

Arms Fairs networking session at National Gathering 2008

The session provided an opportunity for campaigners from CAAT, ELAAF and Disarm DSEI to share ideas about campaigning in the run up to DSEI next year.

Group 1: Clarion

1. With Reed we could attend their AGM, but this isn't an option with Clarion, so what other opportunities are there to reach board members?

- Board meetings - protest outside, NVDA inside
- Writing personalised letters to board members

Comment: Every letter to an MP is counted as though it represents 10 people (they assume there are 9 who agree but didn't write) and perhaps companies / board members think in a similar way?

2. Emailing customer services or 'contact us' section of company website to reach staff in less senior positions

3. Continue targeting other Clarion events, especially where there's an obvious contradiction with the arms trade. ie. next Baby Show in Feb/March 09.

4. AGMs of companies that exhibit at Clarion events, go in as token shareholders to inform board and shareholders.

5. Find out if Boris Johnson will oppose DSEi.

6. Go to Clarion CEO's home town and hold stalls, write to local press, get local councillor and MP support - NOT naming him or targeting him personally, but ensuring campaign reaches him directly.

Group 2: Campaigning prior to DSEi

- Have a template letter on the CAAT website for both Clarion and the private equity company – draw attention to this on the CAAT website and in CAAT news.
- Target East London MPs – Fitzpatrick is one of the local MPs
- Target the Mayor of Newham – he is elected so open to public opinion
- Target local press - angles include link the fact Newham was heavily bombed and the cost of policing DSEi does the policing budget come out of local or national budgets
- Who owns the Excel centre? Target them/the shareholders and events at the Excel centre in general

Emailing – update CAAT members and contact other peace/social justice/campaigning groups

Group 3: Networking around DSEi campaigning

There was concern about lack of co-ordination and it was suggested that the London CAAT group, the CAAT office and ELAAF should and could stay in touch about campaigning. It was suggested that there was a natural division of labour with ELAAF concentrating on events around Excel and the London CAAT group could focus on Clarion events in west London. Disarm DSEi were also represented at the session.