressed in the interview.

How would you use extra funds?



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The Needs of Local and Union Conference Staff Professionals and Their Opinions about Denominational Structure

The input of departmental directors from the local and union conferences was collected by the use of focus group research rather than survey research. Although this method is quite subjective and does not give statistical validation to the various opinions expressed, it does give a richness and texture not available in survey results. Because the total population is less than 500 individuals, it would be very difficult to use random sample survey techniques in any case.

The Pacific Union Church Resource Center was retained to conduct the focus group study because of the expertise of Dan Savino and his staff in this method, and so that division staff would be detached from the process. Three focus groups were conducted during the last week of January in St. Louis, Missouri, at the time of the every-two-year NAD Ministries Convention in order to eliminate travel costs and secure a wide range of participants. A professional market research center off-site from the meetings was leased for the focus group sessions, and they were taped and transcribed for analysis.

A total of 26 departmental staff were participants in one of the three groups. This included 22 working at the local conference level, three working at the union level, and one conference president who also has departmental assignments. Four of the local conference department directors are pastors who also have a staff assignment. All nine unions were included, and all departments were represented except Publishing. Four of the participants are female; 22 are male. Four of the participants are African American, four are Hispanic, and 18 are Anglo/Caucasian. They provide a representative cross-section of this important segment of denominational employees.

What do Conference and Union Staff Need?

What do conference departmental staff need from the union conference and the division to do their work well? What do union departmental staff need from the division and General Conference to do their work well? Participants were asked to respond to these questions in terms of their own needs, and the moderator gave examples of the kinds of things that might be included, "information, resource materials, training events, consultants, leadership, organized programs, funding, etc."

The responses were very individual and fragmented. Many seemed to focus on immediate issues instead of a wider view of the denominational system. A few participants were quite negative, with comments like "I can't think of anything I need from them," or "I need a clear idea of why they exist," or even the challenge to "quit talking about things you no longer know anything about." The major themes are listed below in the approximate rank order of how often they were mentioned.

- Clearer communication and more information, including greater opportunity for dialog between departmental staff at various levels

- Information about what is working and what is not working in the local church and conference programs
- Increased funding
- Personal support such as a listening ear, networking
- Meaningful direction and clarification of mission
- Events scheduled much further ahead than they are now, and the detailed planning information available much further ahead
- An accreditation or evaluation system "to determine whether we are passing or failing"
- Greater ethnic diversity and relevance in resource materials and in denominational programs

What Should be the Role of Department Directors?

Participants were asked to describe the role that they believe departmental staff should play in church structure. A wide variety of ideas were suggested. They are summarized in the list below with the number of participants who mentioned each concept in parenthesis following each item. The list is in rank order of the ideas most often mentioned.

- Train pastors and lay leaders (13)
- Provide support services (more broadly than just training) for pastors and the local churches (11)
- Motivate and inspire local church leaders, "cast a vision" for their area of specialized ministry (9)
- Coordinate and/or manage programs (9)
- Be a consultant or resource person (7)
- Provide, develop and/or help local leaders find resource materials (6)
- Provide information to conference administration and staff from the local churches (5)

- Provide information to local church leaders from the various levels of the denominational structure (3)
- Encourage networking among local leaders (2)
- Promote the goals of conference administration (2)

Review of Current Departmental Structure

Participants were each given a copy of the diagram that describes the current allocations of roles and functions among the four levels of denominational structure in the departments that provide support and resources for the local church. They were asked to spend several minutes marking-up the diagram to show specific suggestions for changes that would improve the system they work in. These marked-up diagrams were collected from the participants.

Two out of three of the returned diagrams include some suggestion for eliminating functions at the union level. Even union departmental staff wrote down suggestions (with their signatures attached!) for reducing tasks assigned to the union level. A wide range of very specific suggestions were made about individual functions. Only two themes were widely mentioned:

- Increase in the marketing program of the division for resource materials.
- The training of trainers and consultants ("level-2" training) needs to be the responsibility of the division, not the unions

One participant suggested eliminating both the unions and the division, so that the General Conference provides direct services to the local conferences. Another participant suggested eliminating the division.

What Would be an Ideal Structure?

Participants were asked to dream about the ideal denominational structure for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America. The majority of the responses focused on which level of the denomination should be eliminated, if any. Few original ideas were presented. The major themes are listed below in the approximate rank order of mention.

- Keep the same number of levels, but redefine what each level does

- Strengthen the division staff so that it can adequately provide for the need for resourcing and coordination; union departmental staff would not be needed
- Down-size the union staffs so that they only handle administrative and technical roles, such as doing the payroll for all of the local conferences
- Just eliminate the union conference level, or at least combine some of the unions, "we don't need as many as we have"
- Don't eliminate the unions; there might be too much centralization of power as a result of their elimination
- Get rid of either the local conferences or the union conferences; "we don't need both levels"
- Reduce the staffing in the local conferences
- Increase the staffing in the local conferences, especially in the area of family life ministries, "we are wearing too many hats"
- Establish small districts or mini-conferences with presidents or leaders who can provide greater supervision to local churches
- Whatever re-structuring is done, "don't touch the Regional Conferences;" establish two Afro-American union conferences

One individual suggested that larger districts should be established with fewer pastors, and "let the lay people do the work like they do in Latin America." Another individual said, "Let's eliminate the division and have stronger unions. The division is further away from the local church than the unions."

How to Be More Cost Effective

Participants were asked to share their ideas on how the denominational system can be made more cost effective. How can we save more money in the system? How can it be more efficient, "leaner?" How can we return more funds to the local church? Again, there were a wide range of responses, some contradictory. The major themes are listed below in the approximate rank order of mention.

- Get rid of non-productive workers

- Restructure our Christian education program and close some of the academies
- Reduce the amount of travel by conference and union administrators and the division staff
- Make greater use of new technology
- Eliminate the duplication of departments and functions at all levels
- Build a full staff of departmental specialists in each union and do not duplicate these functions at the local conference level
- Have the unions take over the treasury, payroll and accounting functions for the local conferences

Some participants felt that more money could be raised through the Tithes and offerings, if better communication were provided interpreting the need for financial support. "Give a true accounting of how we are spending the money and people will give more; Baby Boomers and Generation X need regular feedback" on this topic.

Others stressed the need for greater use of volunteers in the denominational system. "Pastors could be used to handle the departments" if the number of pastors were increased by shifting budgets from the office to the field. "Use more 'tentmaker' ministers" or bivocational pastors.

One individual said, "stop the higher-ups from sending down harebrained ideas that do not work." Another individual suggested down-sizing the unions and eliminating the division. Another participant said, "close some colleges."

Departmental Staffing at the Division, Union & Conference Levels

Denominational Staffing Levels

A total of 946.5 full-time equivalent (FTE) officers and senior staff work for the division, nine union conferences and 58 local conferences that make up the denominational structure of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America. This count was derived from the 1994 edition of the *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook*, and includes presidents, vice presidents, assistants to the president; officers holding the rank of secretary, associate secretary, and field secretary; treasurers, associate treasurers, and assistant treasurers; and the directors, associate directors and assistant directors of departments, services, offices and associations.

It is estimated from data in the report *Denominational Employees in the Adventist Church: How Many and Where are They Assigned?* (NAD Office of Information & Research, September 1994) that at least 1,000 support staff are employed in the same 68 denominational offices and related facilities such as book stores and camp sites. This includes clerical workers, accountants and cashiers, janitorial and maintenance workers, sales clerks, etc., who are not listed by job title in the *Yearbook*. This does not include any personnel who work at church-related schools, hospitals and publishing houses, or in local churches. It does not include the personnel of Risk Management Services or the General Conference Auditing Service.

Staffing Levels of Departments & Offices

Table 1 displays the FTE staffing in 25 departments and administrative units at each of the three levels -- division, union conference and local conference -- as well as the cumulative totals in each department. In order to identify the specific amount of staffing in each area, the listings in the *Yearbook* were compared with a listing of departmental speciality assignments compiled in late 1993, and where a particular person holds more than one assignment, that single FTE was broken into portions using the following guidelines:

- Where a department director is listed as having more than one department, the FTE factor of 1 was divided equally among the number of departments listed. For example, if William Jones was listed as the director or an associate in 4 departments, each department was assigned .25 FTE.
- Two exceptions to the first guideline relate to listings of Prison Ministry and Reclaiming Ministry coordinators. Where a department director had these assignments among his or her portfolio, there were assigned only the value of .1 FTE because these specialty areas have never been constituted as recognized departments or offices.

- Where a president also held a departmental assignment, the presidential office was assigned .9 FTE and the other department only .1 FTE because of the predominant role of presidential assignments in the time use and work of such a person. If a president held two additional departmental assignments, presidential was still given .9 FTE and the departments given .05 FTE each. In a few cases presidents in very small conferences hold three additional departmental assignments, but in no case was the portion assigned to presidential less than .85 FTE.
- Where a department director is a part-time employee or holds a pastoral or other field assignment as well as staff responsibilities, an appropriate apportionment of 1 FTE was made.
- Where a department director is a volunteer, as is the case for most Women's Ministries directors, some Adventist Community Services (ACS) directors, and in a few other instances in other departments, the value of .1 FTE was assigned. At least 6.5 of the total 946.5 FTE represent 65 unremunerated volunteers who, in most cases, work only part-time in their staff responsibilities.

Average Staffing Pattern in Unions & Conferences

By averaging the FTE assigned to each office and department among the nine unions and again among the 58 local conferences, it is possible to sketch a profile of the typical staffing pattern in denominational offices at each level. Table 2 displays these averages.

The "average" union conference office has:

- 2 FTE between the presidential and secretariat offices
- 4.75 FTE of fiscal officers in treasury, data processing and trust services
- 2 FTE in the Education Department
- a little more than a full FTE each in Communication and Publishing
- almost a full FTE in Religious Liberty
- a little more than 2 FTE assigned to the other 13 departments and offices

That is a total of about 14 FTE officers and senior staff which make up a typical union conference team. On average, there would be another 15 support staff too. The larger union conferences have additional staff at the department director level, as well as additional support staff, which are involved in unique activities outside the generally recognized departments and offices. Examples of this kind of activity are Southern Union Special Services that produce *Mission Spotlight* and the Pacific Union Church Resource Center that works in close collaboration with the division through the Church Resources Consortium.

The "average" local conference office has:

- 2 FTE assigned to the presidential and secretariat offices together with the Ministerial Association
- a little more than 3 FTE fiscal officers assigned to treasury, data processing and trust services
- 1.5 FTE in the Education Department
- a full FTE each in the Publishing Department and managing the Adventist Book Center
- a little more than 1 FTE assigned to youth and children's ministries, including Pathfinder Clubs and the summer camp program
- about 2.5 FTE assigned to the other 11 departments and offices

That is about 12 officers and senior staff that make up the team in a typical conference office. An equal number of support staff, including clerical workers, sales clerks, accountants, cashiers, and janitorial workers, also work in the same office.

Staff Resources Relative to Field Needs

Measures of productivity and customer-related accounting for personnel resources are new concepts in the Seventh-day Adventist denominational system. There are no established measures for relating the staffing of denominational offices and departments to specific needs in the field or productivity outcomes. In this study I have borrowed the concept of "billable hours" from accounting and law firms in order to establish some measure along these lines.

The formula used for "billable hours" in Table 3 is based on the assumption that denominational officers and staff work an average of 50 hours per week, and four weeks of each year are devoted to vacation and holidays. Each FTE was multiplied by 48

weeks multiplied by 50 hours, or a total of 2,400 "billable hours." This represents time that can be utilized in serving the needs of the field.

Table 3 relates the hours at the union level to local conferences. For example, each union conference presidential office can on average provide 497 hours per local conference each year. This does not seek to take into account generic, administrative tasks that are necessary but do not relate to any individual conference. It does not seek to take in consideration hours devoted to the hospital system, the colleges and universities or NAD and General Conference meetings and assignments.

Table 3 relates the hours at the local conference level to local churches. For example, each conference presidential office can on average provide 31 hours per local church each year. Again, this does not take into consideration general administrative duties such as chairing conference committee meetings, representing the conference on the union committee, etc. This is a general calculation spread across all 58 local conferences and representing the 4,600 local churches in the division; conferences with fewer churches or those with more churches would, of course adjust this figure accordingly if the same calculations were made on a conference-by-conference basis.

Table 3 does give some feel for the fragmentary nature of the time available to local churches and local conferences from staff resources. For example, if the typical local conference has about 2 hours per year to give to each local church to help it reach out and reclaim the many non-attending and former members, then it is possible to get a better understanding of the difficulties involved in pursuing a coherent strategy toward such a goal as the NAD did in 1993.

Table 1
Full-time Equivalent Staffing of Denominational Offices in the NAD

DEPARTMENT/OFFICE	DIVISION	UNIONS	CONF'S	TOTAL
Presidential	4.3	12.02	59.21	75.53
Secretariat	2	6.39	37.11	45.5
Treasury	3	20.9	108.03	131.93
Trust Services	2	7.4	81.12	90.52
Data Processing	4	14	4.5	22.5
Adventist Book Centers	0	0	62.68	62.68
A.C.S. & Inner City	1.1	2.06	17.76	20.92
Camps*	.5	0	13.11	13.61
Children's Ministries	1	.92	13.1	15.02
Communication	1	11.57	18.66	31.23
Education	4	19.4	84.82	108.22
Family Life Ministries	.25	1.54	16.15	17.94
Health-Temperance	1	1.13	13.58	15.71
Ministerial Association	2	3.51	30.53	33.04
Pathfinder Clubs	.5	1.17	15.58	17.25
Personal Ministries	.25	1.09	18.94	20.28
Prison Ministries	.25	.54	4.5	5.29
Publishing**	1	6	63.04	70.04
Reclaiming	.1	.75	4.51	5.27
Religious Liberty	1.5	7.73	7.5	16.73
Sabbath School	.25	1.05	13.62	14.92
Stewardship	1	2.68	16.94	20.62
Women's Ministries	1	1.3	7.36	9.66
Youth Ministries	1	2	21.82	24.82
Other	8	18.17	31.1	57.27

*Does not include personnel resident at the camp sites such as rangers, cooks.

**Does not include FER and PPPA personnel.

Table 2
Average Staffing of Departments/Offices in the NAD

DEPARTMENT/OFFICE	UNIONS	CONFERENCES
Presidential	1.33	1.02
Secretariat	0.71	.64
Treasury	2.32	1.86
Trust Services	0.82	1.4
Data Processing	1.56	0.08
Adventist Book Centers	0.00	1.08
A.C.S. & Inner City	0.23	0.31
Camps*	0.00	0.23
Children's Ministries	0.1	0.23
Communication	1.29	0.32
Education	2.16	1.46
Family Life Ministries	0.17	0.28
Health-Temperance	0.13	0.23
Ministerial Association	0.39	0.52
Pathfinder Clubs	0.13	0.27
Personal Ministries	0.12	0.33
Prison Ministries	0.06	0.08
Publishing**	1.37	1.09
Reclaiming	0.08	0.08
Religious Liberty	0.86	0.13
Sabbath School	0.12	0.23
Stewardship	0.3	0.29
Women's Ministries	0.14	0.13
Youth Ministries	0.22	0.38
Other	2.02	0.54

*Does not include personnel on location at camp sites.

**Average calculated on those unions/conferences not participating in FER/PPPA.

Table 3
Service Capacity of Departments/Offices in the NAD

DEPARTMENT/OFFICE	UNIONS HRS/CONF*	CONF's HRS/CHURCH**
Presidential	497	31
Secretariat	264	19
Treasury	865	56
Trust Services	306	42
Data Processing	579	2
Adventist Book Centers	0	33
A.C.S. & Inner City	85	9
Camps	0	7
Children's Ministries	38	7
Communication	479	10
Education	803	44
Family Life Ministries	64	8
Health-Temperance	47	7
Ministerial Association	145	16
Pathfinder Clubs	48	8
Personal Ministries	45	10
Prison Ministries	22	2
Publishing	720	33
Reclaiming	31	2
Religious Liberty	320	4
Sabbath School	43	7
Stewardship	111	9
Women's Ministries	54	4
Youth Ministries	83	11
Other	752	16

*The annual number of "billable hours" per conference.

**The annual number of "billable hours" per local church.

An Overview and Analysis of Local Conference Financial Patterns

In order to get an overview and analysis of the use of financial resources by the 58 local conferences in the North American Division, George Crumley, the NAD treasurer, requested that each of the nine union conference treasurers prepare a worksheet from the local conference financial statements which have been received in their offices. These were the financial statements for the 1993 calendar (and fiscal) year. From these worksheets the following analysis has been prepared.

Methodology

In order to get a representation of the overall usage of funds by a typical local conference, the following information was extracted from the worksheets for all except four of the 58 local conferences. Four were eliminated because it appears from the information on the worksheets that either some typographical error is present or these conferences are using non-standard accounting procedures.

The actual dollar amount sent on to other levels of the denomination was calculated on each worksheet. Policy calls for 21% of Gross Tithe to be shared as follows; 20% to the division and General Conference, 10% to the union conference, and 1% to the Special Assistance Fund operated in each union to equalize tithe among larger conferences with greater income, and smaller conferences with less income. From this amount was subtracted the appropriations, "come-backs" and reversions received from the division and union conference to calculate a net contribution to the denominational structure.

Local conferences also contribute 9.75% of their Gross Tithe to the Retirement Fund to provide retirement benefits for their employees. On each worksheet this amount was prorated among the portion of conference employees who are assigned to the conference office and related activities, pastoral and other field work, the church school system, the Literature Evangelism program (if one exists) and in a few cases an "other" category. This provided an actual dollar amount of retirement contributions assignable to each major cost center in the conference.

For the purposes of this report, the calculated dollar amounts for net contribution to higher levels of the denomination and for retirement contributions for each major cost center were integrated with the conference financial report simplified to the following major cost categories -- church program, education program, publishing program, special services, other programs and supporting services (administrative and departmental functions). Percentages were calculated for each of these major categories and then average percentages for each category calculated for each union conference. This results in a picture of an "average" conference, not any real conference. This "average" conference is very close to three out of four actual conference profiles.

Table 1
Average Conference Expenditures by Major Categories

Union Conference	Sent on	Church Program	Schools	Lit. Evang.	Other	Conf Office
Atlantic	18%	33%	26%	1%	9%	13%
Canada	11%	53%	8%	2%	1%	25%
Columbia	19%	42%	17%	1%	8%	13%
Lake	18%	29%	30%	2%	9%	12%
Mid-America	13%	36%	24%	2%	14%	11%
North Pacific	17%	39%	16%	1%	11%	16%
Pacific	23%	37%	17%	1%	10%	12%
Southern	18%	37%	17%	3%	12%	13%
Southwestern	20%	43%	11%	3%	8%	15%