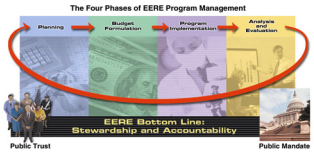
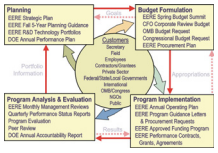
Appendix G-5
EERE Support Services Guidelines





Click here to access the *EERE Support Services Guidelines* in its entirety at http://ee-intranet/sops/pdfs/support_services_guidelines.pdf.

Introduction

The use of technical and management support services at the DOE Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) is a critical component of program implementation. The employment of support service contracts complement and supplement the use of Federal staff and the DOE National Laboratories. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to achieve published EERE program goals without the assistance of contracted support services.

However, support services are no cure-all. It cannot substitute for many activities that must be performed by Federal employees. Indeed, the need for support services varies across the organization and over time. In some cases, support service contractors can provide a quick infusion of technical expertise to help address an urgent need. In other cases, off-loading of routine tasks to support services contractors allows Federal employees to focus on higher-level administrative, policy, and R&D decisions.

Identifying the proper level of funding for support services is a constant balancing act for EERE program managers at each of its headquarters and field locations. The need for support services must be weighed against the availability of resources, as well as the skills mix available at headquarters and the field.

Historically, EERE has had sufficient flexibility to provide for both technical and management support services across its programs. However, in recent years the availability of funding for support services has become constrained, especially for programs funded by the Energy and Water Development (EWD) Appropriations Bill. These low dollar levels are hampering the ability of EWD funded programs to conduct technical reviews and prepare reports in the most efficient manner.

Just as short-falls in support service funding can reduce efficiency, over-reliance on these types of contracts can lead to negative

long-term effects by insulating DOE employees from important programmatic elements. EERE managers must also be sensitive to potential negative perceptions or misunderstandings created by relatively large and visible support services contracts.

Internal and external analyses of EERE support services have identified several opportunities to improve their utilization. The August 2003 EERE Management Action Plan includes a specific area of improvement for support services. This document serves as one of the first steps taken in implementing the action plan and improving the use of support services within EERE.