

## TECHNOLOGY STRENGTHS

The UK has broad technological strengths across most sectors, and is strengthening an already formidable science base. There are however concerns about UK industrial innovation and competitiveness, and ability to avoid a brain drain in the new '1992' European environment. Specific strengths include defence technology, telecommunications, aerospace, software development and offshore oil and gas technology.

## KEY ORGANIZATIONS

- *Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)*  
Encourages and supports industrial innovation and R&D. Also, through the DTI's Chief Engineer and Scientists, establishes government-wide policy, e.g. on the status and operations of government laboratories/agencies. Also has major international trade responsibilities.

DTI has five industrial research establishments which are being converted to semi-independent agencies or private sector research institutes:

- National Engineering Laboratory (NEL)
- National Physical Laboratory (NPL)
- Laboratory of the Government Chemist (LGC)
- Warren Spring Laboratory (WSL)
- National Weights and Measurement Laboratory (NWML)

- *Research Councils*  
The five major research Councils not only support university research but also serve as important funding partners in industrially-relevant projects. In addition they have major laboratories, e.g. British Antarctic Survey.

The Councils are:

- Science and Engineering Research Council
- Natural Environmental Research Council
- Agriculture and Food Research Council
- Medical Research Council
- Economic and Social Research Council
- Proposals to combine the Councils into one Super Council have been shelved.
- *British Technology Group (BTG)*  
Handles intellectual property, patenting and licensing for universities and other public sector sources, sometimes with provision of funding for technology development, transfer and exploitation. BTG plows back its retained share of license royalty income into the development and exploitation of other technology, and acts as a catalyst for start up companies.

## SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Research related to industry is encouraged and financed through a variety of competitive programmes:

1. **LINK.** Cost-sharing of joint pre-competitive research involving companies in collaboration with Higher Education Institutions and Research Councils. LINK Programmes underway include Molecular Electronics (5 year programme, total value £20 million), Advanced Semiconductor Materials (5 years, £24m), Industrial Measurement Systems (5 years, £22m), Eukaryotic Genetic Engineering (4 years, £4.6m), Protein Engineering (5 years, £10m), Nanotechnology (4 years, £15m), Optoelectronics (3 years, £30m) and Catalysts (5 years, £5m). About 20 programmes have been launched with an expected 500 industries participating and government contributions next year at £76m.