

WINFO

Newsletter of Women in Nuclear WIN No.12 (2/96)

Nuclear Communication – the WINning Formula

WIN's Enlarged Leading Group has held its third meeting since its formation last year. The group, which now comprises all presidents and liaison officers of national groups, met in Brussels on February 3rd – the day before PIME '96 kicked off in the Belgian city of Bruges (see below). The meeting discussed the communication programme drafted by the Executive Leading Group in Budapest last October and adopted it, with a few changes, as follows:

Permanent goals:

- to contribute to objectively informing the public, especially women, about nuclear energy and radiation
- to develop a dialogue with the public

Future goals:

- by the year 2000, 75% of women in important positions in the nuclear industry should be WIN members
- by the year 2000, a country WIN group should exist in each country that uses nuclear energy
- WIN should also be promoted among the authorities and medical personnel

Three most important messages:

- Radiation: Radiation is part of everyday life, and can be beneficial if used the right way.

- Safety: Life is not risk-free, and the nuclear industry has a unique safety culture. Nuclear safety should be seen in an overall context.
- Sustainable development: The nuclear industry cares for the environment and can make an important contribution to sustainable energy supplies.

Communication strategy:

Communication must be open, honest and from a human perspective. Effective communication informs people on three different levels: the ethical, the economical, the technical/scientific.

PIME '96: A Resounding Success

The growing role of women in nuclear communications worldwide was reflected in the number attending this year's PIME conference in Bruges (February 4th–7th). Of the 163 listed participants – itself a record – no fewer than 55 were women, with many of them playing an active role in proceedings.

The main theme of the Bruges workshop was "How to put nuclear back into fashion" – a theme which it tackled from a variety of angles. Colin Duncan, the chairman of the European Nuclear Society's Information Committee, said the overriding message of the meeting was that in the nuclear industry, perhaps more than in any other, it is necessary to think globally in strategic planning terms, but act locally when it comes to implementation.

Group Portrait with Ladies

WINners who attended the Enlarged Leading Group meeting in Brussels were rewarded for their efforts with a restaurant dinner, courtesy of WIN Belgium, in the historic Waterloo section of town.

Pictured (right to left) are: Cécile Bruwier, president of WIN Belgium; Irene Aegerter, outgoing WIN president; Julie Gillies, Scottish Nuclear; Ludmilla Kiss-Zoltan , Paks NPP, Hungary.



Getting Down to Business

The Executive Leading Group, which met in Budapest in October, drafted a WIN business plan comprising the following items:

- regular updates of the WIN database
- production of a quarterly WIN newsletter (WINFO), containing reports, features and other articles of interest to women
- production of a good PR brochure outlining WIN's goals and communication programme, in order to promote the organisation
- creation of a WIN home page on the Internet
- organisation of an annual international WIN meeting and General Assembly
- organisation of seminars about radiation-related risk perception and risk communication
- organisation of national communications workshops together with WIN country groups
- initiation of studies about female perceptions of nuclear energy
- production of fact sheets about radiation uses, Chernobyl, etc.
- arrangements for WIN award nomination and presentation

The following business plan has been drafted for 1996:

- organise seminars (one in St. Petersburg on the issue of safety)
- start a documentation centre relating to issues relevant to women in nuclear
- exchange experience on the best ways of communicating ideas to female audiences
- start looking for project sponsors

Changing of the Guard

The fifth annual WIN meeting (to be held in St. Petersburg, starting on May 29th) will be the occasion for WINners from all over the world to choose their next leader. The election of a new president, to replace outgoing president Irene Aegerter of Switzerland, is one of the first items on the agenda. The Enlarged Leading Group will meet on May 29th, and the WIN general assembly will be held on the following day. The programme for the event has already been drawn up, and invitations have been sent to all WIN members. The programme looks like this:

Wednesday, May 29th, 18.00–20.00:

Enlarged Leading Group meeting, followed by dinner

Thursday, May 30th:

09.00–10.00: **WIN general assembly**

Agenda:

1. Welcome
2. President's annual report
3. Election of new president
4. Altering WIN charter
5. 1st WIN Award: Presentation
6. New WIN projects
7. Any other business

10.00–13.00: Country reports (part 1)

13.00–14.00: Lunch

14.00–16.00: Country reports (part 2)

16.00–16.30: Coffee Break

16.30–18.00: **Panel: Women and technological safety in the 21st century (jointly with women's section of Russian Nuclear Society)**

18.30–20.00: Bus tour to St. Petersburg

20.00: Dinner

Friday, May 31st:

08.00–16.30: Visit to Sosnovy Bor

Technical tour to Leningrad NPP (including lunch)

16.30–19.30: Departure of participants (on request) to airport
Visit to Petergoff

19.30–21.00: Dinner

Saturday, June 1st:

08.00–12.30: Visit to Gatchina: Konstaninov Petersburg Nuclear Physics Institute

12.30: Lunch

14.30–18.00: Cultural programme

Departure on request (20 minute drive to Pulkovo international airport)

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The WIN Award – Choosing a Winner

The St. Petersburg annual meeting will also be the occasion for presentation of the first WIN award. Five women have been nominated for the honour: Elida Bustos of Argentina; Carolyn Heising of the USA; Lioudmila Kolesnikova of Russia; Valentine Vanhove and Nadine Van Mechelen of Belgium (joint entry). The winner will be chosen by members of the Executive Leading Group, and the award presented at the annual meeting.

What Women Want to Know (About Nuclear) ...

WIN Belgium has conducted a survey to identify the nuclear-related issues of most concern to women. The main findings? Theme number one for most women is radwaste – what happens to it and is it safe? Most of the other questions raised by the majority of women concern radioactivity, and range from its nature and effects on health and the environment to the likelihood of another accident comparable to Chernobyl. WIN members discussed the results of the survey at a meeting with WIN Belgium in February. Their main conclusions? The best way to talk about radioactivity is to give the audience first-hand experience of radioactive materials, explain that radioactivity is constantly present in our everyday life, and show how it is actually measured. This is far more effective than copious technical explanations.

Country Reports: From Nuclear Tango to Quality Czechs

Argentina's Elida Bustos was one of the five nominees for the WIN Award '96 (see above). To accompany her nomination, an article by her was presented, entitled "The Nuclear Tango, or how to deal with public opinion in Argentina".

Presentation of the article was just one of the highlights of an active WIN year in Argentina. A talk given by national WIN representative Maela Viirsoo at last year's annual meeting in Sweden was repeated to audiences at the Argentine Atomic Energy Commission, the Argentine Association for Nuclear Technology and the Swedish Foundation, among others.

Maela Viirsoo also gave a talk on WIN activities to participants in the annual meeting of the Argentine Association for Nuclear Technology.

In the Czech Republic, an independent organisation named "For Cleaner Energy" has been set up, to promote nuclear energy as a safe and environmentally-friendly energy source. The association brings together women working in nuclear-related fields and welcomes all women who sympathise with its aims as members. It aims to improve the quality of public information and debate by organising lectures and study trips, interacting with the mass media, providing and/or acquiring technical information and collaborating with similar organisations in the Czech Republic and abroad.
