
BY THE U.S. GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE

Report To The Mayor Of The District Of Columbia

Lessons Can Be Learned From Corrections' Reduction-In-Force Resulting From Budget Cutbacks

A 1981 reduction-in-force in the D.C. Government's Department of Corrections triggered a temporary but significant adverse effect on prison operations. Although the Department's staff did a creditable job of coping with its problems, GAO found that this RIF could have been better managed.

--The Department of Corrections did not adequately communicate information about the RIF to the staff.

--A lack of cooperation existed between Corrections and the D.C. Office of Personnel, and neither agency gave RIFed employees formal assistance and outplacement support.

The D.C. Government stated that it would consider GAO's recommendations for improving operational procedures but did not specify what type of actions it would take to implement them.





UNITED STATES GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

GENERAL GOVERNMENT
DIVISION

B-201003

The Honorable Marion S. Barry, Jr.
Mayor of the District of Columbia
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Mayor Barry:

The General Accounting Office (GAO) recently reviewed the impact of the reduction-in-force (RIF) and budget cutbacks on the District of Columbia Department of Corrections. We noted that, although the Department did a creditable job of coping with its problems, there was a perception among the employees that the Department did not care about what happened to them. In our opinion, more attention should have been paid to this perception.

The recommendations presented in this report should be useful if the D.C. Government again experiences a RIF. Our work was performed at the D.C. Department of Corrections headquarters and at all its operational units--the D.C. Detention Center, five Lorton institutions, Community Services, and auxiliary units. We interviewed managers, supervisors, and employees who worked in security, correctional programs, and administrative and support services. In addition, we interviewed officials at the District's Office of Personnel, Board of Parole, and City Council.

It was difficult to independently verify the occurrence of a number of matters discussed in this report because (1) we performed our fieldwork after most of the effects of the RIF had subsided and (2) the Director of the Department of Corrections informed us that most of the instructions for implementing the RIF were verbal. The conclusions and recommendations contained in this report are based primarily on interviews and supported by those documents and statistics we were able to obtain.

In January 1980, a Mayor's memorandum ordered the Department of Corrections to plan for a \$1.5 million budget cutback resulting from an expected \$28 million shortfall for the entire D.C. Government. Several months later, the Department was informed that it would not get its full "supplemental"

appropriation request for fiscal year 1980. This budget supplement request was to provide funds for the Department to pay the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) for housing District of Columbia prisoners in Federal institutions. In total, the Department was facing a shortfall of \$6.6 million--about 12 percent of its \$55.5 million budget. The Department responded to this shortfall by designing a "savings plan" to reduce spending by \$5 million, and an official said he hoped to receive some money in the fiscal year 1981 budget that could be used to make up the rest of the shortfall. To achieve these savings, the city administration planned to eliminate 75 of the Department's approximately 2,000 positions through attrition and another 360 positions through layoffs.

Department officials argued strongly to the Mayor that cuts of this size would "cripple" Corrections' ability to carry out its basic functions. Even though Department officials were forced to plan for a RIF of nearly 360 staff, they worked hard to convince the city administration that Department operations would be severely hampered by such deep cuts. They argued that these cuts would put the Department in the awkward position of conducting a large scale hiring program within weeks of conducting a RIF. Consequently, in the savings plan worked out in early 1980, the RIF was reduced from about 360 to 225 positions with an additional 100 or so positions held vacant through attrition and a hiring freeze. This plan estimated savings of about \$3.5 million.

BUDGET CUTS AND STAFF REDUCTIONS
HAD AN ACUTE YET TEMPORARY EFFECT
ON CORRECTIONS OPERATIONS

Although Corrections officials forecasted major problems in agency operations, including institutional security, if cuts were made, it is our view that the Department adequately coped with the situation when the RIF was implemented. The loss and/or shortage of correctional officers, program personnel, equipment, and supplies disrupted operations for a while, but over several months the Department made the necessary adjustments. One exception related to hiring of correctional officers: shortages of such officers continued for over a year.

Institution security threatened
but adequately maintained

A primary mission of the Department of Corrections is to provide for the care, custody, and security of the people

remanded to it. Within the budgetary constraints facing the Department, its staff did a creditable job of carrying out this mission.

Between February and the end of fiscal year 1980, the number of total onboard correctional officers dropped from 1,261 to 1,078, a reduction of almost 15 percent. Administrators of the operating facilities told us about unmanned posts, overtime, lack of officer coverage, and staff exhaustion caused by these shortages. Sick leave use, for example, almost doubled at one of the facilities between the first and last quarters of fiscal year 1980. In the first quarter of 1980, sick leave taken totalled 7,688 staff hours. During the fourth quarter of 1980 the figure jumped to over 13,000 staff hours.

Many staff members we interviewed said they felt the loss of correctional officers heightened tension in the institutions and threatened the personal safety of staff and inmates alike. At one institution, an official told us that, although perimeter security had been adequately maintained, the coverage of walks and dormitories had been significantly reduced. This official believed that, as a result, inmates could move unobserved to areas from which they could attempt to escape or cause other problems. This possibility was increased by the fact that at one of the facilities the prison population was on the upswing, rising from 1,090 in the first quarter of 1980 to 1,279 in the second quarter of 1981--up 17 percent for the period.

According to staff at several facilities, internal security within the institutions to some extent deteriorated because of the shortages of correctional officers. However, the data we collected did not show any clear pattern of security breakdown. Certainly, the Department never lost control of any of its institutions.

Some services to inmates were temporarily altered

In addition to reductions in the number of correctional officers, program staff in education, classification and parole, psychology, and several other program units we reviewed lost at least one or two positions either through the RIF or by the hiring freeze resulting in an unfilled vacancy. In some instances this represented a staff reduction of 25 percent or more. Several persons we interviewed provided us with examples of how the RIF had affected ongoing programs. Each

facility, for example, has a classification and parole unit responsible for handling such issues as institutional adjustment reports, counseling, work-release and parole plans, and family contacts. These units have authorized staffing levels of from 4 to 12 classification and parole officers (caseworkers), depending on the size of the inmate population at the particular facility. Since the inmate populations remained constant or rose slightly during the RIF period, the caseloads of the remaining officers had to be increased. As a result, they did not have as much time as formerly to devote to counseling activities.

At the D.C. Detention Center, the position of Chief of Classification and Parole remained vacant, requiring the line officers to assume these duties on a rotating basis. At the maximum security facility, one of five classification and parole positions was eliminated by the RIF and another remained vacant for over a year. Many units acknowledged that during the RIF and immediately afterwards they were extremely overworked but eventually their workloads dropped to a more manageable level because they were again able to fill some vacancies.

The RIF directly affected other programs for inmates. For example, the inmate education programs were hard hit. At the D.C. Detention Center most of the teaching is done by volunteers who are supervised by two education specialists. When one specialist was RIFed, a void in supervision was created and the services of a number of volunteers had to be dropped. This resulted in a limitation on enrollments. At the youth centers in Lorton, two of seven teachers faced with being RIFed left in expectation of being laid off. Consequently, the academic school, for the first time, had to put students on a waiting list at one of the centers. Existing classes increased in size, and the amount of individual attention available to students was severely reduced. The vocational programs were also reduced by a combination of staff cuts, lack of supplies, and lack of correctional officer coverage to prevent theft of tools. The house painting and carpentry/dry-wall courses at Lorton's Central Facility were shut down completely.

Other programs, such as religious, recreational, and library services, encountered similar difficulties. The RIF eliminated the chaplain's position and a recreation specialist position at one of the youth centers, although the latter position was later restored. Also, the lack of security coverage curtailed some recreational activities, particularly those requiring prisoner transportation.

Almost all of these reductions were temporary. With the beginning of fiscal year 1981 (October 1980), the Department's financial crisis eased considerably, and new staff were beginning to be hired into most existing vacancies within 7 months. These programs had returned to their normal pre-RIF levels at the time of our fieldwork.

A strategy the Department used to cut expenses during fiscal year 1980 was to apply stringent restrictions to the purchase of supplies and equipment. The Department ordered that every purchase order be approved by the Department's Comptroller. This saved money, but some inmate service programs and support units were hit hard by their inability to buy supplies and equipment. The farm operation at Lorton (the Office of Agriculture) could neither buy new equipment nor pay for repairs to its antiquated machines. As a result, harvests were delayed and therefore reduced, safety hazards increased, and the farm lost its credit with several suppliers. The school at one of the youth centers could not get any new text books. The Medical Services units at Lorton and the D.C. Detention Center experienced delays in ordering supplies. One medical official told us that he frequently had to use alternative medications because the proper medications were not available. The Veterans Administration at times refused to sell supplies to Medical Services units because of late payments by the D.C. Government. Delays in getting supplies also affected dental services, and some inmates were denied needed treatment until supplies arrived.

With the beginning of fiscal year 1981, however, the availability of supplies and equipment began to return to normal, and the problems disappeared within a few months.

Security staff shortages continued over a year because of unresolved problems between D.C. Corrections and D.C. Personnel

When the fiscal year 1981 budget went into effect in October 1980, the Department was in a much more favorable condition. The hiring freeze was lifted immediately, allowing Corrections to begin to hire personnel to fill its open slots. However, the recovery in the correctional officers staffing complement took a considerable amount of time. Information obtained from the Department of Corrections indicated that, in July 1981, the Department had 56 fewer correctional officers than it had had at the end of the RIF year (1,022 compared with 1,078).

The Department was naturally very concerned about this decline. Department-wide attrition continued at an average of seven officers per pay period, through the first 9 months of fiscal year 1981, which was higher than anticipated. Hiring simply did not keep up with attrition, much less add the officers needed to raise the total complement to the Department's goals.

Corrections' analysis of the problem pointed to delays in the D.C. Office of Personnel. The Director told us that, in a memorandum dated August 10, 1981, to the Mayor's office, he pointed out some problems Corrections was experiencing. He informed us that when the hiring freeze was lifted in October 1980, Personnel possessed the necessary hiring certificates to bring staff on board immediately. But the first correctional officer was not hired until December 1980. He also pointed out that in May 1981 the D.C. Office of Personnel had hiring certificates in its possession to bring aboard 30 new corrections officers, but after 71 days only half of the 30 had been hired. Additionally, he pointed out that in October when the hiring freeze was lifted only 105 officers had been hired and that, since it had lost 146 officers, it had lost ground after the hiring freeze was lifted. Corrections' officials told us of delays in hiring noncorrectional officer staff but did not believe their needs for these positions were as critical. The main problem they said, was the extraordinary slowness in "processing paper" in the D.C. Office of Personnel.

A key official in the D.C. Office of Personnel disputed these claims. The official told us that every effort was made to provide the service required by the Department of Corrections and that any "unconscionable delays" that occurred were the fault of persons in Corrections, not in Personnel. When we asked the Personnel official for written documentation to support the contention the official told us none was available and that communication between Corrections and Personnel was oral.

We did not attempt to evaluate these conflicting statements. However, it is indisputable that the Department of Corrections continued to suffer a decline in correctional officer staffing for nearly a year after the RIF was over, and the reasons for this decline were administrative rather than budgetary. D.C. Office of Personnel officials told us there were sufficient applicants and Corrections officials said there were sufficient funds to pay them.

Although there was no official action taken by the Mayor's office to resolve the delays in the hiring process, the problems had diminished substantially at the time of our fieldwork and corrections officials told us that the hiring was "going pretty well." As of August 1982, the correctional officer complement stood at 1,295 and the Department expected to reach its goal of 1,330 by the end of fiscal year 1982.

SEVERAL EXTERNAL FACTORS DISRUPTED
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DEPART-
MENT'S REDUCTION-IN-FORCE

A number of outside factors created problems which complicated RIF decisions made by the Department of Corrections. Uncertainty of budget levels, as previously mentioned, plus the recent reorganization of the D.C. Office of Personnel and legal challenges to the RIF by inmates at the maximum security facility and the employees union affected the implementation of the RIF.

The reorganization of the D.C. Office
of Personnel added to confusion

Additional confusion throughout the RIF period resulted from problems within the new D.C. Office of Personnel. This department began operation on January 1, 1980. It was unfortunate that this total reorganization of the city's personnel functions coincided with personnel layoffs and reductions in the Department of Corrections. Records were in disarray and were not readily available, staff were learning new responsibilities, and the whole organizational structure of the new personnel operation was being put into place at the same time that officials were trying to carry out the personnel actions required by the budget cutbacks. In the words of one Corrections official, "it was an absolute nightmare." Some records were lost, and others were found to be inaccurate or incomplete. Also, the District's personnel regulations had not been fully articulated and many people were not sure which regulations governed the RIF process. Eventually, the D.C. Office of Personnel decided to use the Federal regulations in Chapter 351 of the Federal Personnel Manual (FPM). According to the Corrections Director, only one official in the city's personnel system had any experience with a RIF.

Corrections officials and employees affected by the RIF told us they experienced problems with the D.C. Office of Personnel. Several employees said their personnel records were

either incomplete or not immediately accessible for their personal inspection. Others said Personnel made serious mistakes in computing their government service time--a key factor in determining which employees would be retained.

In February 1980, the Department of Corrections was forced to begin its own inhouse count of onboard staff because it believed the figures provided by the D.C. Office of Personnel were not accurate enough to use in planning the staff reductions. Corrections required each of its "timekeepers" to return a complete report on all staff to the Department's budget office biweekly for the next six pay periods. Corrections officials said that this was the only way that they could have confidence in the numbers they were using.

Inmate and union law suits
challenged staff reductions

The action to RIF Corrections employees further was delayed by two lawsuits contesting the planned RIFs on grounds that such reductions would severely hamper the District's ability to maintain safe and adequate conditions at its detention facilities. One lawsuit was brought in U.S. District Court by inmates of the maximum security facility at Lorton Reformatory, and the other was brought in D.C. Superior Court by a union representing certain Department of Corrections employees. During the course of litigation, a number of court orders were issued in both Federal and D.C. courts which precluded the Department from implementing its plans. These lawsuits contributed to the action taken by Mayor Barry on July 9, 1980, to reduce the number of RIFs from 225 to 76. On July 12, 1980, 45 non-Correctional employees were separated from the Department, and 31 Correctional officers were terminated on July 26, 1980. It should be noted that these RIFs occurred approximately 6 months after the need for them was announced and less than 3 months before the end of the fiscal year.

EMPLOYEE MORALE UNDERSTANDLY DE-
CLINED BUT D.C. CORRECTIONS COULD
HAVE DONE MORE TO LESSEN EFFECTS

From top management of the Department of Corrections to the correctional officers and program staff, we found universal agreement that the worst effect of the RIF and budget cut-backs was the lowering of staff morale. While the budget crunch resulted in shortages of supplies, loss of correctional

officers and program staff, and cuts in services to inmates, many corrections staff said this was corrected once funds became available. However, they felt it would be many years before the morale of the Department recovers from the experiences of 1980. In addition, the Department failed to act quickly to reduce the numbers receiving RIF notices. Had the Department paid more attention to employees' needs, damage to morale could have been lessened.

Obviously, an announced RIF is bound to cause distress and resentment among workers who are at risk of losing their jobs. But in this case the damage was magnified for several reasons: (1) the length of time between the first knowledge of the RIF and the final listing of the individuals affected; (2) the frequent changes in the number to be RIFed; and (3) the lack of clear and reliable information available to the employees. The Corrections workforce lived for months in a kind of limbo, hearing numerous rumors stimulated by news media reports, hearsay, informal announcements by individual Department officials, and unofficial "leaks" from the D.C. Office of Personnel. "Bootleg" RIF lists were passed around among Corrections staff. Employees repeatedly told us of the prolonged sense of uncertainty they experienced and their loss of confidence in the Department's management as the confusion continued. In fact, both high level Department officials and midlevel administrators told us they believed that anxiety about job security was responsible for the high attrition rate of 1980. The following table shows that the rate of attrition at the Lorton facilities rose steadily during fiscal year 1980 until it peaked during the fourth quarter. Beginning in fiscal year 1981, there was a sharp decline in attrition at the Lorton facilities and attrition remained low for the next two quarters. Data for the fourth quarter of fiscal year 1981 was not available at the time we completed our fieldwork.

Quarterly Staff Position Losses
At Lorton Facilities

<u>Fiscal Year 1980</u>				<u>Fiscal Year 1981</u>			
<u>Quar-</u>	<u>Number of</u>	<u>Attrition</u>		<u>Quar-</u>	<u>Number of</u>	<u>Attrition</u>	
<u>ter</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>(note a)</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>ter</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>(note a)</u>	<u>Total</u>
	<u>RIFs</u>				<u>RIFs</u>		
1st	0	38	38	1st	3	44	47
2nd	0	42	42	2nd	0	23	23
3rd	1	51	52	3rd	0	26	26
4th	<u>27</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>79</u>	4th	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	<u>28</u>	<u>183</u>	<u>211</u>	Total	<u>3</u>	<u>93</u>	<u>96</u>

a/Attrition includes: retirement, early retirement, resignation, disability retirement, and termination for cause.

Department of Corrections officials told us it was the best qualified--and therefore most employable--younger officers who left to work for other jurisdictions because long term prospects of work for the D.C. Government began to be doubtful. Department officials said this drain of young talent will hurt the Department in the long run. In addition, the Department, in an understandable effort to avoid as many outright layoffs as possible, offered "early-out" retirement to senior employees who were nearing retirement age. In several cases this offer was accepted, costing the Department some of its most experienced midlevel officers and administrators. Many persons we talked with believed that this action lowered the quality of the Corrections workforce.

Overall, on the basis of our interviews with Corrections staff we believe there was a significant drop in trust and confidence in the management of the Corrections Department and the D.C. Government. Corrections employees felt victimized by decisions that were being made, often without explanation, about their jobs and future prospects, and, as the months passed, each new piece of information seemed to them to contradict the last. Some individuals understood that the Department itself had little control over the course of events,

but many others--including senior officials at some of the facilities--felt that Department management had little understanding of or concern for the well-being of its workers. More than a year after the RIF, these feelings of distrust and bitterness remained widespread among staff we interviewed.

The Department failed to act quickly to reduce numbers receiving RIF notices

The Department planned to send RIF notices to 225 employees in April 1980. But, because of the legal challenges from the inmates in the maximum security facility and the employees' union, the delivery was delayed until July. The notices were mailed despite two developments that had taken place and eventually allowed the RIF to be drastically reduced.

The first development was an increase of \$5 million in fiscal year 1981 funding for the Department which increased the ceiling on the number of employees Corrections could employ. The second was that, from March to June, the Department experienced an average attrition of about 10 persons per pay period.

These two factors allowed the Department to decrease the number of persons it needed to RIF from 225 to 76; however, it did not act to stop the D.C. Office of Personnel from mailing the 225 notices. In a quick aboutface, the notices were "retracted" within a matter of days and new letters sent to the final 76. These actions resulted in unnecessary stress for a number of people about possible and insufficiently explained changes in their employment status. Morale and confidence in the Department's management obviously suffered a setback.

More attention to employees' needs could have reduced damage to morale

The Department of Corrections did not provide regular, authoritative information to its employees about what was happening. One top official we interviewed admitted that top management of the Department was uncertain about the status of the RIF from time to time. Some employees said that, if this were the case, management should have been forthright enough to advise them. They told us that honesty and candor would have been appreciated and might well have eased the damage to employee morale.

In addition, there was a lack of supportive services to those threatened by the RIF. Many of the nonmanagerial employees we interviewed told us the Department showed little concern for helping them. Employees felt victimized and ignored. They said they were given few facts to dispel rumors and hearsay that often magnified their fears of losing their jobs.

The biggest complaint from the employees of the Department about the way the RIF was handled was the total lack of clear, reliable information available to them. This complaint was nearly unanimous, from midlevel managers downward. The FPM, which the D.C. Office of Personnel used as a guide, states:

"Ignorance breeds suspicion; suspicion lowers morale and increases administrative problems. The percentage of appeals from a RIF is an almost infallible index to the degree of employee suspicion. In its experience, OPM has seen many RIFs with few or no appeals when employees have been completely informed about the entire process." (FPM, Chapter 351, Subchapter 1-8.)

In this case, although exact figures are not available, the D.C. Office of Personnel estimated that, of the 149 Corrections officers who received RIF notices, about 35 filed appeals.

Our review showed a lack of effort on the part of Corrections management to provide their employees with information about what was happening. It was not until June 1980, about 5 months after the RIF was announced, that meetings were held to explain the RIF to the staff. The Department's newsletter, the "Morning Count," mentioned the RIF in only one of its monthly issues, in March. This issue briefly mentioned the Department's financial difficulties and confirmed that there would be a RIF of 225 employees, including 149 correctional officers. Other than this brief printed statement and a single meeting at each of three locations--Lorton, D.C. Detention Center, and Department headquarters on June 18 to 20, we found no evidence of any effort to keep Corrections employees continually and formally advised either orally or in writing. Department officials confirmed that there were no other formal communications.

These facts agree with the consistent, often bitter, remarks of the great majority of Department employees we interviewed. More than anything else about the RIF, Corrections staff felt neglected and resentful because they could not find out what was happening. "People left [the Department] simply because they didn't know what would happen next," said a senior official at one of the facilities. "The biggest complaint is that we couldn't get information," said a classification and parole officer. Even staff who survived the RIF still seemed to feel strongly about it.

The Department could have done more to help its RIFed employees find new jobs

The FPM (Chapter 351, Subchapters 1-6 and 1-7) states:

"An agency's obligations to its employees do not really end with adherence to the minimum requirements of the regulations and instructions. Good personnel practice requires an agency, to the full extent of its resources, to carry out the role of a good employer who shows concern for the problems and interests of employees. Since reduction-in-force threatens employees' economic security, whatever the agency can do to help relieve this insecurity is to its benefit in terms of morale and good employer-employee relationships. One of the methods most successful in achieving these results is the adoption of special programs to help affected employees to locate other jobs * * *. Employees for whom no positions are located should be counselled, on the basis of information obtained from the local State employment security agency, on any benefits that may be available to them * * *. When, in spite of the outplacement program, employees have to be separated in [a] RIF * * * the agency should continue to devote resources to finding jobs for the employees not yet placed."

The Department of Corrections did very little to help its RIFed correctional officers find other correctional jobs. It did not have a formal system. Its only effort consisted of asking its midlevel managers and institutional administrators to find out whether job openings existed in the jurisdictions where they lived and to pass such information along to employees who were interested. We did not find any evidence that anybody was helped by this informal effort.

The D.C. Office of Personnel did little more. Its outplacement program consisted of visiting or telephoning a few nearby jurisdictions (Fairfax County, Montgomery County, Baltimore City, and the State of Maryland) to find out if there were any correctional openings. The Office of Personnel designated a staff person to relay this information to Corrections' employees who either visited or called Personnel. Again, we found no record of anyone being helped. Office of Personnel staff we interviewed said that most of the contacts with Corrections' employees were by phone, and no followup was made. Corrections and the D.C. Office of Personnel confirmed that they offered no workshops, counseling, or assistance with job applications or resumes, or interviewing.

CONCLUSIONS

Corrections could have minimized the impact of the RIF and budget cutbacks if it had paid more attention to the needs of its employees. The Department did little to keep its mid-level managers or other employees informed about what was happening during this period and both Corrections and Personnel could have better cooperated with and assisted each other in providing supportive and outplacement services to employees who were RIFed. In fact, many of the events that occurred during Corrections reduction-in-force could have been better managed.

We believe the lessons learned from this experience regarding employee morale, communications, and interagency cooperation should give D.C. Government officials a better understanding of how to manage operations more effectively should it be faced with another RIF in Corrections or another District agency.

The D.C. Government should have a plan that could be implemented by the Department of Corrections when it is facing a RIF situation. It should also determine whether other Departments need such a plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that the Mayor require the Department of Corrections and the D.C. Office of Personnel to jointly develop a plan to deal with circumstances when the likelihood of a RIF arises. The plan should provide for:

- (1) Improving communications with employees likely to be affected by

--making better use of existing information channels such as the Department's monthly newsletter, to inform staff of administrative decisions that affect them, particularly when job security, career advancement, or similar vital issues are involved; and

--providing frequent written communications to explain changing circumstances as quickly and completely as possible. Good personnel management makes it imperative that this kind of information be readily available and up-to-date.

- (2) Developing special programs to provide training, counseling, and assistance to help employees who are affected by budgetary cutbacks.

The Mayor should also require the D.C. Office of Personnel to consider whether plans for other departments within D.C. Government should be developed.

AGENCY COMMENTS AND OUR EVALUATION

The District of Columbia Government commented on a draft of this report by letter dated November 12, 1982. (See appendix.) Although the District stated that it would take careful note of the matters discussed in our report, it did not specify what type of action it would take to develop a plan to

--improve communications with employees likely to be affected by a reduction-in-force or


--work with the D.C. Office of Personnel to develop special programs of training, counseling, and assistance to help employees.

Although the District stated that it did not intend to implement a reduction-in-force of this magnitude in the near future, it is not always possible to accurately forecast such events. Accordingly, we continue to believe that a RIF plan should be developed so that the District will be better prepared to deal with such situations in the future.

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We wish to thank you for the cooperation extended to us during this review. As you know, the Mayor is required, within 90 days after receiving our audit report, to state in writing to the District Council what has been done to comply with our recommendations and to send a copy of the statement to the Congress (31 U.S.C. § 715(c)(1), as recently codified by Public Law 97-258, formerly section 736(b) of the District of Columbia Self-Government and Governmental Reorganization Act, Public Law No. 93-198). The Mayor is also required to report, in the District of Columbia's annual budget request to the District Council, on the status of efforts to comply with such recommendations (Section 442(a)(5) of Public Law No. 93-198). We are sending copies of this report to interested congressional committees; to the Director, Office of Management and Budget; and to each member of the Council of the District of Columbia.

Sincerely yours,



William J. Anderson
Director

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
EXECUTIVE OFFICE

OFFICE OF THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR

ELIJAH B. ROGERS
CITY ADMINISTRATOR
1350 E STREET, N.W. - ROOM 507
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20004

NOV 1 2 1982

Mr. William J. Anderson
Director, United States General
Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Anderson:

On October 20, 1982, you forwarded for comment your draft report entitled "Lessons Can Be Learned from Corrections' Reduction-in-Force Resulting from Budget Cutbacks."

We were pleased to note that although the necessary cutbacks did result in temporary disruptions in service, adequate security was maintained throughout the period.

We will take careful note of the lessons which you point out can be learned to minimize the negative impact of such large scale reductions. It is not our intent, however, to implement reductions-in-force of this magnitude in the near future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elijah B. Rogers".

Elijah B. Rogers
City Administrator

cc: George Holland
Jose Gutierrez

(182693)

24469

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