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**THE BRITISH NUCLEAR INDUSTRY FORUM'S PUBLIC AFFAIRS
CAMPAIGN**

SYNOPSIS OF PRESENTATION TO PIME 2000

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In March 1999, BNIF launched a public affairs Campaign with the objective of influencing the views of opinion formers – particularly in the political field – about the case for nuclear energy as a long-term, sustainable component of the UK's energy mix.

The Campaign was launched to BNIF's 70 member companies under the slogan, *Profiting through Partnership – By Changing the Climate of Opinion*. That slogan was chosen to emphasise a key feature of the Campaign approach, which is the importance of an industry speaking collectively with one voice, but with each individual company actively playing its part by spreading the industry's messages to their own local and regional audiences – Members of Parliament, local politicians, local media – to build a groundswell of support for the eventual renewal of nuclear energy in the UK. Our aim was to place the prospect of a new nuclear power station firmly on the political agenda during the lifetime of the next Parliament – that is, in the period 2002-2007.

The Campaign was launched at a time when a few encouraging signs were emerging of a growing recognition in Government, Parliament, and in academic and scientific circles that nuclear energy has an important role to play in meeting the energy and environmental challenges of the 21st century. The challenge, in particular, of climate change and the UK Government's commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions undertaken at Kyoto and in its election manifesto, gave the industry a strong, positive issue on which to campaign. However, we fully recognised that to make a convincing case for nuclear energy we would also have to address the issues of concern and doubt in the minds of the public and politicians – economic competitiveness, waste management, transport and decommissioning.

During the year, BNIF produced a range of Campaign materials, made submissions to several Government and other inquiries and consultations, organised events, meetings and discussions, all with the view of promoting a balanced and persuasive case for nuclear energy and the achievements of the nuclear industry. There are indications that the messages are being heard and acknowledged by those whose opinions and decisions could determine the future shape of energy and environmental policy. There is, though, still a long way to go to change the prevailing climate of public and political opinion towards nuclear energy.

Despite some modest successes in the first year of the Campaign, the degree of support and active involvement BNIF had hoped for from its member companies has not materialised. Therefore, the ways in which BNIF has sought to orchestrate the delivery of the Campaign will need to be reviewed and revised.

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