A guide to setting up an AA teleconference service

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Background: With the new reality of living with Covid-19, we are looking for options to enable people to attend meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous remotely. One solution is a meeting where people attend in person as well as having a teleconference line in the room.

Purpose: This document outlines my investigations so far, in setting up a limited teleconference capacity for my local AA meeting. This provides an option for people who:

1. are unable to attend their regular meeting in person or
2. are concerned with the limitations of other online meeting options (e.g. skype and security/anonymity gaps) or
3. do not have reliable Internet access
4. are not inclined to use the Internet

Scope: This option outlines my experiences with a particular carrier (Optus) via a particular device (Apple iPhone). There may/will be limitations with other carriers and teleconference devices. Using an Optus mobile SIM provides the ability for up to 5 additional attendees to join a teleconference (6 including teleconference number in the room).

Disclaimer:

- I am not advocating the services of Optus, nor am I promoting the use of Apple products.
- Peoples experiences may differ based upon carrier plan and version of iPhone/teleconference device used.
- I am aware that several mobile carriers and their subsidiaries do not allow for teleconferences (e.g. Amaysim). I can confirm that my Optus pre-paid service works and have heard that Telstra works as well (search online to see if your carrier supports teleconference capability).
- Some Android devices do allow teleconferences, but the general tech community consensus is that Android devices are less secure.
- Normal call costs apply.

Tools Required:

1. Optus SIM (or selected carrier)
2. iPhone (or selected teleconference device)
3. Bluetooth speaker (optional)

How to Setup Phone

1. Purchase an Optus SIM
2. Follow carrier instructions to activate service and select plan
3. Insert SIM in iPhone, if you haven't already
4. In phone settings
   a. Activate "Call Waiting"
   b. Deactivate "Show My Caller ID" (This is optional)

How to Host

1. Wait for first caller to attend and answer call
2. When a second person calls, select "answer and place on hold"
3. Select "Merge Calls"

    You will hear "New attendee in call"

4. Repeat steps 2 & 3 as each attendee calls in
    When someone leaves the call you will hear "An attendee has left the call"

How to run a teleconference meeting

Use a meeting run sheet as normal and adjust for teleconference scenario.

- Get everyone on the phone and attending in person to introduce themselves (e.g. first name, city and perhaps home group – adjust at your discretion).
- If someone dials in during the meeting, ask them to introduce themselves after the current share is finished.
- Tradition 7 - For overseas attendees, suggest that they donate to their local meeting. For local attendees provide account details. Here is an tradition 7 instruction set for the daily Brisbane online meeting (https://aaaussieaa.wixsite.com/skype/traditons)
- Set up an information webpage (instructions out of scope) or use the above example, so that attendees can refer to literature such as a reading of the day.
- Ask that members mute their microphone when not speaking, to reduce echo and feedback.
- Mute or turn down the host <u>speaker</u> when phone attendees are not sharing, to reduce echo and feedback.

How to attend

1. Call the teleconference phone number(e.g. 0422391150 for Byford Thursday 7pm)

- **Suggestion 1** : Call no earlier than 5 minutes before the meeting is due to commence
- **Suggestion 2**: To improve anonymity we suggest attendees turn off caller ID, by prefixing the phone number with #31# if calling from a mobile phone and *31 if calling from a landline. Using the above example:
    - from mobile #31#0422391150
    - from landline *310422391150