

Annual Report: Reestablishing Strategic Focus



U.S. Department of Energy
State Energy Advisory Board

October 1, 2003 through September 30, 2005

What Is STEAB?

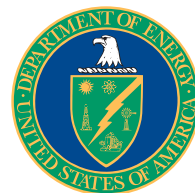
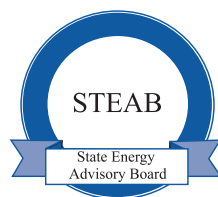
The State Energy Advisory Board (STEAB) is comprised of State energy directors, Weatherization directors, other state officials, and representatives of state and local interests. The Board's statutory charge is to develop recommendations for the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and the U.S. Congress regarding initiation, design, implementation, and evaluation of federal energy efficiency and renewable energy programs and policies. STEAB maintains a close working relationship with DOE's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) and provides a conduit through which federal, state, and local voices can be heard at DOE and other offices of the federal government. STEAB also offers a forum for the exchange of ideas and information on energy issues and policies.

**U. S. Department of Energy
State Energy Advisory Board (STEAB)**

Annual Report

Reestablishing Strategic Focus

**For Period October 1, 2003
Through September 30, 2005**



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1. Executive Summary

The State Energy Advisory Board (STEAB) is now entering its fifteenth year. It was established by Public Law 101-440 of the State Energy Efficiency Programs Improvement Action of 1990 and charged to advise the U. S. Department of Energy (DOE) on the operation of its federal grant programs. Its role is to develop recommendations for the U.S. Department of Energy and the Congress regarding initiation, design, implementation, and evaluation of federal energy efficiency and renewable energy programs. In doing so, STEAB serves to integrate and provide consistency between federal, state and local activities.

With activities continuing apace in a dynamic operating environment, the Board recently paused to evaluate its planning framework and undertake a strategic review with respect to: (1) the needs of and relationships with its clients and stakeholders; (2) continuing trends and projections in STEAB-chartered areas of interest; and (3) emerging strategic issues.

Strategic priorities were established to focus on the highest priorities of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy by clarifying valued stakeholder issues. These were broken into three focus categories: (1) Programmatic; (2) Organizational; and (3) Current Issues. These focused categories are in congruence with EERE's and the President's Management Agenda to:

- Improve organizational efficiency through stakeholder input and collaboration.
- Remove artificial organizational layers.
- Focus on programs and empower the Program Manager, resulting in greater accountability.
- Focus on the Program Manager results rather than processes.

The Board narrowed the topics and achieved consensus on pursuing three new strategic priorities to guide its future activities over the next year. It directed its near-term focus and attention to two emergent issues: implementation of the Energy Policy Act of 2005; and the impending consolidation of the DOE Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) Regional Offices. The third priority will be an ongoing focus on wide-ranging efforts related to furthering energy efficiency initiatives.

The Board established a task force to develop recommendations to EERE for planning and implementing the provisions of the Energy Policy Act of 2005. An additional task force will focus on the Regional Office consolidation to ensure that critical Regional Office functions, such as technology deployment, local policy interpretation, peer exchange, local synergy, training and technical assistance and national weatherization program evaluation are preserved in some manner.

The Board adopted a strategic planning framework and will use it to maintain focus and periodically refresh its strategic priorities in the face of changing conditions.

Over the past two years, the Board experienced difficulties and encountered roadblocks affecting Board continuity. The number of meetings was insufficient to develop valued recommendations. Several legal constraints impeded the appointment of new members. These barriers resulted in failure to attain required levels of membership. Although these issues were eventually resolved, they consumed considerable valuable Board time, energy, and focus. Consequently, the Board was able to meet only four times in the two-year period and was unable to prepare and submit an Annual Report for FY 2004. Despite this, the Board, primarily through its standing committee structure, has maintained a strong dialogue with EERE leadership and programs, the National Laboratories technology research and development initiatives, and State Energy and Weatherization Programs. Through this dialogue, the Board has provided timely input and advice in each of these areas.

2. Introduction

There is growing public concern that the United States is on the verge of an energy crisis. The catastrophic events related to Hurricane Katrina have only served to fuel their anxieties. Consequently, Americans are calling for action at the federal and State levels. It is becoming increasingly obvious that sound energy policy is inextricably linked with sustained economic growth and environmental wellbeing. Most Americans are unfamiliar with the nuances of federal and State energy policy. However, from gasoline pumps to executive board rooms, common experience tells Americans that something needs to be done.

The recently passed Energy Policy Act of 2005 has numerous provisions affecting the policies and programs of the Department of Energy, in particular the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, as well as State Energy Programs. It is imperative that STEAB weigh in strategically to ensure that energy efficiency and renewable energy programs develop viable plans, justify and effectively defend budget requests based on those plans, and carry out their

programs in the most efficient and effective manner to optimize their contributions to the energy outlook for the nation.

It is in this climate that the State Energy Advisory Board (STEAB) presents its consolidated report for FY 2004 and FY 2005. STEAB has renewed its strategic focus through a concerted strategic review and evolutionary planning process that will guide its attention and resources toward a few vital current issues that are expected to yield the maximum benefit to EERE. The three areas that STEAB has selected for this next year are:

- (1) The Energy Policy Act of 2005;
- (2) The consolidation of EERE Regional Offices; and
- (3) Wide-ranging efforts to further energy efficiency initiatives.

As events occur and conditions change, STEAB will revisit its strategic planning framework to ensure that its strategic priorities are relevant.

3. Summary of Activities

a. Meetings

Dates	Location	Organizations Visited	Primary Agenda Topics
March 11-12, 2004	Washington, DC		Performance-based metrics; State Energy Program and Weatherization; EERE Technology Development Programs; EERE organizational issues
August 12-13, 2004	Portland, OR	Bonneville, Power Administration's Dittmer Operations Center	Reinvention of Weatherization Program Technical Assistance; Office of Weatherization and Intergovernmental Programs (OWIP) Management Changes; National Lab/State Energy Office Interface; STEAB committee reports
November 18-19, 2004	Albuquerque, NM	Sandia National Laboratory	DWIP Reorganization; EERE Deployment Strategy and Role of the Regional Office Director of Operations (RODD); Annual Report; STEAB Strategic Plan
August 2-4, 2005	Golden, CO	National Renewable Energy Laboratory	STEAB Strategic Planning; Renewable Technology Research & Development

b. Committee and Task Force Activities

Weatherization/State Energy Programs

STEAB has continued its dialogue and close working relationship with EERE's Office of Weatherization and Intergovernmental Programs in a time of dynamic change. STEAB has provided counsel and recommendations to Office of Weatherization and Intergovernmental Programs on its reorganization, strategic deployment study, program plans and budget formulation, changes in leadership, and the roles of the Regional Offices and the Regional Office Director of Operations. STEAB has also reviewed issues of Congressional committee jurisdiction and prospective transfer of program responsibility to other cabinet-level agencies, as well as internal EERE initiatives to shift responsibility for program implementation to the field.

EERE Strategic Goal(s)

- Increase the energy efficiency of buildings and appliances; and
- Reduce the burden of energy prices on the disadvantaged.

Expected Outcomes

- Technical Assistance in the Weatherization and Intergovernmental Programs improve through connections between and among States, regions, EERE, partners and outreach stakeholders.
- State Energy Offices improve communications and working relationships with EERE and stakeholders.

STEAB Accomplishments

- Reviewed the Weatherization and Intergovernmental Gateway Programs and proposed changes, March 2004.
- Reviewed the pending FY 2005 appropriations bills concerning the State Energy Program, Weatherization and Special Projects including reauthorization language, March 2004.
- Reviewed EERE issues regarding Improving Technical Assistance in the Weatherization and Intergovernmental Program, and reviewed the management changes in the Office of Weatherization Intergovernmental Program, August 13, 2004.
- Reviewed "A Proposed Strategy for Weatherization and Intergovernmental Program Technical Assistance," October 2004.
- These reviews and STEAB analysis of issues resulted in recommendations to EERE.
 - See the August 13, 2003, Letter of Recommendation to Mr. David K. Garman, Re: Issue of Weatherization Training and Technical Assistance Funds.
 - STEAB developed a position regarding the National Constituency Letter and Congressional Jurisdictional Responsibility for the Weatherization Assistance Program. See the August 27, 2004, Letter of Recommendation to Mr. David K. Garman, Re: Congressional Jurisdictional Responsibility for Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) Appropriations.
 - The STEAB Weatherization Assistance Program and State Energy Program Committee developed a follow-up charge

and scope with proposed action items for maintaining viable support for state weatherization assistance.

- Mr. David K. Garman, Assistant Secretary, EERE “thanked the STEAB for its work on program metrics, saying the ability to show spending outcomes helped EERE get its budget increase. He said EERE is striving to become more efficient and trying to reduce the cost of overhead while improving deployment of funds and technology. He asked STEAB to help develop a compendium of barriers to renewable energy deployment in the states, citing what methods are successful (March 11-12, 2004).”
- Accepted and processed public comment presentations and recommendations from program partners (Example: Puget Sound Clean Cities Coalition, August 12-13, 2004).
- Updated the STEAB website to link federal, regional and state EERE units. See <http://www.STEAB.org>. Completed after August 13, 2004 STEAB meeting.
- Reviewed the resources of and role of the Northwest Sustainable Energy for Economic Development group. They requested input and guidance from STEAB, August 2004.

National Laboratories

The Board visited *Sandia National Laboratory (Albuquerque)* and the *National Renewable Energy Laboratory (Denver)* – two national labs engaged in renewable energy and energy efficiency technology research and development. The Board received technical presentations, held discussions on Research & Development (R&D) projects with broad and specific research implications, and heard about lab outreach programs and services.

EERE Strategic Goal(s)

- Increase the energy efficiency of buildings and appliances;
- Increase the energy efficiency of industry; and
- Increase the viability and deployment of renewable energy technologies.

Expected Outcome(s)

- More efficient processes and greater utilization of the national laboratory system especially by states.

STEAB Accomplishments

- Developed a National Lab Technology Matrix of programs as a tool to locate programs and to illustrate the primary capacity of each lab with their core capability. A draft was shared with EERE and state partners in August of 2003.
- Established a website for STEAB with links to major labs as a communication tool. STEAB developed web links to DOE Laboratory sites, and requested Lab sites to link to STEAB, August 2004.
- Invited a presentation of National Laboratories at each STEAB meeting to strengthen the interface with State Energy Offices and other outreach partners.
- Reviewed processes for improving National Lab and State Energy Office interface, August 2004. Encouraged labs to continue to share information and services and recommended appropriate contacts and representatives in state and among partners.
- Reviewed projections and metrics for State Energy Programs developed by the Oak Ridge National Lab, March 2004.

- Reviewed perceived barriers of colleges and universities in the deployment of technologies from the labs. One barrier was lack of knowledge about the technologies. STEAB established by Board adoption that the Board would visit at least one national lab per year and that there would be a meaningful visit and sharing of technologies, and ways to get assistance in the transfer.
- Examined the Technical Assistance Procedures for entities to gain assistance from the labs. This was identified as difficult for State Offices and colleges/universities to get through. The system became more transparent and labs began to reach out more with small assistance grants. Lawrence Berkeley National Lab was a leader in this along with Oak Ridge.
- Encouraged labs to make contact with regional and state offices when projects are funded or initiated in their state.
- Determined STEAB interaction with other groups focusing on the issues of business between the State Energy Offices and national labs.
- Improved the interface between the State Energy Offices and the national laboratories through:
 - A concept paper regarding establishment of lab information coordinators. The developed concept paper was adopted and approved by STEAB, August 13, 2004. (Documented in minutes)
 - Examining the contract process and making recommendations to streamline the method of doing business with labs.
- Working with expansion of the STEAB website to include information on programs and research in the national labs.
- Reviewed issues concerning Wal-Mart's Energy Efficiency Designs at Two Experimental Stores, Dub Taylor.
- Reviewed issues concerning The National Renewable Energy Laboratory, Roya Stanley, NREL.
- Reviewed issues concerning State and local Incentives, John Brown, NREL.
- Developed a STEAB Concept Paper: Improving Interface Between State Energy Offices and National Laboratories was developed and submitted to EERE in November of 2004.

Budget/Strategic Planning

Through facilitated discussions, the Board designed and adopted a strategic planning framework, conducted a strategic review of its own operations, and developed strategic priorities to guide its efforts in the next year. Additionally, the Board conducted an exhaustive analysis of the EERE budget, identifying areas where enhancements would provide tangible benefits. It presented its findings and recommendations directly to EERE officials in face-to-face meetings in DOE Headquarters.

EERE Strategic Goal(s)

- Increase the viability and deployment of renewable energy technologies;
- Reduce the burden of energy prices on the disadvantaged; and
- Change the way EERE does business (through beneficial input from stakeholders).

Expected Outcome(s)

- Valued strategic and tactical recommendations to EERE.

STEAB Accomplishments

- October 1, 2004 members of the STEAB Budget and Strategic Planning Committee (Bill Nesmith, Chair) met in Washington, DC with John Sullivan, Richard Moorer and Doug Goodman to discuss the Department of Energy, EERE Budget Planning issues. After that meeting, the Committee wrote a draft of budget recommendations for the STEAB Annual Report, and reviewed those recommendations during the November 18-19, 2004 meeting in Albuquerque.

Energy Policy Act Task Force

The Board established a crosscutting task force to place immediate attention on unfolding policies, program plans, and initiatives in EERE in response to the provisions of the Energy Policy Act of 2005. As EERE's efforts in this area begin to materialize, STEAB will review them for efficacy, compliance and impacts on the States and provide recommendations accordingly.

EERE Strategic Goal(s)

- Dramatically reduce, or even end, dependence on foreign oil;
- Reduce the burden of energy prices on the disadvantaged;
- Increase the viability and deployment of renewable energy technologies;
- Increase the reliability and efficiency of electricity generation, delivery, and use;
- Increase the energy efficiency of buildings and appliances;

- Increase the energy efficiency of industry;
- Spur the creation of a domestic bioindustry;
- Lead by example through government's own actions, and
- Change the way EERE does business.

Expected Outcome(s)

- Effective operational and programming functions serving EERE states and local entities.

STEAB Accomplishments

- Reviewed EERE Programs of Biomass, Geothermal, Solar, Wind and Hydro, Building Technologies, Distributed Energy, the Federal Energy Management Program, Freedom-Car and Vehicle Technology, Hydrogen Fuel Cell and Infrastructure, Industrial Technology, and the Office of Weatherization and Intergovernmental Programs, March 2004.
- Reviewed the EERE program, National Clean Cities, Inc. and recommendations to improve deployment efficiency, August 2004.
- Reviewed the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and identified key issues to follow for review at later STEAB meetings, August 2005.

Regional Office Consolidation Task Force

Because of its serious concern regarding a proposed consolidation of the EERE Regional Offices and its impacts on State Energy and Weatherization Programs, as well as the deployment of important new technologies, the Board established a second task force and adopted a resolution expressing the need to ensure that critical Regional Office functions will be maintained.

EERE Strategic Goals

- Increase the viability and deployment of renewable energy technologies;
- Increase the energy efficiency of buildings and appliances;
- Lead by example through government's own actions, and
- Change the way EERE does business.

Expected Outcome(s)

- Effective operational and programming functions serving EERE States and local entities.

STEAB Accomplishments

- Reviewed the role of DOE's six Regional Offices including workforce, management, weatherization, state energy programming, and special project funds, March 2004. (James Ferguson)
- Reviewed the purpose, function and direction of the National Association of State Energy Officials including functions of the Office of Environmental Assurance, the Energy Emergency Coordination Network, and the Association of State Energy Research and Technology Transfer Institutions who prioritize issues for projects, March 2004. (David Terry)
- Adopted Board Resolution 05-01 (Draft) on preserving key functions of existing Regional Offices, August 4, 2005.

c. Issues Impeding the State Energy Advisory Board Progress

Over the past two years, STEAB has experienced difficulties and encountered roadblocks in maintaining continuity and focus due to misunderstanding between the Board and EERE and legal constraints impeding the appointment of new members.

The conclusions and recommendations in the FY 2003 Annual Report were perceived as non-actionable by EERE officials because they were submitted after the "train had left the station". This led to an extended dialogue between the Board and EERE officials culminating in an understanding that the Government would be better served by the Board taking a more strategic view of EERE's plans and programs. During the interim, the Board lacked direction and could not move forward.

In terms of the legal constraints, attempts at appointing Special Government Employees (SGEs) to the Board encountered barriers with respect to determination of applicability of the types and extent of ethics and conflict-of-interest requirements and related certifications. Many months were consumed in completing the necessary legal reviews and obtaining legal opinions. Ultimately, the Board was unable to appoint Special Government Employees during the reporting period. This forced the Board to temporarily suspend activities due to lack of required membership levels.

Although these issues have been resolved, they have consumed considerable valuable Board time, energy, and focus. Consequently, the Board met only four times in the two-year period and was unable to prepare and submit an annual report for FY 2004. Despite this, the Board, primarily through its standing committee structure, has continued a strong dialogue with some elements of EERE leadership and programs, the National Laboratories technology research and development initiatives, and State Energy and Weatherization Programs. Through this dialogue, the Board has offered timely input and advice in targeted areas.

4. Conclusion

During the two-year period covered by this Report, the Board was able to meet only four times. Despite that, the Board has continued to remain highly engaged and proactive, maintaining a strong dialogue with EERE leadership and programs, the National Laboratories technology research and development initiatives, and State Energy and Weatherization Programs. Through this dialogue, the Board has continued to provide timely input and advice, most notably in the area of the EERE budget, conducting an exhaustive analysis, identifying areas where enhancements would provide tangible benefits, and presenting findings and recommendations directly to EERE officials in face-to-face meetings. Additionally, the Board weighed in on the proposed consolidation of EERE Regional Offices drafting a resolution enumerating a set of functions and services that they recommend preserving. Finally, the Board refocused its attention through a strategic planning evolution to ensure that subsequent activities will address the most highly relevant issues with potential for making further positive contributions.

Appendix A. Legislative Charge of the State Energy Advisory Board

The State Energy Advisory Board was established by Public Law 101-440 (The State Energy Efficiency Programs Improvement Act of 1990) to advise DOE on the operation of its Federal grant programs. The Board also advises on the energy efficiency and renewable energy program in general and on DOE's effort relating to research and market deployment of energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies.

The specific responsibilities of the Board, as mandated by statute, are:

1. To make recommendations to the Assistant Secretary for EERE with respect to:
 - a. The energy efficiency goals and objectives within the Federal grant programs; and
 - b. Programmatic and administrative policies designed to stimulate and improve Federal grant program effectiveness.
2. To serve as a liaison between Federal and State Governments on energy efficiency and renewable energy resource programs.
3. To encourage the transfer of R&D results from activities carried out by the Federal Government with respect to energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies.
4. To submit an annual report to the Secretary of Energy and the Congress concerning the Board's activities for the prior fiscal year.

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Appendix B. Board Membership

The State Energy Advisory Board consists of 18-21 members appointed by the Secretary of Energy. Membership regulations are outlined in Public Law 101-440, Section 365(g)(1)(A) as follows: *At least eight of the members for the Board shall be persons who serve as directors of the State agency, or a division of such agency, responsible for developing State energy conservation plans pursuant to Section 362. At least four members shall be directors of State or local low-income weatherization assistance programs. Other members shall be appointed from persons who have experience in energy efficiency or renewable energy programs from the private sector, consumer interest groups, utilities, public utility commissions, educational institutions, financial institutions, local government energy program, or research institutions. A majority of the members of the Board shall be state employees.*

The following is a membership listing of the State Energy Advisory Board, as well as DOE contacts and contract staff support.

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Appendix C. FY 2004/2005 Travel Expenditure Report

In accordance with Section 365(g)(1)(B)(I)(7) &(8) of Public Law 101-440, which requires a reporting of federal reimbursement of Board members' expenses (including travel expenses) incurred in the performance of their duties, the following accounting is provided:

For FY 2004, travel expenses of \$30,566 were incurred and reimbursed for State Energy Advisory Board meetings.*

For FY 2005, travel expenses of \$30,168 were incurred and reimbursed for State Energy Advisory Board meetings.*

* *Estimate based on number, location and duration of meetings, number of attendees, average cost of airfare and local travel, and per diem rates. Actual expense data not available.*

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Appendix D. Examples of Recommendations and Reports Submitted to EERE

- August 13, 2003, Letter of Recommendation to Mr. David K. Garman, Re: Issue of Weatherization Training and Technical Assistance Funds.
- August 27, 2004, Letter of Recommendation to Mr. David K. Garman, Re: Congressional Jurisdictional Responsibility for Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) Appropriations.

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Appendix E. STEAB Concept Paper: Improving Interface between State Energy Offices and National Laboratories

Issue:

A different business model has evolved within the Department of Energy – Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) – as it engages in a restructuring of its deployment/technical assistance operations. The focus is for building a stronger relationship with the local stakeholders and empowering the State Energy Offices (SEOs) to the maximum extent to develop and deliver energy management and renewable energy programs that fit with the EERE Vision and Mission as well as respond to the Administration’s Portfolio Priorities. The process also calls for developing a stronger role for the Regional Offices (ROs) as facilitators for the SEOs in meeting the larger regional and national goals. This climate of change yields an opportunity to also improve the working relationships between the National Laboratories and the SEOs.

Challenge:

Currently there is a disconnect between what the State Energy Offices and their constituents need and their ability to access the resources at the National Laboratories to meet those needs. It is with this basic challenge in mind that STEAB recommends that there be an office established at each of the laboratories with a full time responsibility of working with State Energy/Regional Office needs/requests.

Proposal:

In order to maximize the use of the National Laboratories as “service centers” for the State Energy Offices, it is critical to expand the usability of these resources. This means that there needs to be a path established that ensures State Energy Offices can access a liaison that can assist them in navigating the laboratory systems in the most expeditious, cost-effective way to both the lab and SEO. Having a point of contact can relieve backlogs of calls that are made to wrong contacts; screen and shortcut requests; improve relationships between SEOs and labs; and eliminate some of the mysteries of accessing laboratory resources.

Expected Results include, but are not limited to:

- Designated State Energy/Regional Office liaison.
- Improved, more user-friendly web page.
- List of service available at laboratories – identify which are free and which are fee.
- Improved telephone response turnaround system.
- Compiled list of work being done in each state by topic area.
- Improved SEO performance.

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Appendix F. STEAB National Laboratories Deployment Committee Strategic Plan – August 2004 (Draft)

Draft

**State Energy Advisory Board
National Laboratories Deployment Committee
Strategic Plan – August 2004**

I. Purpose

- A. Make specific recommendations to DOE through STEAB regarding effective deployment and adoption of energy efficient and renewable energy technology and practices.
- B. Make specific recommendations to DOE through STEAB strengthening the interface between the state energy offices and the national laboratories.

II. Expected Outcomes

A more efficient process and greater utilization of the national laboratory system especially by the states.

III. Strategies

- A. Hold one meeting per year near a national laboratory that includes a lab tour and presentations.
- B. Encourage lab liaison persons to attend STEAB meetings.
- C. Have a presentation at each STEAB meeting on lab activities that improve the interface with the state energy offices and other outreach partners (successes, challenges, new programs, assistance needed, and opportunities).
- D. Provide a template/matrix of programs by national labs to serve as a tool for locating technologies and practices. Place this matrix on the STEAB website and advertise its existence. Work with labs to update matrix at least twice annually.
- E. Improve the interface between the state energy offices and the national laboratories.
 - i. Propose concept paper regarding lab information coordinators.
 - ii. Examine the contract review process to make recommendations to streamline doing business with the labs.
 - iii. Work with the Communications Committee to expand the STEAB website information regarding the national labs.

- F. Encourage labs to continue sharing information and services.
- G. Encourage labs to make contact with regional and state offices when projects are funded or initiated in their states.
- H. Determine STEAB interaction with other groups focusing on the issues of business between the state energy offices and the national labs. Encourage regional offices to support this interface.

IV. Performance Indicators

- A. STEAB makes recommendations improving the interface between the state energy offices and the national laboratories that increase effective use of energy efficiency and renewable energy sources.
- B. Feedback from DOE acknowledges the recommendations and provides status of the recommendations.

Appendix G. STEAB Resolution 05-01

BACKGROUND

The Senate Energy & Water bill eliminated the six DOE/EERE Regional Offices and consolidated them at two regional sites: one at the National Energy Technologies Laboratory (NETL), representing the States of the eastern United States; and the other one at the U.S. DOE Golden Field Office, representing the States of the western United States. We believe the recommendations noted below will serve to make the consolidation/transition more successful.

ISSUE

As functions of the six current EERE Regional Offices are absorbed into existing EERE contracting offices, program success, as implemented at the State and local level, is of concern. Cultural differences between program support and contracting offices present assimilation challenges that may unintentionally de-emphasize program support, technology deployment, and utilization. Furthermore, differences in organizational structures between the two contracting offices may lead to inconsistent implementation of EERE policies and programs at the State level. Covering the fifty-four States and U.S. territories from two, rather than six, field locations presents logistical challenges when direct support from personnel is required.

RECOMMENDATION

Members of the State Energy Advisory Board (STEAB) recommend that the U. S. Department of Energy, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE), preserve key functions of the six Regional Offices, including, but not limited to/for:

- Continue as EERE program liaison and ombudsman with State and local entities
- Maintain sub-regional identity within any consolidated office structure
- Provide regional program implementation expertise
- Continue as regional deployment (technology utilization) channel
- Provide project management support to local and state entities
- Provide regional and local interpretation of policies
- Facilitate regional peer exchange
- Continue as an information source – opportunities, etc.
- Continue to provide local synergy with other Federal agencies and with utilities
- Provide training and technical assistance to State and local entities

- Provide point-of-entry (know who the go-to people are)
- Maintain logistical support
- Continue to provide cultural/technical/program/business opportunities
- Retain national Weatherization evaluation responsibilities

In addition, to ensure critical functions are maintained, STEAB strongly encourages EERE to engage its members in future Regional Office organizational planning.

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