

The Energy Information Administration periodically assesses how it can continue to fulfill its mission. Currently that assessment is going on in the context of

1. Loss of technical skills combined with the needs for new areas of technical expertise
2. Stagnant budgets
3. A growing inter-dependence and internationalization of the world's economy, energy and environment.
4. Unrelenting demand for service reports, data and model improvements.

Since EIA's founding it has developed numerous products to inform policy makers and the public. The Agency's unique products include

1. Domestic energy databases and
2. Domestic Forecasting models (STIFS and NEMS).

All are freely available on the Agencies Website. The data and models are used worldwide.

In addition the Agency produces

1. Analysis reports at the direct request of the Executive and Legislative branches (service reports)
2. Domestic energy Forecasts
3. International Forecasts
4. Interpretive reports such as the Changing Structure of the Electric Power Industry
5. Compilations of existing information such as the Country Analysis Briefs
6. A few analyst generated analysis reports (e.g. on the costs of commercial nuclear power)

EIA is looking for ideas on how we can best employ the resources we are likely to have over the next decade. What considerations should guide our tradeoffs between our unique contributions and our other products? Of special import is how customer demands today for answers today should be balanced against resources for maintaining data and analysis tools. Integrated model based analysis has been the staple of EIA's approach to answering Administration and Congressional requests for analyses. Is something to be gained from attempting a tiered response starting with "back of the envelope"- only going to the next level as the client requests more? What are the considerations in expanding or contracting interpretive reports, compilations and analyst generated analyses?

EIA is losing cutting edge technical expertise as the staff ages and retires. Should EIA focus on hiring and developing relatively few technical experts in well-defined areas or emphasize recruiting more generalists, relying on contractors for in-depth expertise? If the former what are the key areas for the next decade? Do you know of government organizations that have leveraged their resources by partnering with non-government organizations or through other means? Should EIA consider trading off some of its domestic information program for a more robust international perspective?

