

World energy information

Joy Sutton describes an important development and invites your participation

For a trial period of seven months from 1 January 1994 Australia has access to the world's principal bibliographic database on energy-related scientific and technical information (STI). The Energy Database contains more than 3 million references to publications covering all aspects of energy and related fields. The citations in the database refer to the most current research as well as to historical records dating back to the 1800s. An important feature is the coverage of the 'grey' literature particularly reports generated from government sponsored research and development (R&D).

The Energy Database covers all areas of energy-related STI such as:

- environmental aspects of energy production and use, including extensive coverage of global climate change;
- renewable energy sources;
- fossil fuels;
- energy storage, conversion, utilisation and conservation;
- energy policy and planning;
- nuclear energy, including environmental aspects;
- advanced energy systems.

In addition, the database covers the basic sciences that support energy R&D such as chemistry, physics, biomedical science, engineering, material science, geoscience, mathematics, computer science, etc. Normally Australia cannot access this extensive source of interdisciplinary information, because Australia is not yet a member of the cooperative program that is responsible for the database, the International Energy Agency's Energy Technology Data Exchange (ETDE). Only those countries which are signatories to the ETDE, and contribute to the database, can access it. For these countries, the database is available to any person or organisation via the online services STN and Dialog and via a SilverPlatter compact disc.

Present IEA member countries, and contributors to the database, are the USA, the UK, Japan, France, Germany, The Netherlands, Canada, Finland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Spain, Italy and Switzerland. The US Department of Energy is the Operating Agent. Member countries of the ETDE

provide bibliographic references to the energy-related scientific and technical information produced within their borders. This supply of information is enhanced through cooperative arrangements with other organisations. For instance, through such arrangements with IEA Coal Research and the International Atomic Energy Agency's International Nuclear Information System (INIS), the database includes world-wide coverage in energy-related coal data and nuclear energy.

The Energy Research and Development Corporation has recognised a potential need for Australian researchers, engineers, R&D managers and industry to have the facility for regular, ongoing access to the sort of information contained in this database. As a direct result of this interest, and of representations made to the ETDE, Australia has this trial access period now available to it. Until the end of July 1994, any person or organisation in Australia can use the database through either of the on-line hosts, STN (file *Energy*) and Dialog (file 103 *Energy Science and Technology*).

An assessment of the database's value to Australian energy industry and R&D sectors, as an all-encompassing source of energy information, is to be made during the trial access period. CSIRO Information Services will assist the Energy R&D Corporation with this process. The purpose of the assessment is to determine whether the database is sufficiently useful to warrant Australia joining the ETDE and thereby always having ready access to the database and the other services available through membership.

So if you have a specific information need, or a general interest in the accessibility of such information, take the opportunity to try this database now whilst access is available.

If you are interested in assisting with the evaluation and in the broader issue of making energy information more readily available here in Australia, we would like to hear from you. In the first instance, please contact Joy Sutton at CSIRO Information Services at PO Box 89, East Melbourne Vic 3002, ph (03) 418 7333; fax (03) 419 0459; AARNet jcs@isb.csiro.au. ■



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