

2. ALTERNATIVE TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER STRATEGIES

In 1985 a technology transfer assessment identified five strategies that appeared to have particular promise for overcoming the barriers inherent in transferring energy-conserving building technologies developed with support from the Office of Buildings and Community Systems (Brown et al., 1985). Due to limited resources, however, the previous study was unable to determine how often (if at all) each strategy was actually used by OBCS and under what circumstances each was most successful.

The five strategies provide a point of departure for this report, and include:

- contracting R&D to industrial partners,
- conducting R&D through industry consortia,
- influencing key decision-makers,
- working with broker organizations, and
- generating end-user demand.

Since that earlier assessment, licensing to industry has been actively debated as a technology transfer strategy (U.S. Department of Energy, 1988b). Changes in federal patent laws and policies have enhanced the ability of DOE's national laboratories to license their technologies to users. Thus, licensing is added to the list of alternative strategies discussed here.

These strategies are not mutually exclusive. For instance, DOE may support workshops to inform manufacturers of a new product opportunity that has energy-conservation advantages (i.e., "influencing key intermediaries"), while at the same time, end-user demand is being generated by informing consumers of the product's advantages (as was the case with low-emissivity coatings for windows - Section 4.1).