



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

1-21-85
5/10/85

GENERAL GOVERNMENT
DIVISION

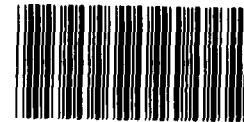
JUNE 14, 1985

B-218879

Approved for release by the General Accounting Office
by the Director of the Office of Information Management

RELEASED

The Honorable Cardiss Collins
Chairwoman, Subcommittee on Government
Activities and Transportation
Committee on Government Operations
House of Representatives



127252

Dear Madam Chairwoman:

Subject: Information on Internal EEO Activities at
Selected Federal Agencies (GAO/GGD-85-62)

In response to your February 21, 1985, request, we have compiled staffing and budget data for equal employment opportunity (EEO) offices at a variety of federal agencies. As noted in your letter, you requested this information because of allegations that EEO offices have been subject to budget cuts and a shift in administrative priorities and policies.

We selected 17 executive departments and independent agencies for review, based on their total number of personnel as of January 1, 1984. Although we chose a mix of organizations by the number of employees, the grouping nonetheless represents a nonrandom sample from which generalizations to all federal executive departments and independent agencies cannot be made.

For these 17 departments and agencies, we examined information on civil rights activities submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for fiscal years 1981 and 1984. This data showed both increases and decreases in outlays, workyears, and complaints processing. Because of inconsistencies in the ways agencies gathered and reported this data, it is difficult to attribute any differences between fiscal year 1981 and 1984 to a policy shift or to know with any degree of certainty how accurate or meaningful the data is.

Data Submitted to OMB

Federal agencies and departments annually report information on civil rights activities to OMB's Office of Civil Rights,

532319

(966215)

pursuant to section 13.2(e) of OMB Circular A-11, Preparation and Submission of Budget Estimates (July 2, 1984). The agency reports ("Forms A-11") contain information on both internal and external EEO activities.¹ They are used primarily by OMB in preparing "Special Analysis J" of the Budget of the United States Government, entitled "Civil Rights Activities." Federal agencies and departments began forwarding this data in the current reporting format in fiscal year 1981. Information submitted by the agencies prior to this time is not compatible with current data.

Our work was limited to obtaining information on internal EEO activities in response to your major area of interest. As defined by OMB, internal activities consist of "all activities undertaken to assure equal employment opportunity in Federal employment (including military service) to all persons regardless of age, handicap, race, color, religion, sex, or national origin." This section of the Form A-11 includes components dealing with complaint counseling, complaint processing, research and information dissemination, policy development, staff training, legal activities, and affirmative action plan development and implementation.

However, we found a number of problems and inconsistencies in the way the EEO data is collected and presented in the Form A-11 reports. These include:

- (1) Institution of a new reporting format in fiscal year 1981: OMB Circular A-11 was first used for EEO information-gathering purposes in fiscal year 1981. Prior to this time, a variety of reporting formats and procedures was used. OMB and agency officials told us the change in reporting format caused some difficulty in completing the new Form A-11.
- (2) Incomplete data: Departments and agencies did not always report all of the statistics the form required. Some agency submissions did not include information from all of their organizational components. Our attempts to obtain complete data for this review were not always successful.
- (3) Lack of continuity in responsibility for compiling and completing data: Attrition and/or changes in staff assignments have in some cases caused differences in

¹External EEO activities include programs designed to ensure nondiscrimination in housing and credit opportunity, and in providing federally assisted or conducted services and benefits. Voting rights enforcement and private sector/nonfederal public sector EEO activities are also included in this category.

agencies' interpretations of reporting guidelines and procedures, such as what would be included or excluded in various categories. Supplemental written documentation of qualifying information was often lacking, with present staff sometimes unable to recount procedural or substantive factors affecting the compilation of data in previous years.

- (4) Format inconsistencies: Available information was at times artificially disaggregated by agency officials to meet the specifications of the Form A-11 format. For example, data is sometimes collected by agency budget and expenditures categories, rather than by categories on the Form A-11.

The extent of these problems at the 17 departments and agencies that we reviewed is illustrated by the footnotes in the appendix.

Although we have the above reservations about the accuracy of the Form A-11 data, we found it to be the most complete source available for information on internal EEO activities. In those cases where the Form A-11 is interpreted correctly and completed by the agency, it can identify trends in EEO operations, not only with regard to outlays and staff years, but also with regard to shifts in emphasis between particular EEO functions. In addition, some department and agency officials stated that, for the most part, the workload indicators were reliably portrayed on the forms.

According to an official of OMB's Office of Civil Rights, OMB plans to discontinue collecting information on internal EEO activities in the future, primarily because the Form A-11 data is "problematic" for reasons such as those noted above. He said OMB will obtain information from other sources, such as the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and the Office of Personnel Management in order to prepare internal civil rights data for "Special Analysis J." However, these sources currently do not gather information on staff years or outlays associated with EEO activities.

Methodology Used to Compile the Data

We extracted internal EEO data from the Forms A-11 for fiscal years 1981 and 1984 on outlays, workyears, and complaint processing, for each of the 17 departments and agencies. The first category--outlays--includes salaries and operating expenses for internal EEO activities. The second category, workyears, includes total federal workyears for full-time permanent internal ("full-time") civil rights staff and total "other"

federal workyears. "Other" federal workyears can include regional and other staff, such as legal counsel who carry out internal EEO duties on a part-time, temporary, or intermittent basis.

The third category, complaint processing, was chosen as a workload indicator because EEOC officials told us that complaint processing makes up a large part of internal EEO work. Within the complaints processing category, we extracted information on

- total complaints in inventory at the beginning of fiscal years 1981 and 1984,
- total complaints received during each fiscal year,
- total complaints in inventory at the end of each fiscal year, and
- total complaints in the ending inventory of each fiscal year open more than 180 days.

We obtained additional background information from the narrative statements accompanying the Forms A-11.

After compiling this data, we contacted officials at the various departments and agencies to verify its accuracy and to obtain missing or corrected figures.

Changes in Internal EEO Activities

We found the following general changes in the fiscal year 1981 and fiscal year 1984 data for the 17 agencies and departments. More detailed information is contained in the charts and graphs in the appendix, as verified and/or corrected by agency officials, unless otherwise noted. The variations are presented without reference to fiscal year 1982 or fiscal year 1983 data.

Change in Outlays and Workyears From FY 1981 to FY 1984
(For 17 departments and agencies)

<u>Category</u>	<u>Number of departments and agencies</u>	
	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
Outlays	10	7
Total workyears ^{a b}	7	8
Workyears for full-time civil rights staff ^c	8	8
Other workyears ^d	8	7

^aTotal workyears represents the full-time equivalent of all staff assigned to internal EEO activities, including both full-time civil rights staff and other associated employees.

^bOne department had no data available for fiscal year 1984 for other workyears, a component of total workyears. One agency showed no change in total workyears.

^cOne agency showed no change in full-time workyears.

^dOne department had no data available for fiscal year 1984 for other workyears. One agency showed no change in other workyears.

Change in Complaints Processing
Activity from FY 1981 to FY 1984
 (For 17 departments and agencies)

<u>Category</u>	<u>Number of departments and agencies</u>	
	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
Complaints in beginning inventory	12	5
Complaints in ending inventory ^a	9	7
Complaints in ending inventory open more than 180 days after filing ^b	9	7
Complaints closed during fiscal year	13	4

^aOne agency reported no change between fiscal years 1981 and 1984.

^bOne department had incomplete data for fiscal year 1984.

The data shows that internal EEO activities at the selected agencies both increased and decreased between fiscal years 1981 and 1984. However, as we point out, because of inconsistencies in the gathering and reporting of the data, it is difficult to draw conclusions about these changes.

- - - -

We conducted our review in April and May 1985. As requested by your office, unless you publicly announce the contents of this report earlier, we plan no further distribution until 10 days from the date of this report. At that time, we will send copies to interested parties and make copies to others available upon request.

Sincerely yours,

W. J. Anderson

William J. Anderson
 Director

EEO INTERNAL ACTIVITIES
(FY 1981 and FY 1984)

Department/Agency	Outlays (thousands of dollars)			Workyears						
	1981	1984	% CHANGE	full-time		other		total		
	1981	1984	% CHANGE	1981	1984	1981	1984	1981	1984	% CHANGE
AGRICULTURE ^a	\$ 4,939.0	\$ 8,207.2	66.2%	59.4	76.6	133.3	175.3	192.7	251.9	30.7%
COMMERCE ^b	3,225.9	2,981.0	-7.6%	52.6	73.0	41.5	20.5	94.1	93.5	-0.7%
EEOC ^c	2,215.0	8,349.0	276.9%	18.0	285.0	45.0	18.0	63.0	303.0	381.0%
EPA	2,070.0	1,209.7	-41.6%	33.0	11.5	64.0	37.2	97.0	48.7	-49.8%
FTC ^d	243.0	509.0	109.5%	4.6	5.0	5.4	7.8	10.0	12.8	28.0%
GSA	2,412.0	1,569.4	-34.9%	70.0	43.0	43.0	6.5	113.0	49.5	-56.2%
HHS ^e	13,345.0	11,280.0	-15.5%	273.0	209.0	63.0	86.0	336.0	295.0	-12.2%
HUD ^f	1,195.0	877.0	-26.6%	22.2	22.8	19.0	n/a	41.2	n/a	n/a
INTERIOR	9,200.0	11,487.0	24.9%	197.0	218.0	102.0	75.0	299.0	293.0	-2.0%
JUSTICE ^g	2,602.0	6,167.0	137.0%	61.8	83.0	164.7	143.0	226.5	226.0	-0.2%
NASA	3,297.9	4,108.0	24.6%	70.0	64.0	30.5	32.9	100.5	96.9	-3.6%
NSF	133.0	224.0	68.4%	3.0	2.9	0.8	1.6	3.8	4.5	18.4%
OPM ^h	2,937.3	2,811.4	-4.3%	79.7	29.0	53.6	31.0	133.3	60.0	-55.0%
SBA	988.0	1,316.0	33.2%	14.0	11.0	4.4	8.9	18.4	19.9	8.2%
SEC ⁱ	136.0	139.0	2.2%	3.0	3.0	1.4	1.4	4.4	4.4	0.0%
TRANSPORTATION ^a	6,585.0	6,449.1	-2.1%	104.9	77.0	45.4	83.9	150.3	160.9	7.1%
TREASURY	7,473.7	12,548.5	67.9%	160.8	231.0	139.8	294.1	300.6	525.1	74.7%

^a1981 figures are incomplete, as data was not submitted for all organizations in the department.

^b1981 data for outlays and other workyears was supplied by Commerce. OMB records indicated that 1981 outlays at Commerce were \$2,251,600, and other workyears were 58.1.

^cSignificant increase in 1984 outlays and full-time workyears resulted because EEOC included the cost and staff devoted to processing government-wide complaints — an activity that should have been classified as an external activity.

^dData was not verified by the agency.

^e1981 and 1984 figures are incomplete and cannot be compared, as data from all organizations in the department were not submitted on a consistent basis from year to year.

^fFigures were not verified by the agency. No data was available for other workyears for 1984.

^g1981 and 1984 figures are incomplete and cannot be compared, as all data from internal divisions was not submitted on a consistent basis from year to year. Data for 1981 was supplied by the agency. OMB data showed outlays-\$357,000, full time workyears-10, and other workyears-2.

^h1981 figures erroneously included workyears for EEO training provided to other agencies. Also, 1981 figures did not include some units' federal recruiting program activities.

ⁱ1981 outlay amount supplied by the agency; not available from OMB records. Figures for other workyears in 1981 were supplied by the agency; OMB records showed 14.

n/a - data not available

COMPLAINTS PROCESSING INFORMATION
(FY 1981 and FY 1984)

Department/Agency	Beginning Inventory		Complaints Received		Complaints Closed		Ending Inventory		% Change Beg '81 to End '84	Complaints Open More than 6 Months		
	1981	1984	1981	1984	1981	1984	1981	1984		1981	1984	% chng
AGRICULTURE ^a	218	742	157	500	82	461	293	781	258.3%	208	542	160.6%
COMMERCE	225	148	64	82	100	85	189	145	-35.6%	154	100	-35.1%
EEOC	131	215	142	115	76	97	197	233	77.9%	115	129	12.2%
EPA	137	138	58	53	53	81	142	110	-19.7%	98	89	-9.2%
FTC ^b	10	5	5	7	9	4	6	8	-20.0%	5	8	60.0%
GSA	125	93	89	106	103	106	111	93	-25.6%	90	39	-56.7%
HHS ^c	667	654	654	545	528	442	793	757	13.5%	536	695	29.7%
HUD	86	151	87	77	60	65	113	163	89.5%	83	120	44.6%
INTERIOR	256	620	190	191	47	418	399	393	53.5%	325	239	-26.5%
JUSTICE ^d	424	535	263	272	138	148	549	659	55.4%	251	526	109.6%
NASA	34	29	14	20	11	23	37	26	-23.5%	28	19	-32.1%
NSF	2	4	3	4	2	5	3	3	50.0%	2	3	50.0%
OPM	19	29	32	23	21	29	30	23	21.1%	16	15	-6.3%
SBA	44	58	28	37	13	29	59	66	50.0%	40	59	47.5%
SEC	14	17	13	8	13	7	14	18	28.6%	14	10	-28.6%
TRANSPORTATION ^e	280	445	296	179	229	239	347	385	37.5%	259	n/a	n/a
TREASURY ^f	531	894	334	692	165	553	700	1033	94.5%	487	973	99.8%

^a1981 figures are incomplete, as data was not submitted for all organizations in the department.

^b1981 and 1984 figures were not verified by the agency.

^c1981 and 1984 figures are incomplete and cannot be compared, as data from all organizations in the department were not submitted on a consistent basis from year to year.

^d1981 figures were supplied by the agency. OMB records showed beginning inventory-27, complaints received-16, ending inventory-22, and complaints open more than 6 months-24.

^e1981 figures are incomplete, as data was not submitted for all organizations in the department.

1984 complaints processing figures were supplied by the agency. No data was available from OMB records.

^f1984 figures were supplied by the agency. OMB records showed: beg. inventory - 1583, complaints received - 1192, complaints closed - 891, and ending inventory - 1884.

n/a - data not available