

### Introduction

UKASTA is the leading association for the agricultural supply trade. It has over 350 members including manufacturers of animal feed, road hauliers and agricultural merchants, with a combined annual turnover of £5 billion.

As such, it is at the forefront of the debate on all issues affecting its members. In recent years, it has presented the industry view on subjects including the BSE crisis, dioxins in animal feeds, salmonella, organophosphates, antibiotics and medicinal residues and genetically-modified products.

### Objective

Mistral's key objectives were to protect and enhance the animal feed industry's reputation in the face of various animal health-related issues.

A key aspect of this was protecting the industry from blame in the Phillips Inquiry over the BSE crisis.

### Strategy

Mistral worked proactively with UKASTA to provide a full crisis preparedness and issues management service. As soon as an issue started to develop, the subject was fully researched and position statements and Question & Answer documents written to respond to media and general public enquiries. These documents were regularly updated to ensure their continued relevance as the crisis situation developed.

Mistral, acting as UKASTA's press office, then handled all press calls and agreed UKASTA's comments before responding to journalists.

Issues were also monitored extensively in the press to follow developments and, where appropriate, a register of all journalists who had commented on the issue was maintained.

Through this approach, UKASTA successfully communicated consistent messages to a number of audiences, to the benefit of its members.

### Results

As an example, following the Mistral/UKASTA combined efforts during the BSE crisis, the Phillips Inquiry cleared the animal feed industry of all blame.

