

GAO



147589

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June 1992

# 1992 Midyear Report of Key Performance Indicators

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# Preface

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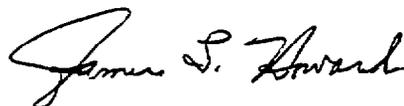
This is the midyear report to the Comptroller General on key GAO performance indicators during first half of fiscal year 1992, covering the period October 1, 1991, to March 31, 1992. A family of measures composed of a key indicator and several supporting indicators is presented in graphic form for each dimension. These key indicators address

- the results of GAO's work,
- managing GAO's work, and
- GAO's human resources.

To the extent possible, 5-year GAO-wide and 3-year division/region/overseas data are presented to help the reader appraise the movement of indicators in a historical context. Current year data are often compared with data covering fiscal year 1990, which also encompassed the second session of a Congress. Comparisons are also made to the first half of 1988, a comparable presidential election year. All numbers presented in this report are midyear figures, except where noted.

Appendix I contains GAO-wide statistics.

Any questions and comments should be directed to Kevin Boland, Director, Office of Information Management and Communications, or Raymond Olsen or Therese Holtzman, OIMC.



James Howard  
Assistant Comptroller General  
for Operations

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## Abbreviations

AFMD	Accounting and Financial Management Division
CPE	continuing professional education
EEO	equal employment opportunity
GAO	General Accounting Office
GGD	General Government Division
GPA	grade point average
GS	General Schedule
HRD	Human Resources Division
IMTEC	Information Management and Technology Division
MATS	Mission and Assignment Tracking System
NSIAD	National Security and International Affairs Division
OGC	Office of the General Counsel
OIMC	Office of Information Management and Communications
PEMD	Program Evaluation and Methodology Division
RCED	Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division
SES	Senior Executive Service



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# Results of GAO's Work

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GAO's total production of 597 audit and evaluation products, including all written reports, testimonies, and congressional briefings, set a 5-year record high in the first half of fiscal year 1992. In addition, the Office of the General Council produced 2,073 external products, also setting a 5-year high for the period.

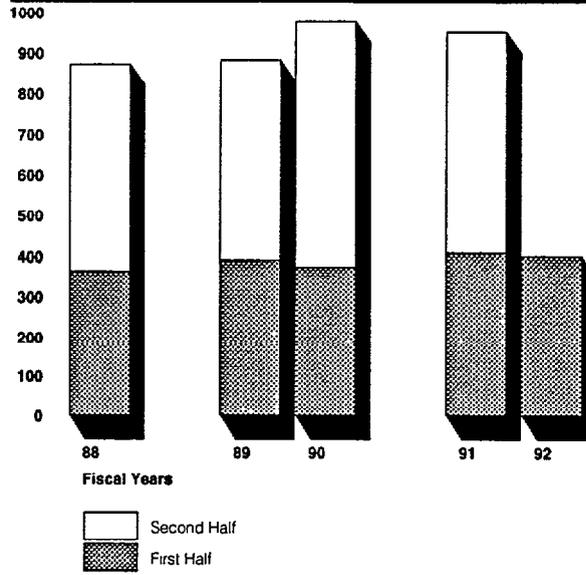
GAO's production of congressional and agency written audit and evaluation products totaled 399, 9 less than in 1991, but more than in any prior year. During the past 5 years, second-half-of-fiscal-year production in even-numbered years (encompassing second congressional sessions) has been much greater than in the first half—40 percent greater in 1988 and 62 percent greater in 1990. At this rate, if past patterns repeat themselves, total written product production for fiscal year 1992 could exceed that of 1991 and possibly exceed the previous record of 971 set in 1990.

Testimonies delivered this year before congressional committees totaled 123, compared with only 65 during the first half of last year. The figures reflect the historic pattern of relatively greater numbers of testimonies during the first half of even-numbered years than in odd-numbered years, which encompass national elections and the formation of a new Congress. Looking ahead, based upon past patterns, testimony for all of 1992 may not exceed last year's total of 277 because of the record-breaking 1991 second-half surge in testimony; and it is unlikely that testimony during all of 1992 will equal the record of 306 set in 1990.

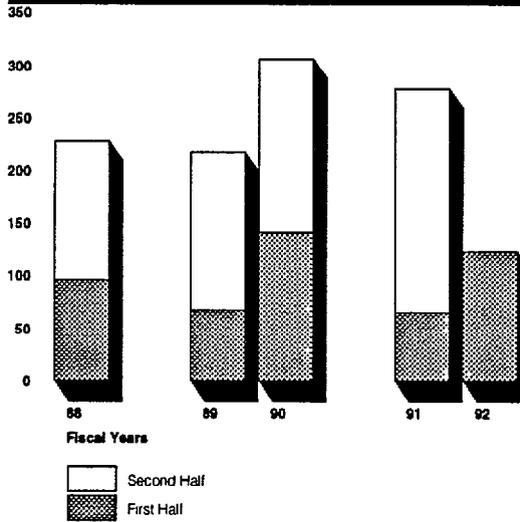
The charts on the opposite page illustrate the 5-year trend in total production of written audit and evaluation products and testimonies during the first and second half of fiscal years 1988-1992.

Section I  
Results of GAO's Work

Written Audit/Evaluation Products  
Issued at Midyear



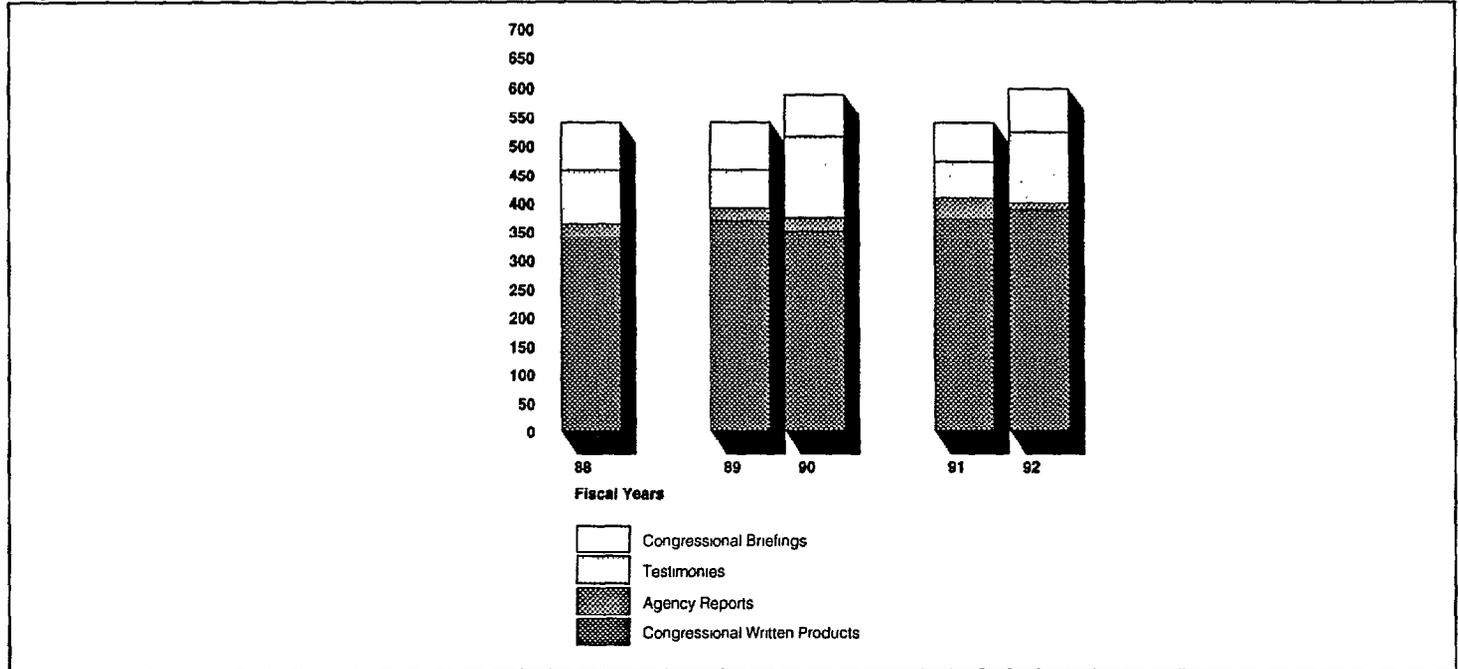
Testimonies Before Congressional  
Committees at Midyear



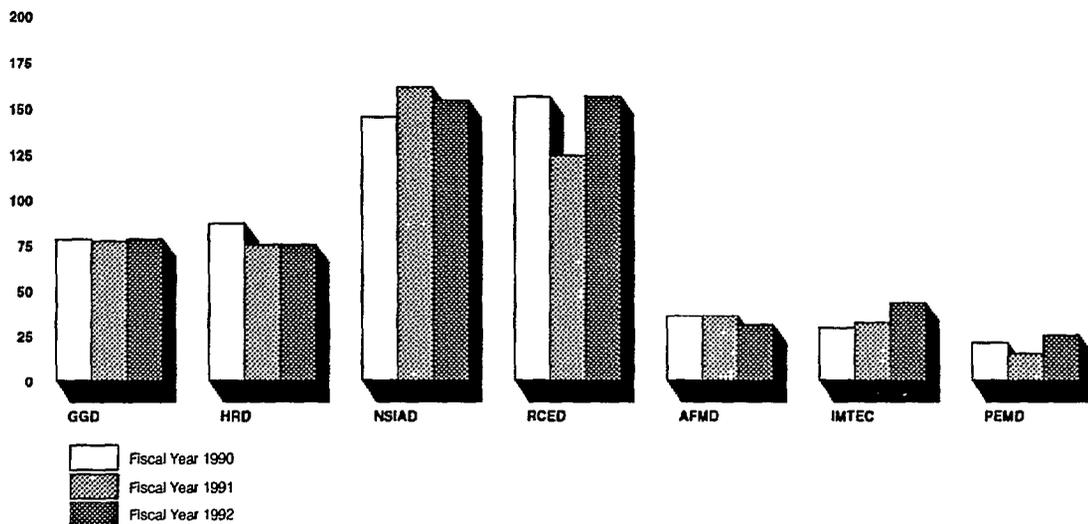
# Product Volume

Total output of audit and evaluation products during the first half of fiscal year 1992 set a 5-year high of 597, 11 percent higher than in 1991, slightly higher than in 1990 (which also encompassed a second congressional session), and 11 percent higher than in 1988 (a comparable year in the presidential election cycle). Only 12 agency reports were issued—a 5-year low. Sixty-one percent of congressional written products were letter reports, up from 44 and 58 percent during the first half of 1990 and 1991, respectively.

**Key Indicator: Number of Audit/Evaluation Products at Midyear**

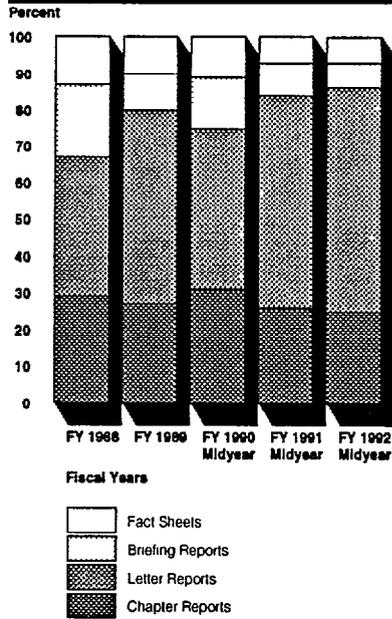


**Audit/Evaluations Products by Division at Midyear**



Section I: Results of GAO's Work  
Product Volume

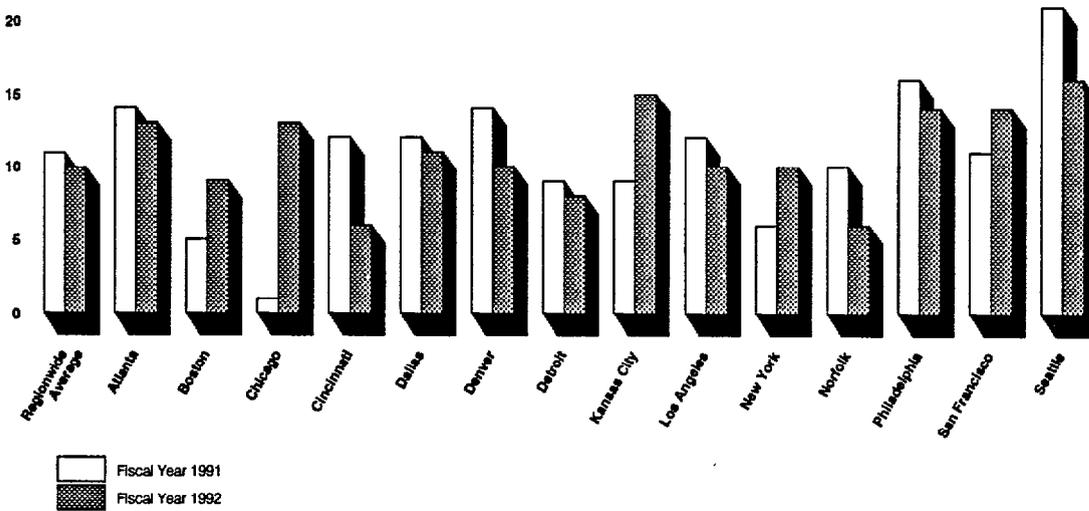
Congressional Written Products by Type at Midyear



Note: FY 1988-89 percentages are for the full fiscal year; no midyear data are available for past years.

Congressional and Agency Written Products Resulting From Region-Led Assignments at Midyear

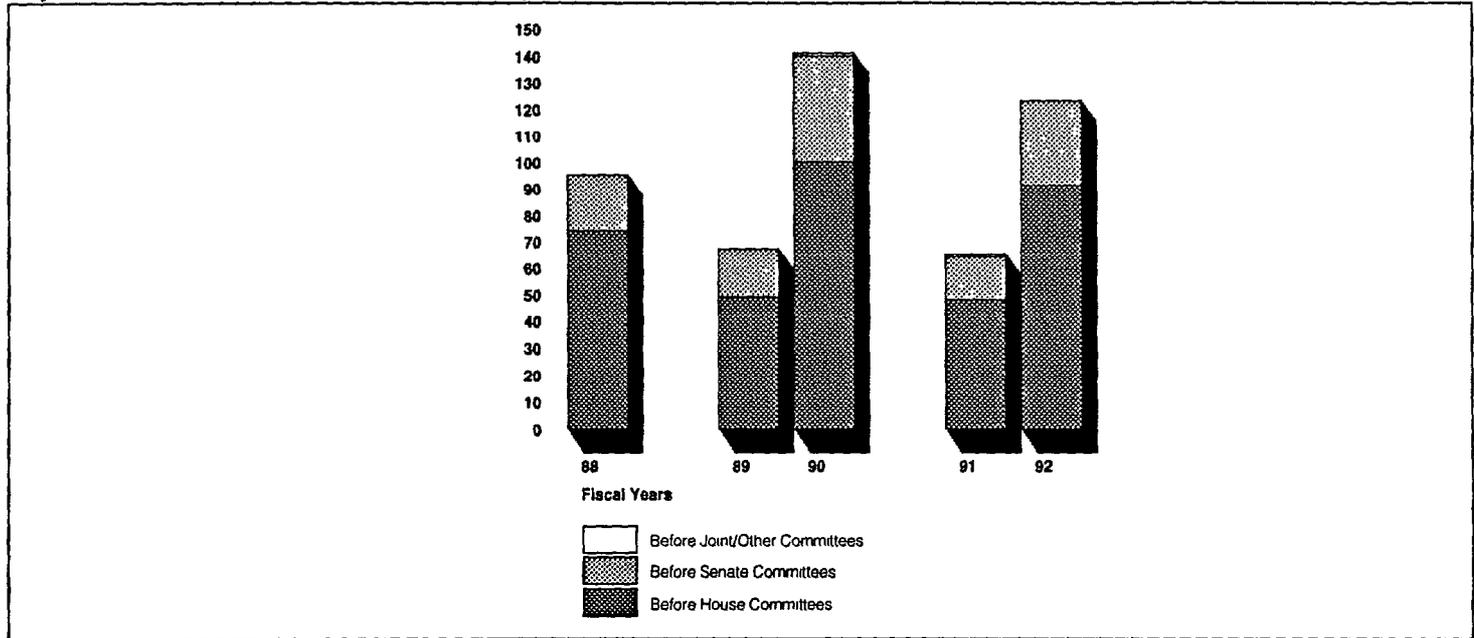
25 Number of Products



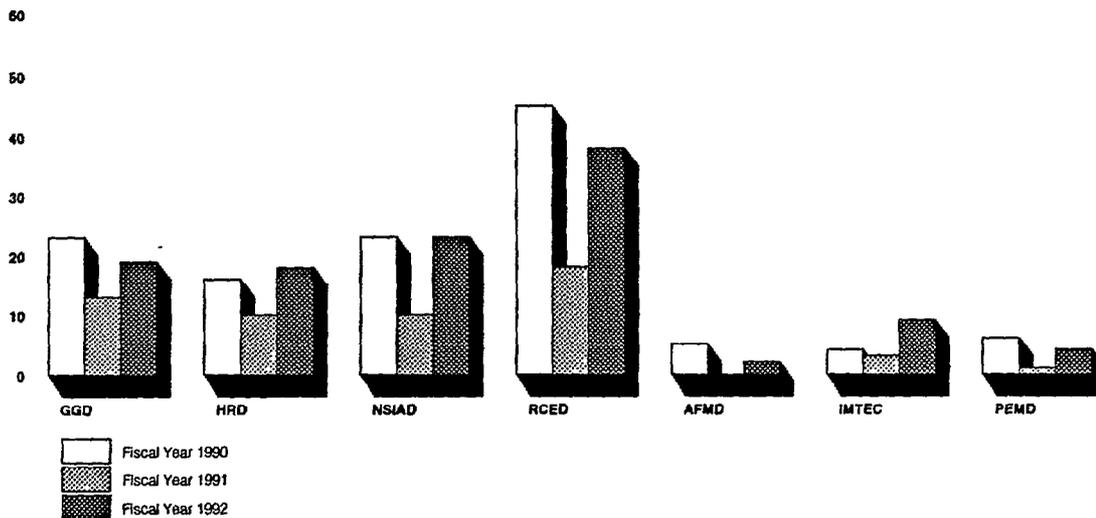
# Testimony

Testimonies totaled 123, down 13 percent from the first half of 1990, which also encompassed a second congressional session. Twenty-seven percent of all testimony during the period was presented to the Committees on Government Operations and Governmental Affairs. This represents an increase of 6 and 7 percent from the same periods during 1990 and 1991, respectively, in testimonies before these Committees.

**Key Indicator: Number of Testimonies at Midyear**

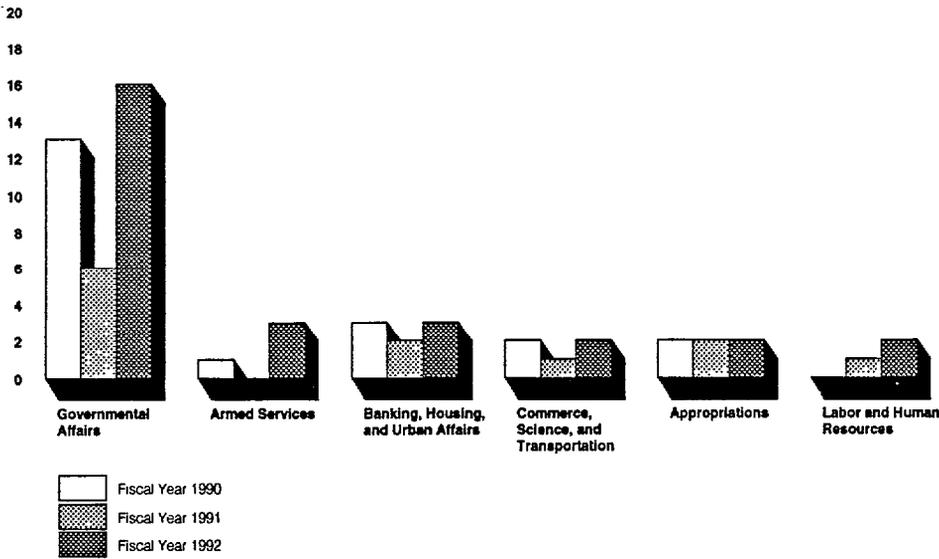


**Number of Testimonies by Division at Midyear**

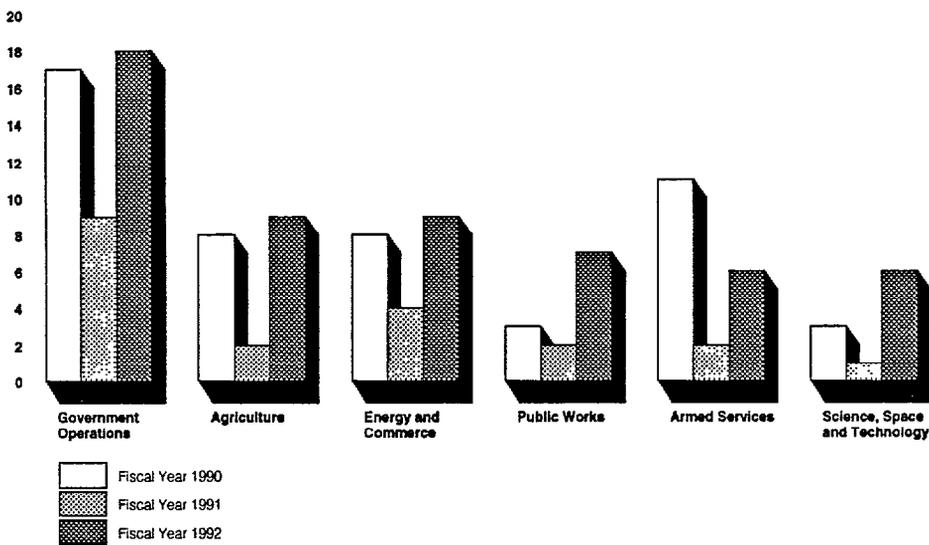


Section I: Results of GAO's Work  
Testimony

Senate Committees Receiving Most Testimony at Midyear



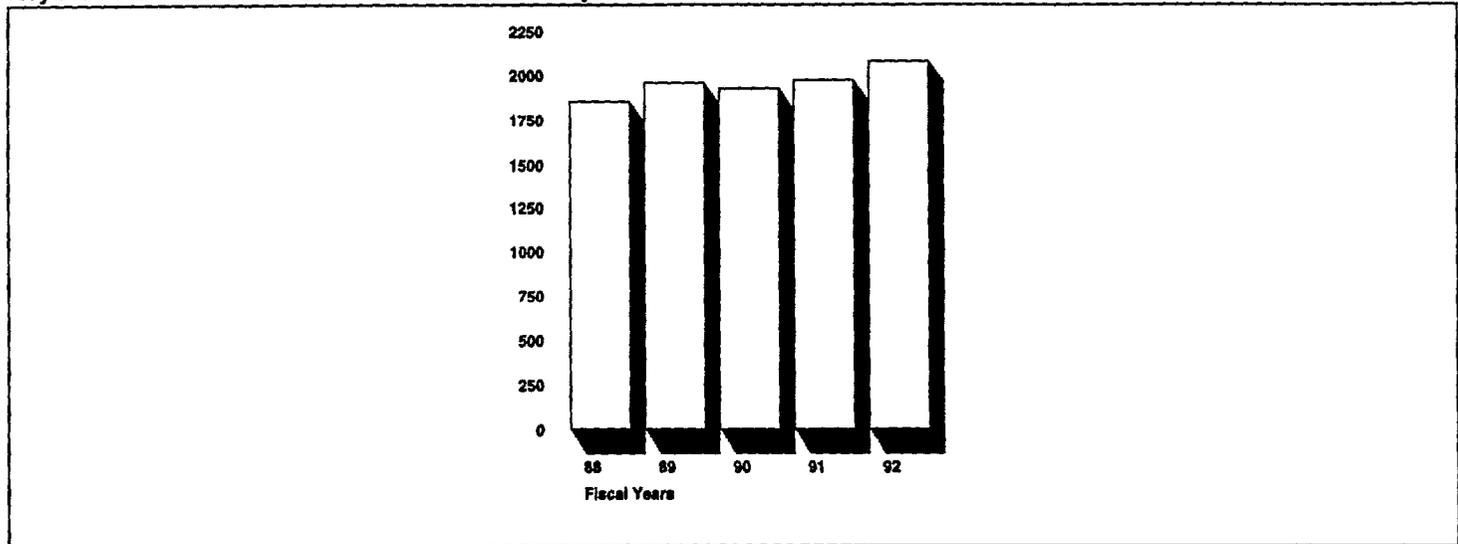
House Committees Receiving Most Testimony at Midyear



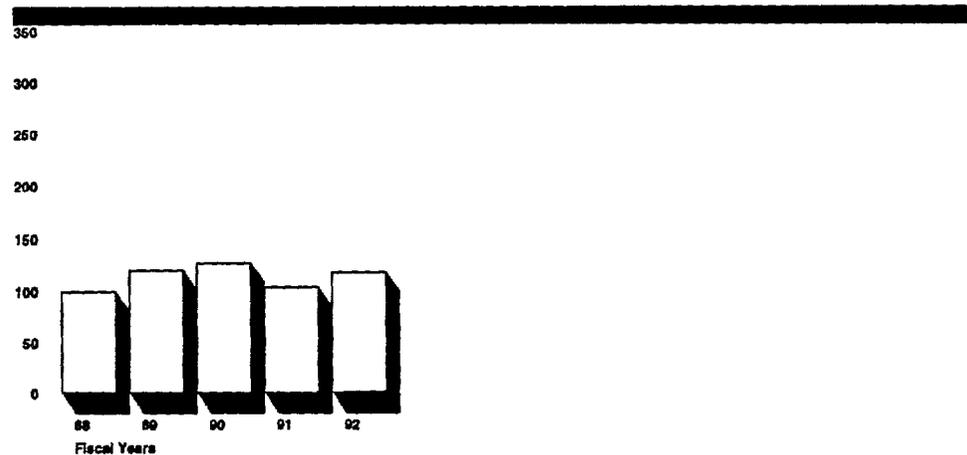
# OGC Output

OGC output of selected external products totaled 2,073, an increase of 5 percent over the first half of 1991. Of these products, Bid Protest Decisions and Congressional Opinions increased 10 and 14 percent, respectively, and Executive Branch Decisions decreased 19 percent.

**Key Indicator: Number of External Products at Midyear**

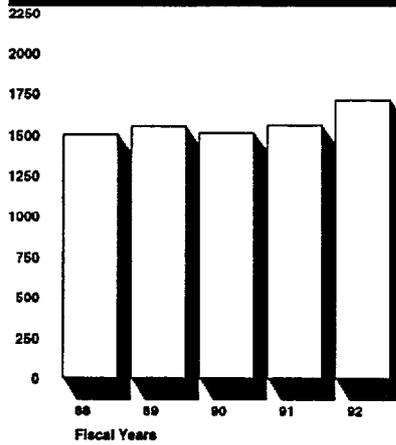


**Number of Opinions for the Congress at Midyear**

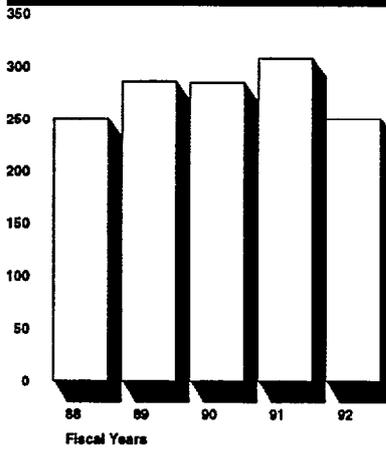


Section I: Results of GAO's Work  
OGC Output

Number of Bid Protest Decisions at Midyear



Number of Executive Branch Decisions at Midyear



# Managing GAO's Work

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As shown in Section I, GAO achieved impressive increases in productivity in the first half of the fiscal year while maintaining high quality in products and services provided. Responding to congressional demands for GAO assistance, the agency was managing 1,347 active assignments at the end of the first half, a 4-percent increase over 1990, the last comparable year encompassing the second session of a Congress. Striving to cope with this growing work load with relatively fixed resources has presented serious management challenges and caused constantly shifting schedules to accommodate the most urgent congressional needs. The effects of this growing work load are reflected in many of the indicators in Section II.

For example, GAO's ability to meet target dates for issuance of its final products (set at the one-third point in assignment implementation) declined slightly from last year. (Customers' urgent information needs are often satisfied through the issuance of interim products, such as oral briefings. This permits GAO to start new urgent assignments but often results in postponing the issuance of final products beyond the original target dates.) Also, the average age of active assignments rose slightly, as did the average duration of completed assignments. With fixed staff resources disbursed over more assignments, however, the average cost per assignment reached a 5-year low.

GAO responded to these conditions by slightly reducing its new assignment starts to 883 (720 congressional requests and 163 other) compared with 910 in 1990, the last comparable year in the congressional election cycle.

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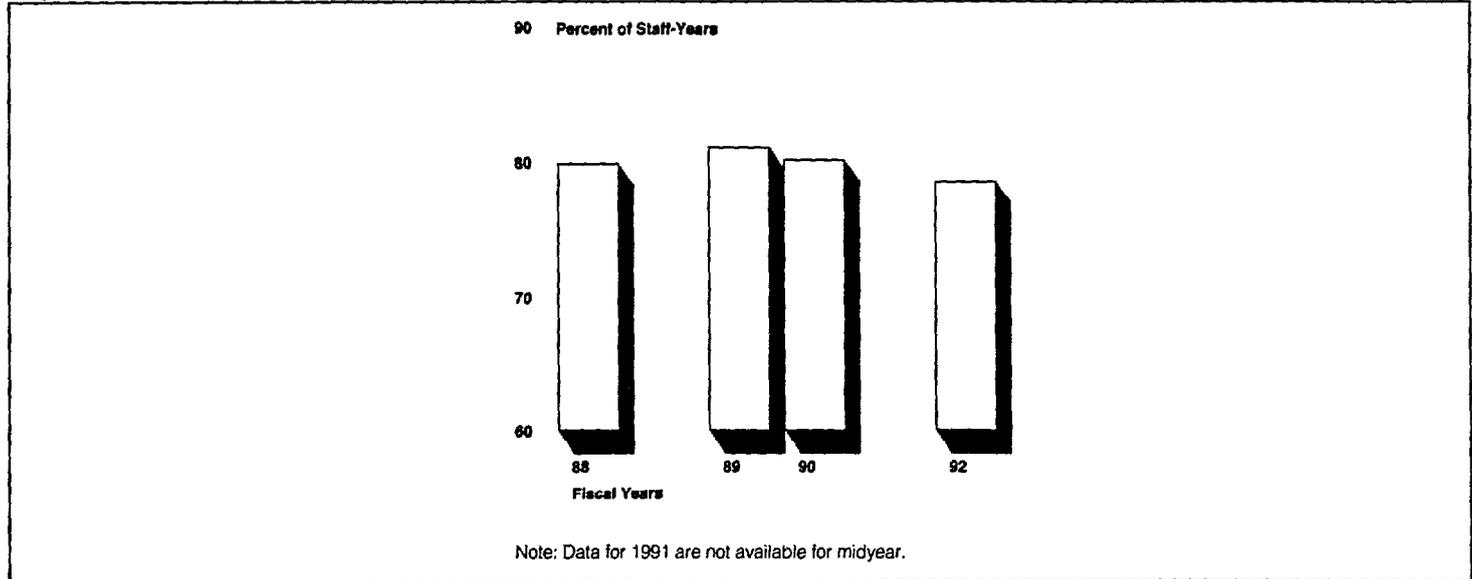
**Section II**  
**Managing GAO's Work**

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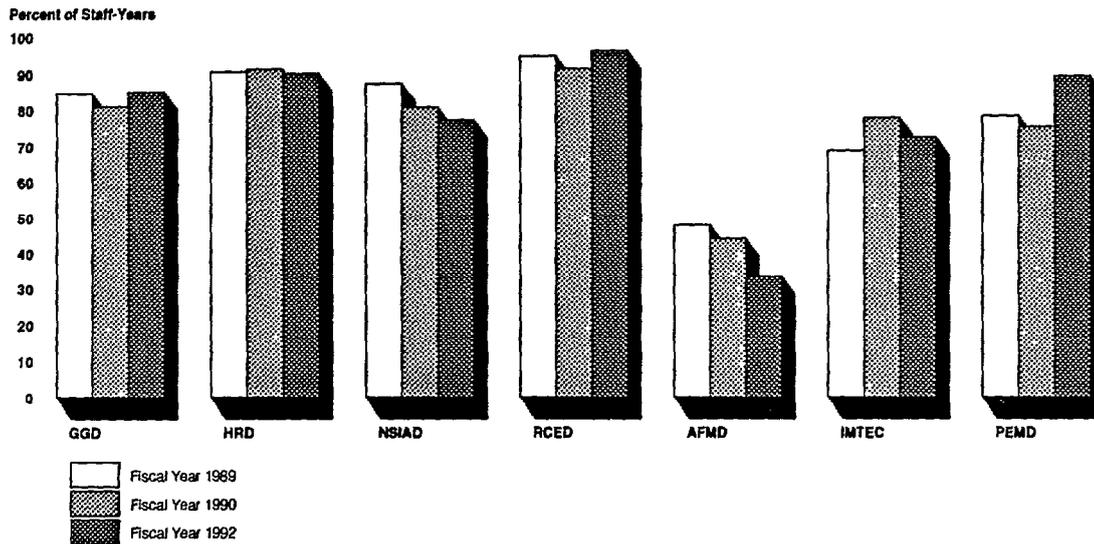
# Direct Assistance to the Congress

GAO's direct assistance work load (staff-years charged to audits and evaluations that directly assist the Congress) was 78.5 percent, down 1.6 percent from the same point in 1990, which also encompassed a second congressional session. GAO started 720 new congressional request assignments, down 4 percent from the first half of 1990 but 12 percent higher than in 1988, a comparable year in the presidential election cycle.

**Key Indicator: Direct Assistance to the Congress at Midyear**

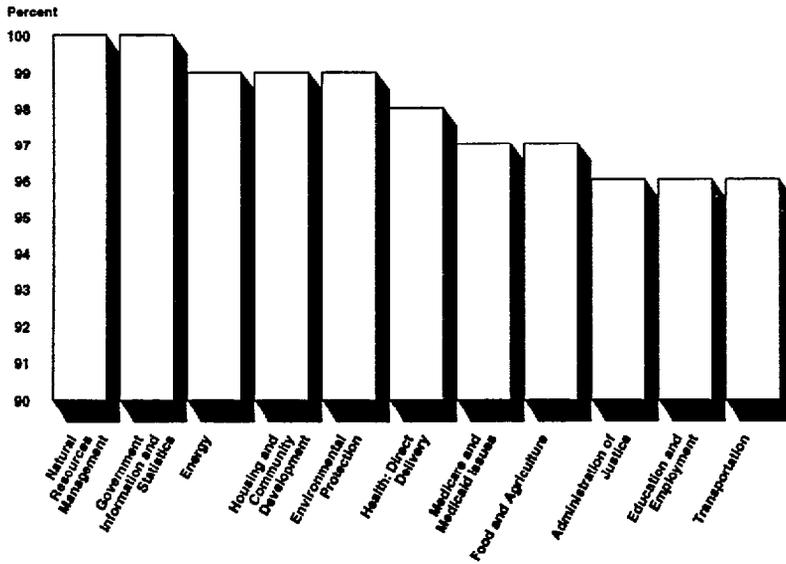


**Direct Assistance to the Congress by Division at Midyear**

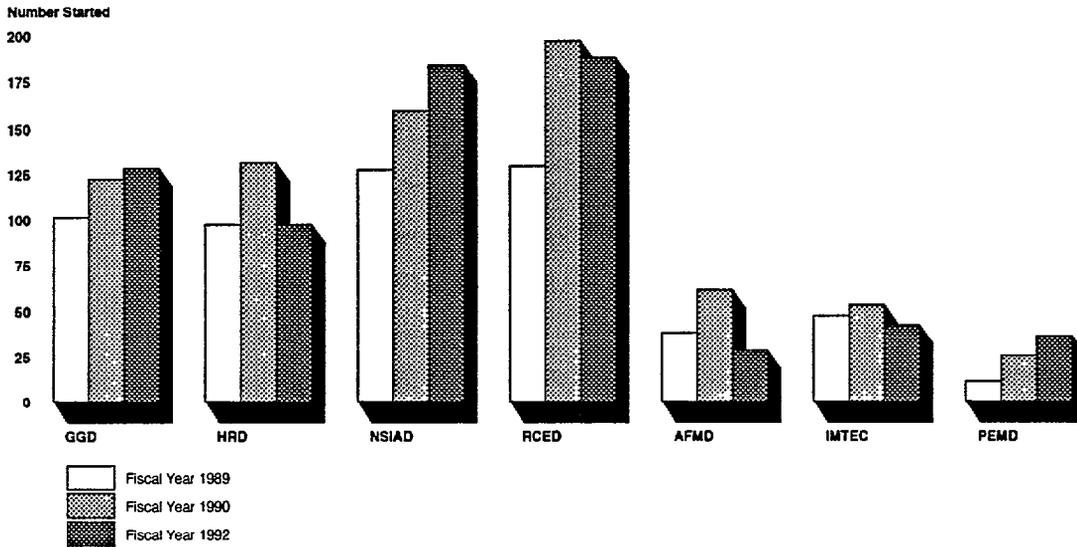


Section II: Managing GAO's Work  
 Direct Assistance to  
 the Congress

Issue Areas/Areas of Interest With Direct Assistance Rates Over 95 Percent at Midyear



Congressional Assignments Started by Division at Midyear

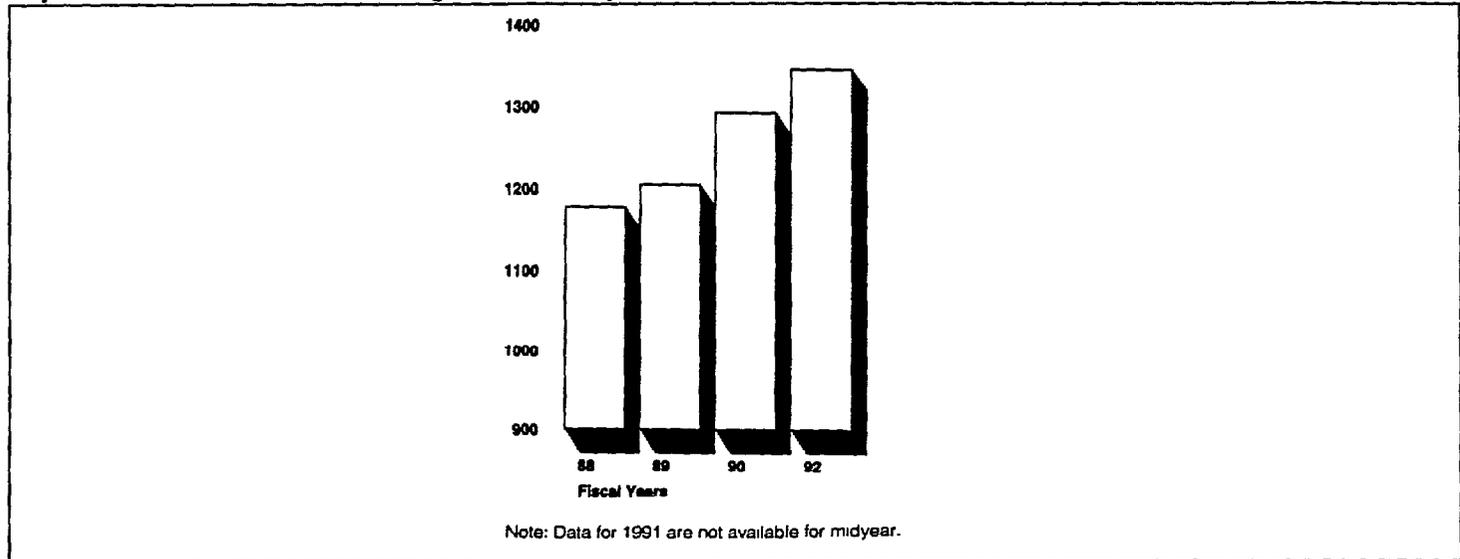


Note: Data for 1991 are not available for midyear.

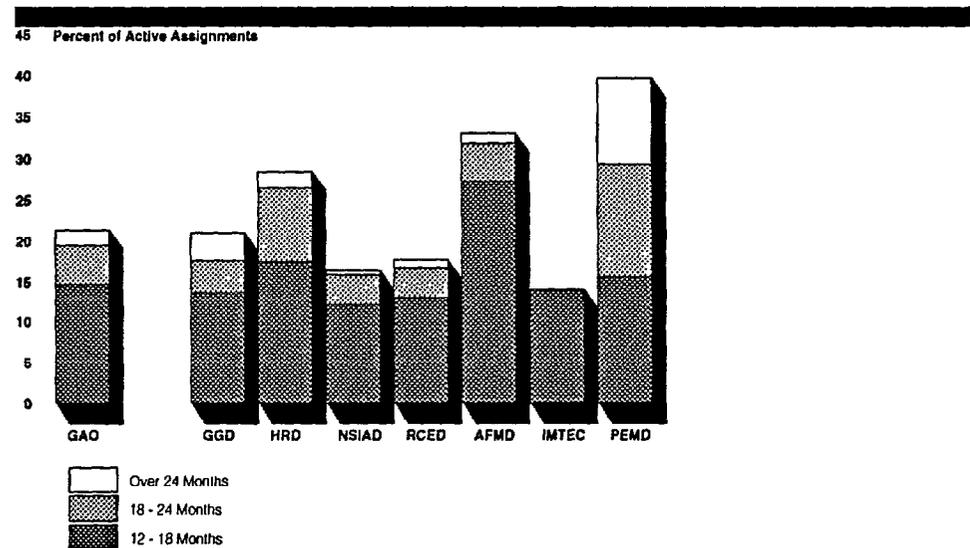
# Active Assignments

Active assignments at the end of the first half numbered 1,347, up 4 percent from the same point in 1990. The average age of these active assignments increased slightly: 21 percent of them were more than 12 months old, compared with 19 percent at the same point in 1990.

**Key Indicator: Number of Active Assignments at Midyear**

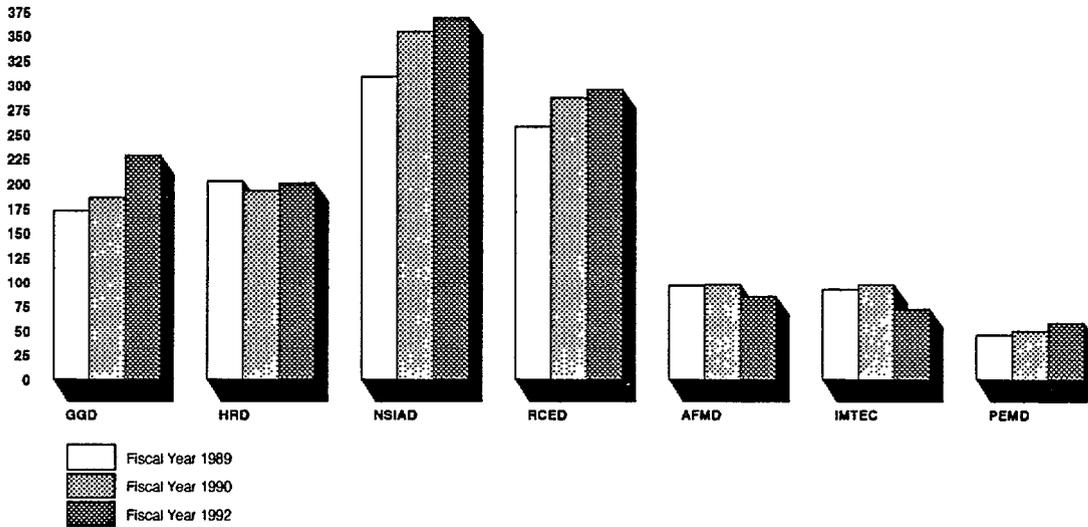


**Aging Pattern of Active Assignments GAO-Wide and by Division at Midyear**



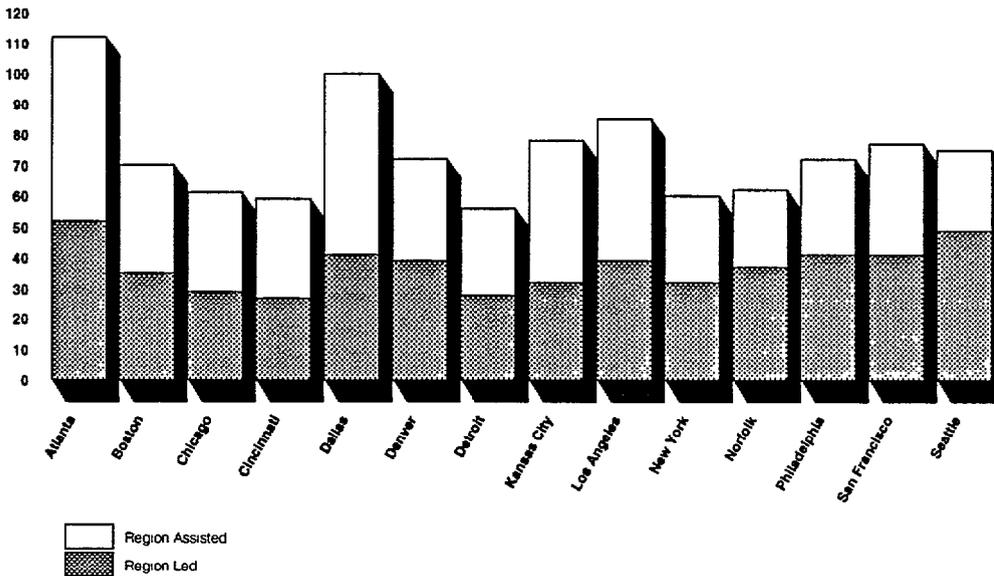
Section II: Managing GAO's Work  
Active Assignments

Number of Active Assignments by Division at Midyear



Note: Data for 1991 are not available for midyear.

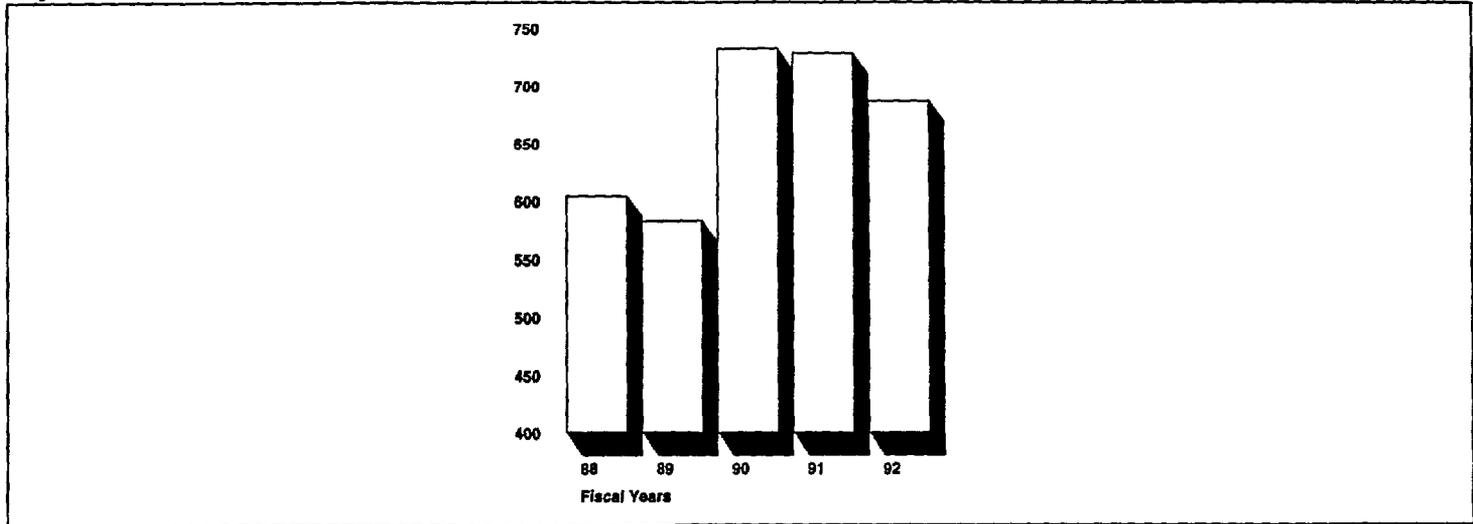
Number of Active Assignments by Region at Midyear



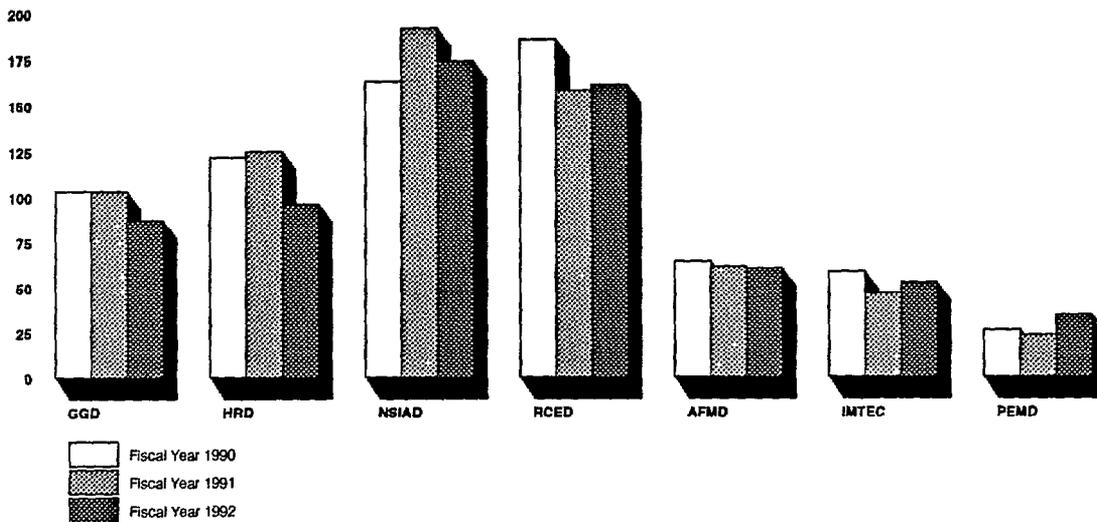
# Completed Assignments

GAO completed 686 assignments during the first half, down 6 percent from both 1990 and 1991 totals for the same period. The average duration of these completed assignments was 9.4 months, up slightly (.2 months) from last year. The average cost of completed assignments during the first half was \$179,000, down 18 and 7 percent from 1990 and 1991, respectively.

**Key Indicator: Number of Completed Assignments at Midyear**

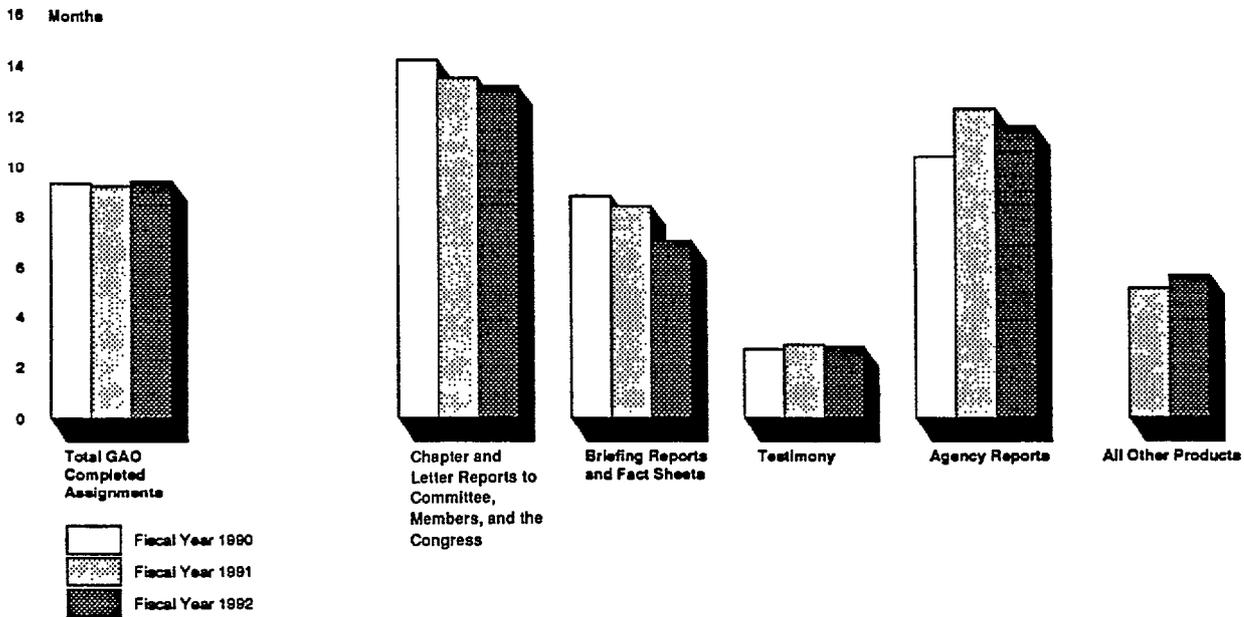


**Number of Completed Assignments by Division at Midyear**

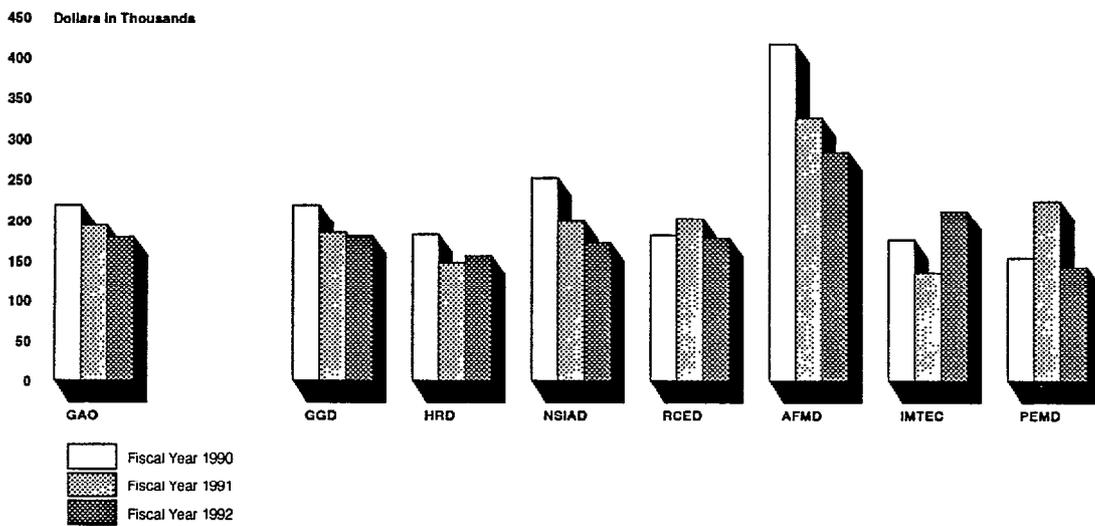


Section II: Managing GAO's Work  
Completed Assignments

Average Duration of Completed Assignments GAO-Wide and by Product Group at Midyear



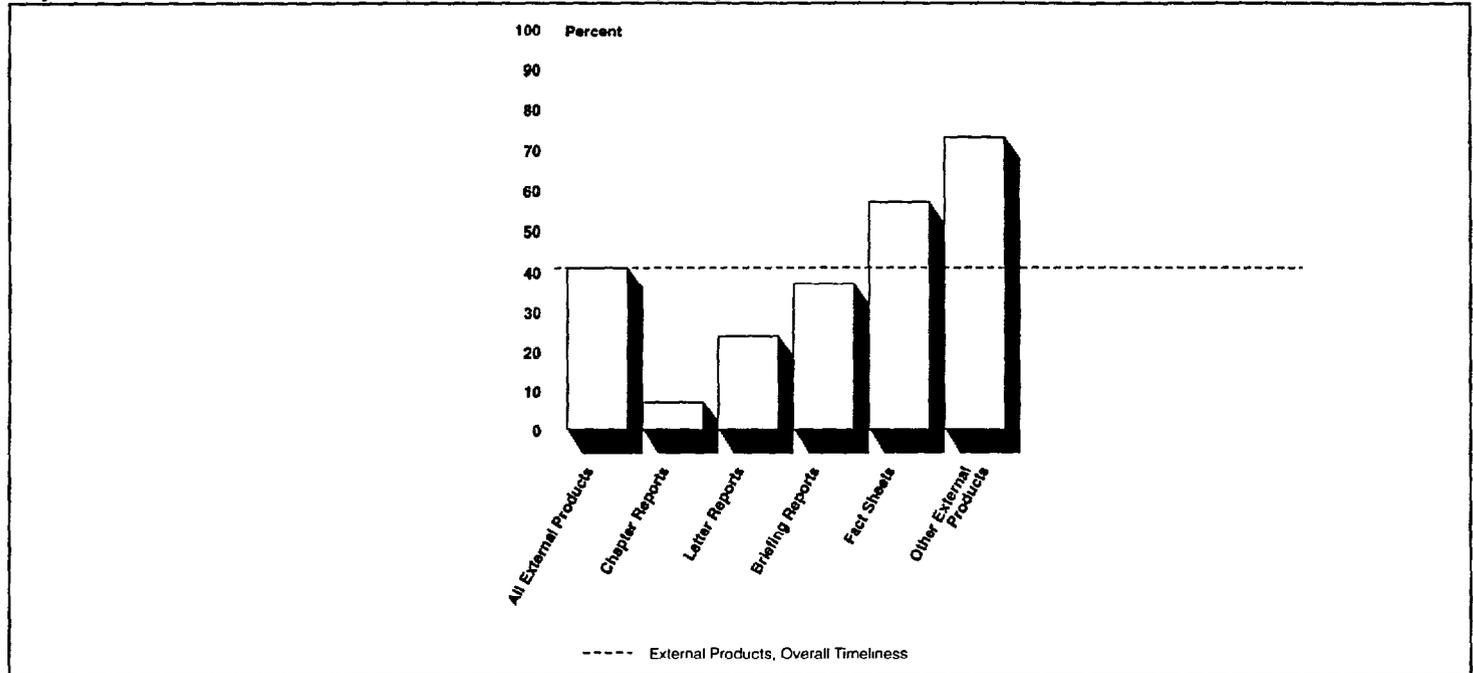
Average Cost of Completed Assignments GAO-Wide and by Division at Midyear



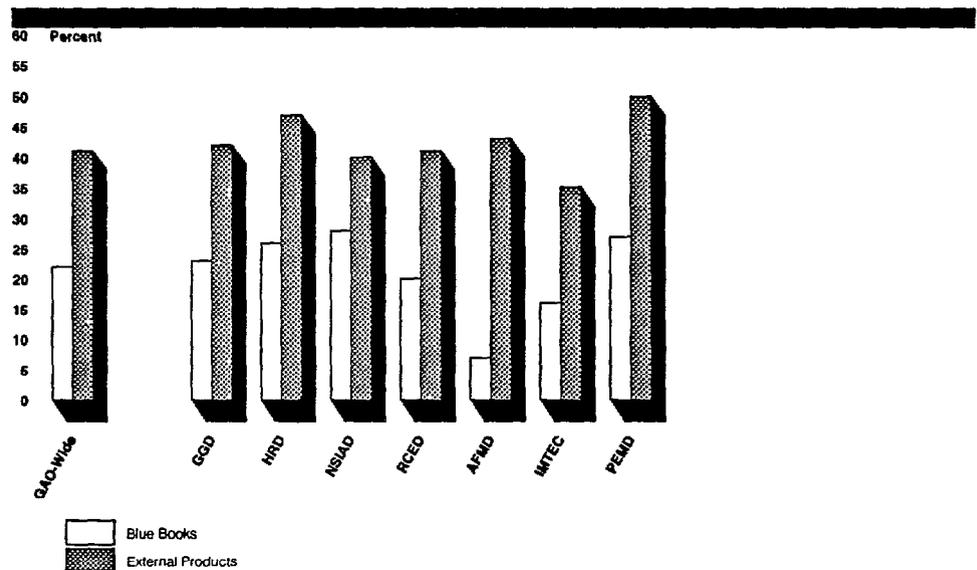
# Timeliness

During the first half, 22 percent of blue book reports (when principal products of assignments) were issued by the target dates established at the one-third point in assignment implementation. Of all types of GAO external audit and evaluation principal products, 41 percent were issued by the target dates during the first half.

**Key Indicator: Timeliness of Principal Products Issued by Target Date at Midyear**



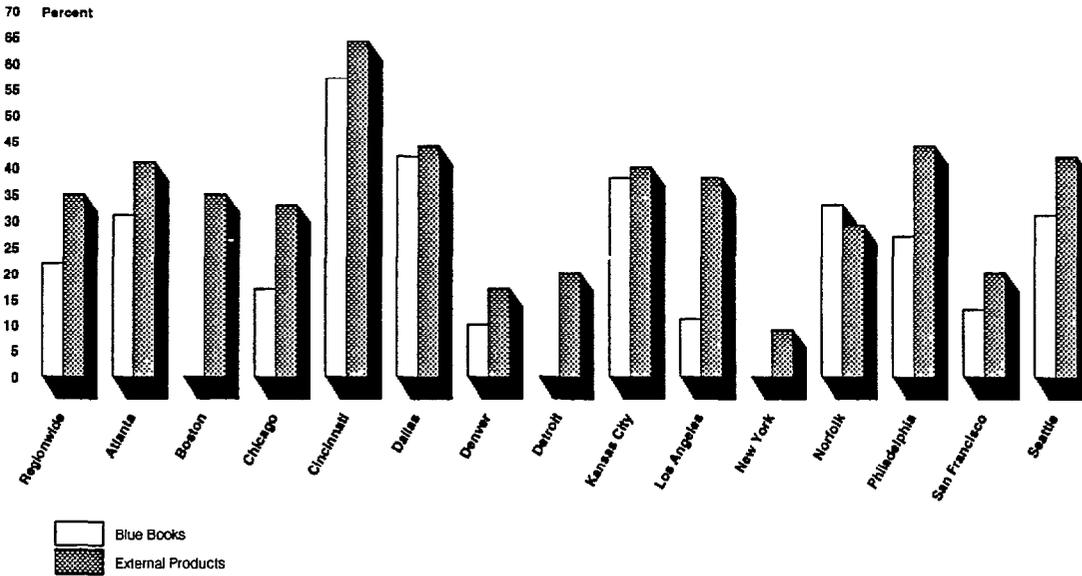
**Principal Products Issued by Target Date by Division at Midyear**



Note: Data for External Products include blue book reports, testimonies, oral briefings, and congressional correspondence when they are the principal products of assignments.

Section II: Managing GAO's Work  
Timeliness

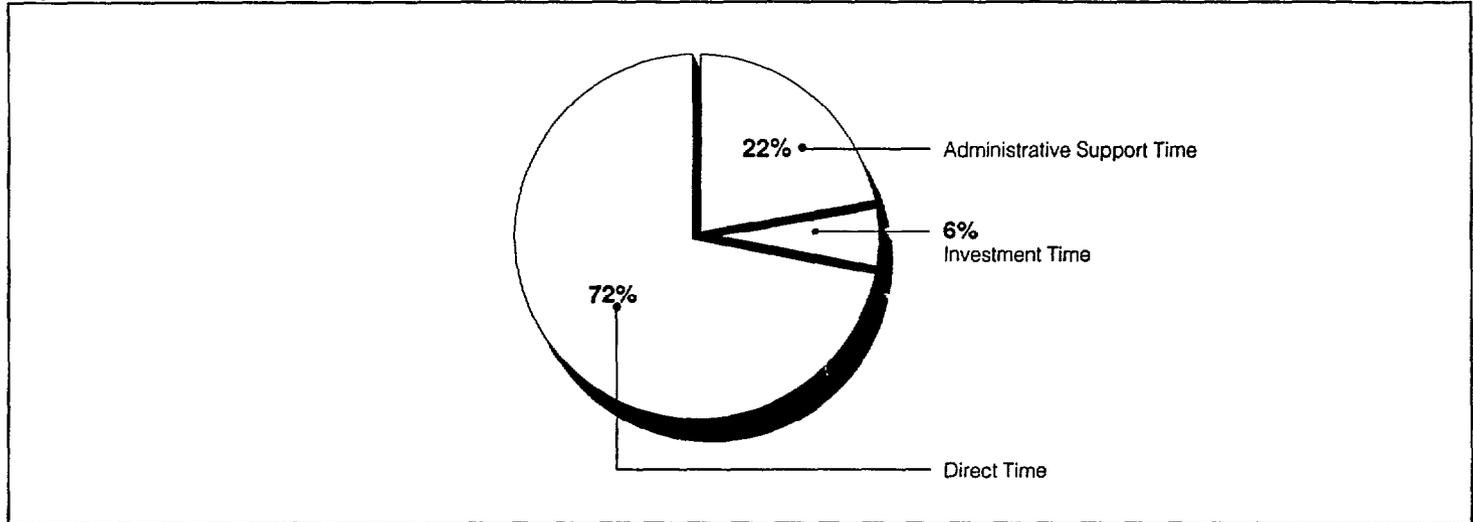
Principal Products Issued by Target Date by Region at Midyear



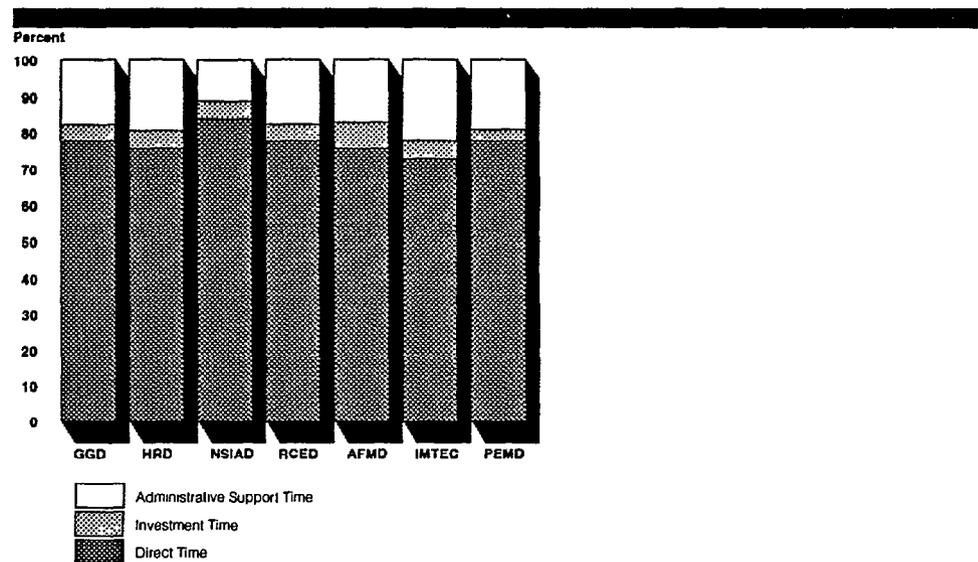
# Resource Utilization

Of all GAO's staff-hours for the first half, 72 percent were directly devoted to mission work. In addition, 6 percent of staff-hours were devoted to developing GAO's human resources. The remainder of staff-hours (22 percent) were devoted to essential administrative work. (No midyear data are available for prior years.)

**Key Indicator: Direct Time at Midyear**

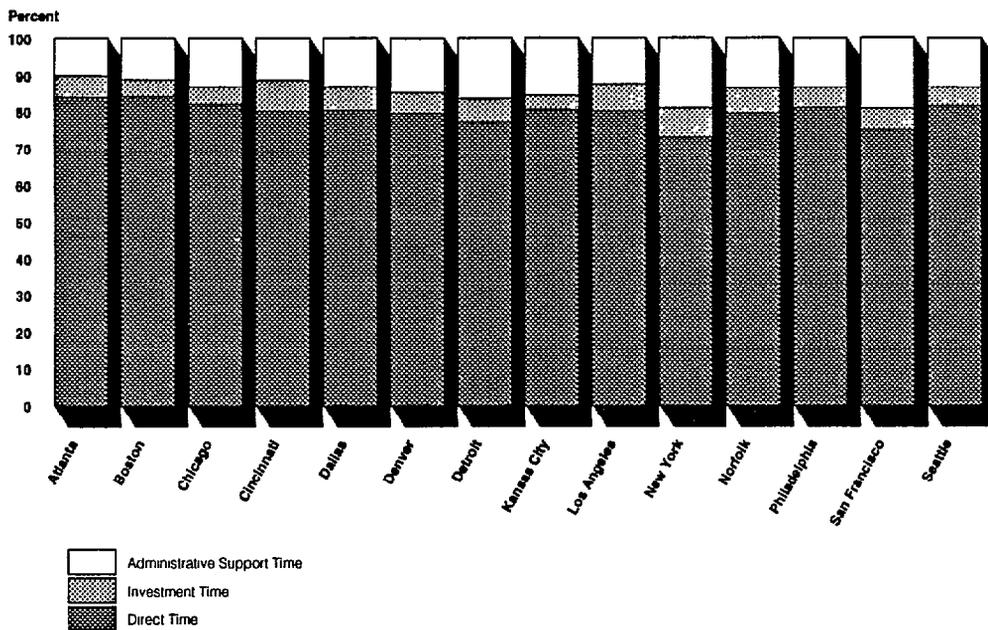


**Resource Utilization by Division at Midyear**



Section II: Managing GAO's Work  
Resource Utilization

Resource Utilization by Region at Midyear



# Profile of GAO's Human Resources

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Unusually low attrition is GAO's major human resource news at the midyear point. The resulting decline in hiring may have a significant effect on the composition of the work force in future periods.

Because of the low attrition, GAO's overall staffing level at the midyear point in 1992 is higher than it has been at any midyear point in the last 5 years. As a result, in February 1992, GAO curtailed all recruiting and hiring, except for those positions that fulfilled a critical need. Before this date, GAO had hired about the same number of employees it did at previous midyear points.

Consistent with labor market conditions, attrition in GAO slowed agencywide in all occupational groups and at all levels. This was particularly true in GAO's regional offices, where attrition was only one-third the rate experienced at this point last year. As attrition slowed during this period, hiring was curtailed. The annual announcement soliciting entry-level applications was closed a month ahead of schedule. As a result, the number of applicants declined substantially this year.

Established staffing trends across occupational groups continued in fiscal year 1992. Evaluator-related specialists, who are needed to conduct complex assignments, continued to increase as a percent of the total work force. Conversely, support staff and, to a lesser extent, generalist evaluators continued to decrease. Band III representation increased with the assignment of additional Assistant Directors to field and staff offices and the hiring of issue area experts across the agency. Senior-level staff also increased, while the percentage of staff-level employees dropped. This trend can be expected to continue if hiring controls limit employment of entry-level evaluators.

Women and minorities are increasingly represented among GAO's senior ranks. GAO continues to place great emphasis and management attention on affirmative action programs.

The qualifications of entry-level hires surpassed those of individuals joining GAO last year. With keen competition for available positions, GAO hired only 1 of every 33 applicants. More than 70 percent had graduate degrees, and more than 75 percent had grade point averages above 3.5. Roughly 44 percent studied public policy, 25 percent studied accounting, and most of the remaining hires studied business or the social sciences.

GAO staff continue to meet the continuing professional education (CPE) requirement designed to foster professional development and offer

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**Section III**  
**Profile of GAO's Human Resources**

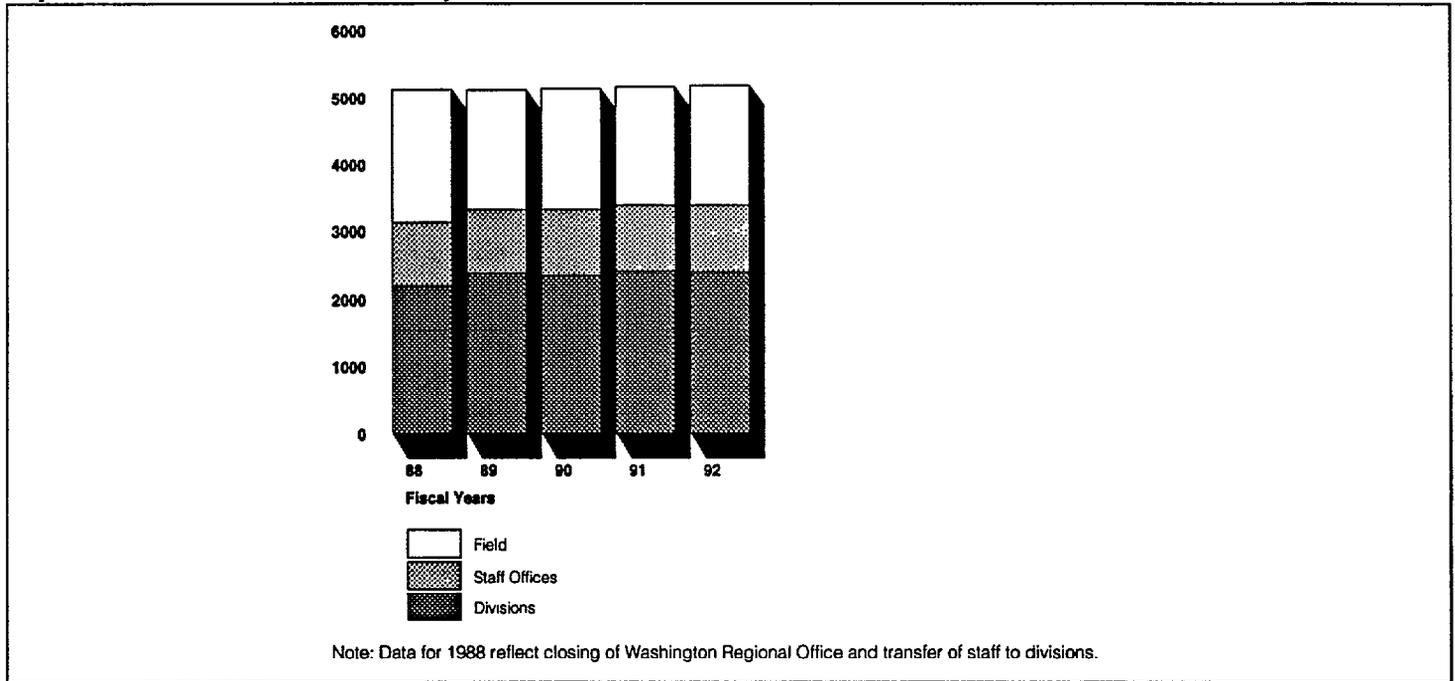
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exposure to new evaluation and management approaches. Statistics on CPE credits across offices and staff levels indicate that staff will again comply with the requirement for the period ending December 31, 1992. More than 87 percent are at the halfway point, and more than 41 percent have already met the requirement.

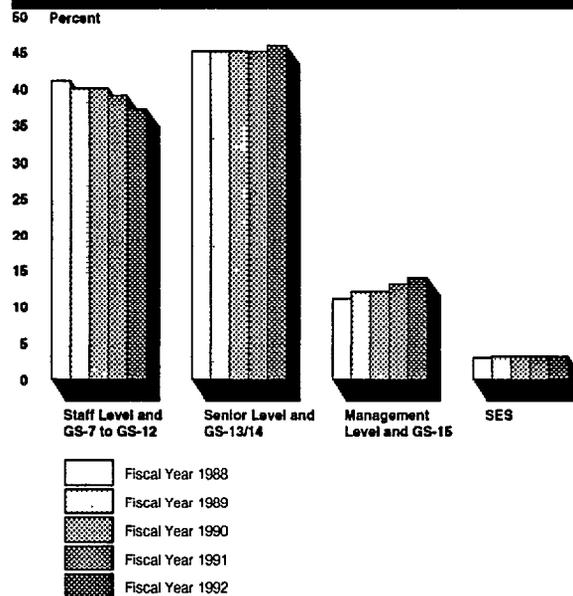
# Work Force

The overall midyear employment level increased for the fourth consecutive year. Small changes occurred in the percentage of staff working in each of the job categories, with the exception of evaluator-related specialists and support staff. The percentage of evaluator-related specialists increased rather substantially, while the percentage of support staff continued to decrease by roughly the same proportion. The percentage of management- and senior-level staff increased, while the percentage of employees at the staff level decreased.

## Key Indicator: Total Work Force at Midyear

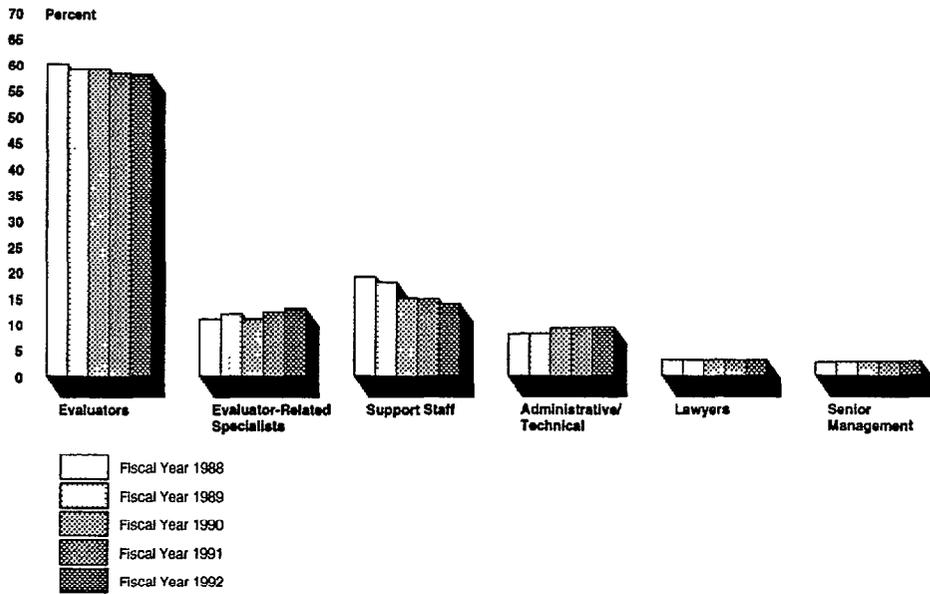


## Professional Work Force by Level/Grade at Midyear



Section III: Profile of GAO's Human Resources  
Work Force

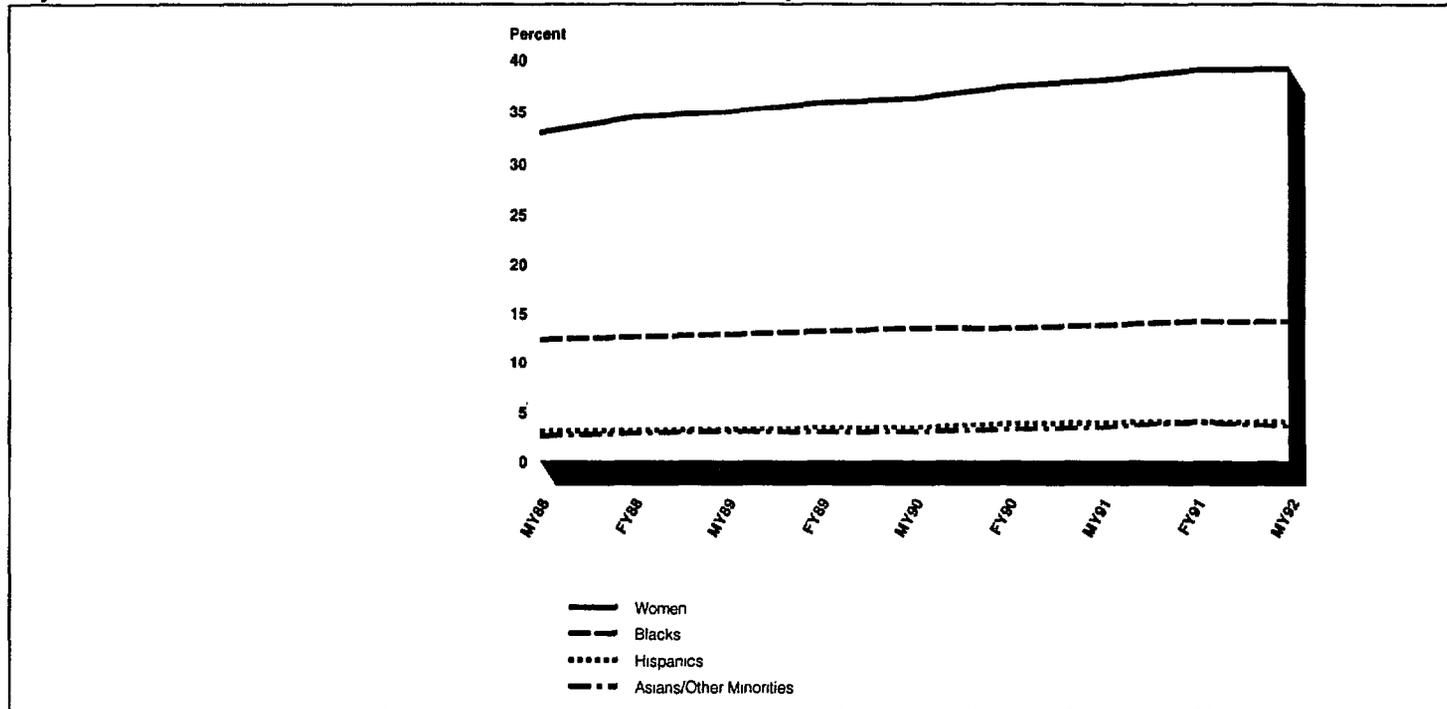
Work Force by Job Category at Midyear



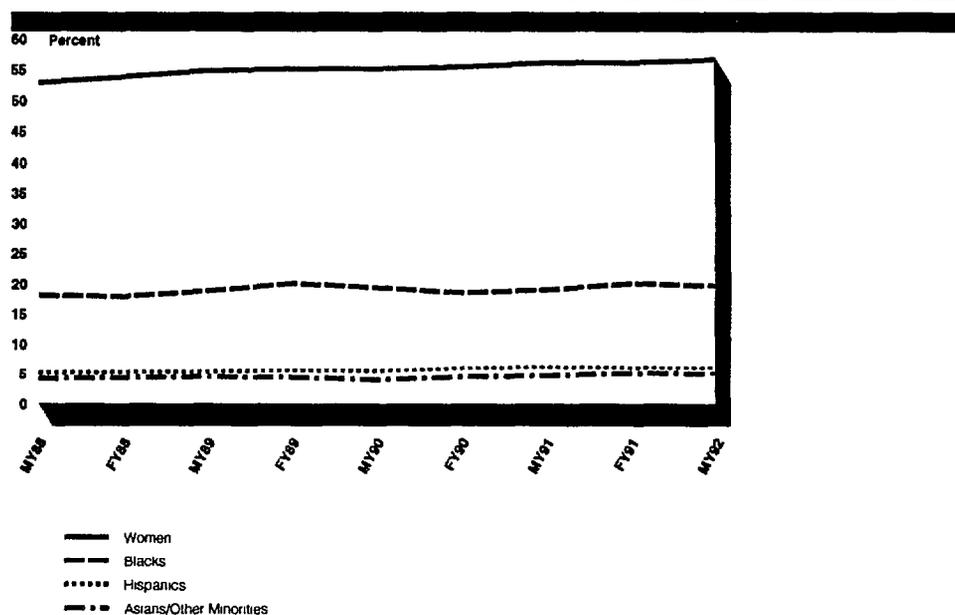
# EEO

Among professional staff, the percentage of women and minorities increased at all levels compared to the midyear point in 1991. Minority representation increased rather significantly at the senior level. At the management and executive levels, representation increased for all groups but most notably for women.

**Key Indicator: Women and Minorities in the Professional Staff at Midyear**

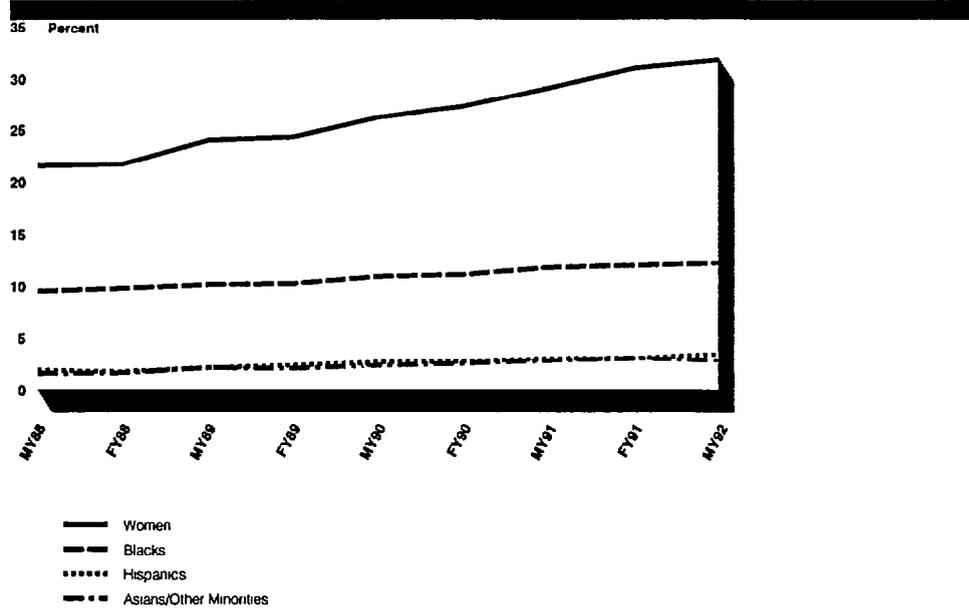


**Women and Minorities at the Staff and GS-7 to GS-12 Levels at Midyear**

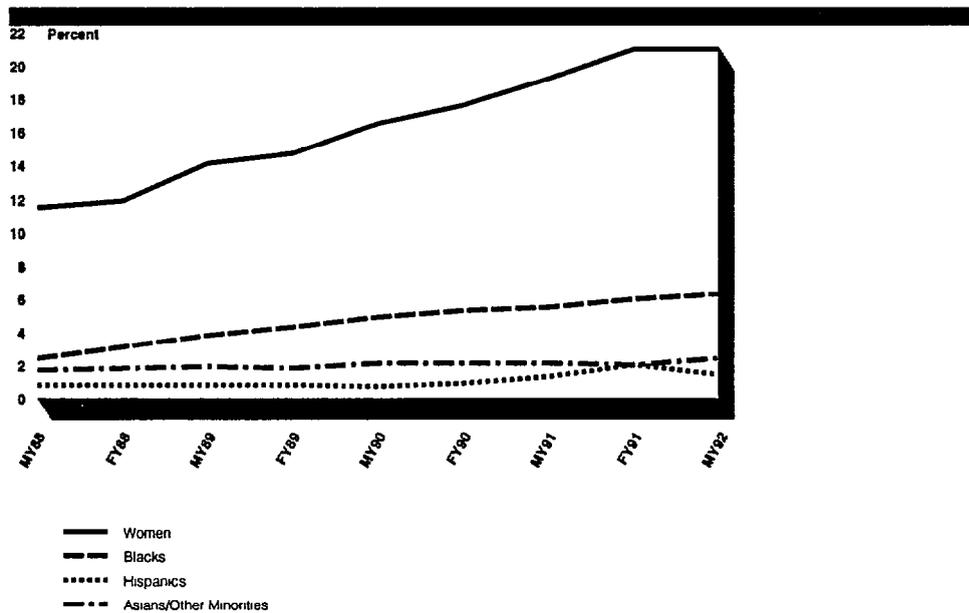


Section III: Profile of GAO's Human Resources  
EEO

Women and Minorities at the Senior and GS-13/14 Levels at Midyear



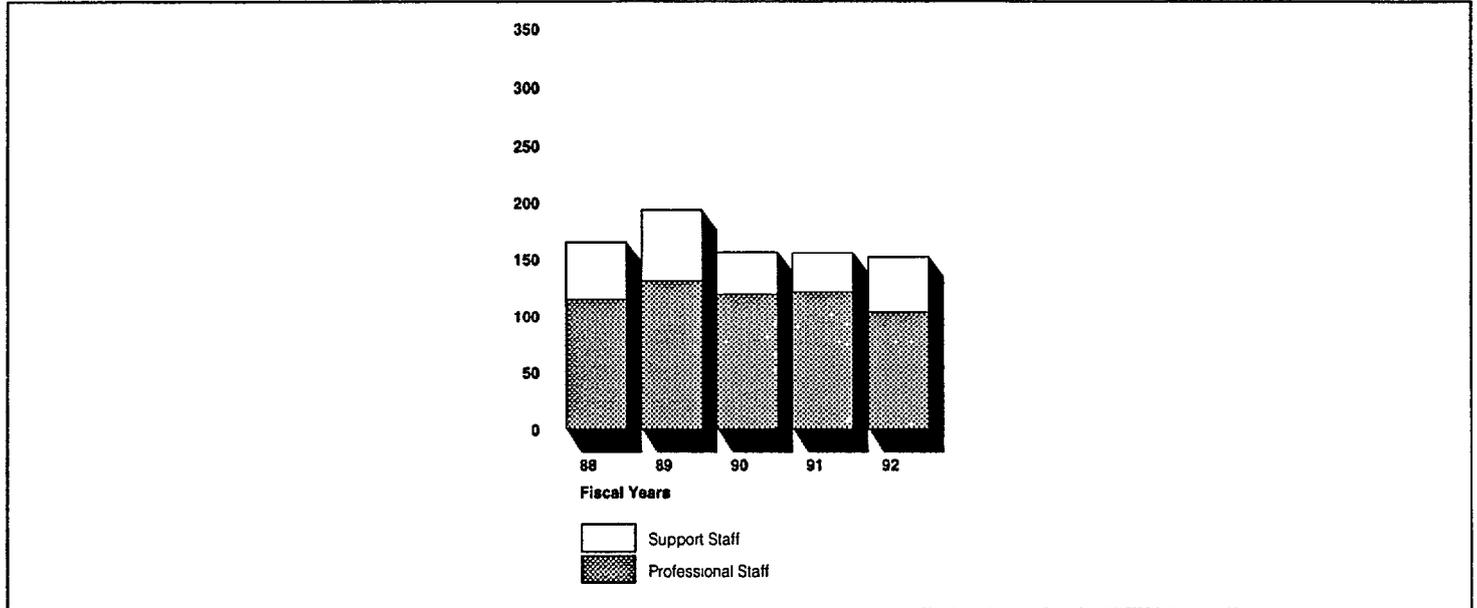
Women and Minorities at the Management, GS-15, and SES Levels at Midyear



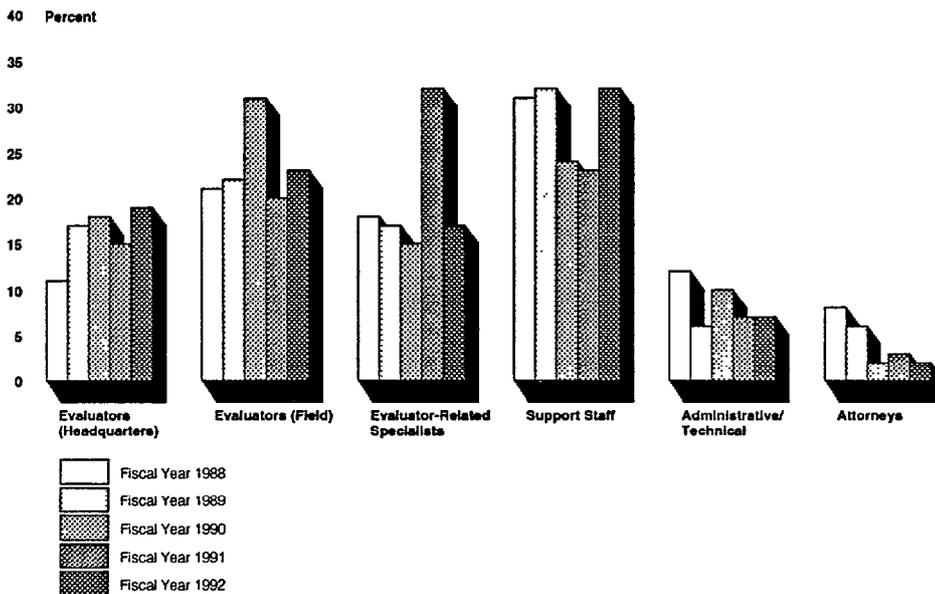
# Recruitment/ Hiring

Compared to prior years, GAO hired about the same number of employees at the 1992 midyear point. As a percent of total hires, evaluator-related specialists declined considerably from the unusually high 1991 level. Conversely, evaluators and support staff increased as a percentage of total hires. GAO received 3,141 applications for the 80 entry-level positions filled by the 1992 midyear point. More than 70 percent of the entry-level hires earned graduate or doctorate degrees, and more than 75 percent had GPAs above 3.5.

Key Indicator: Total Hires at Midyear

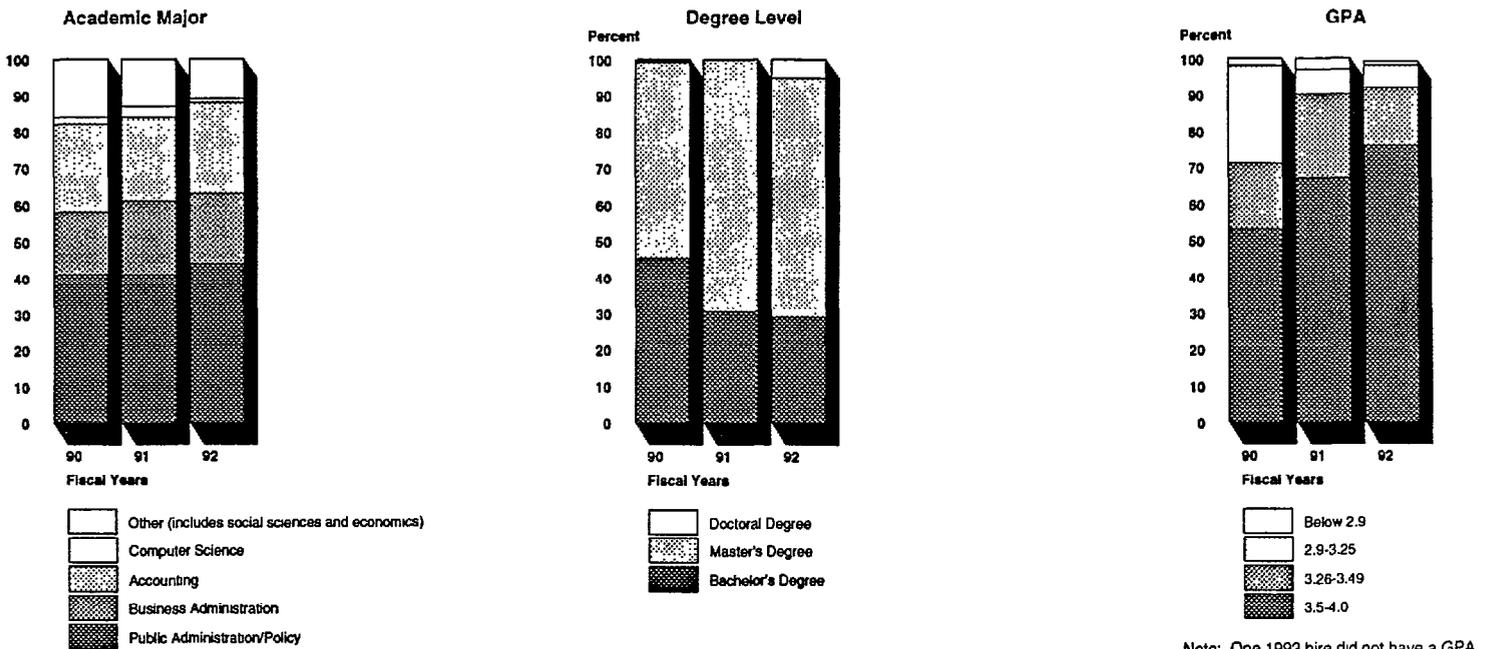


Percent of Hires by Job Category at Midyear

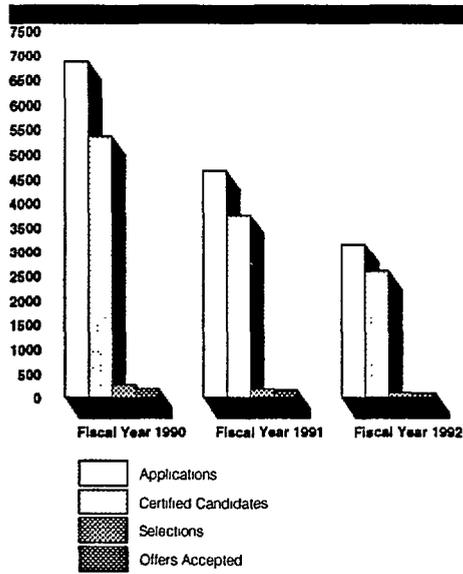


Section III: Profile of GAO's Human Resources  
Recruitment/ Hiring

Entry Level and Evaluator-Related Hiring



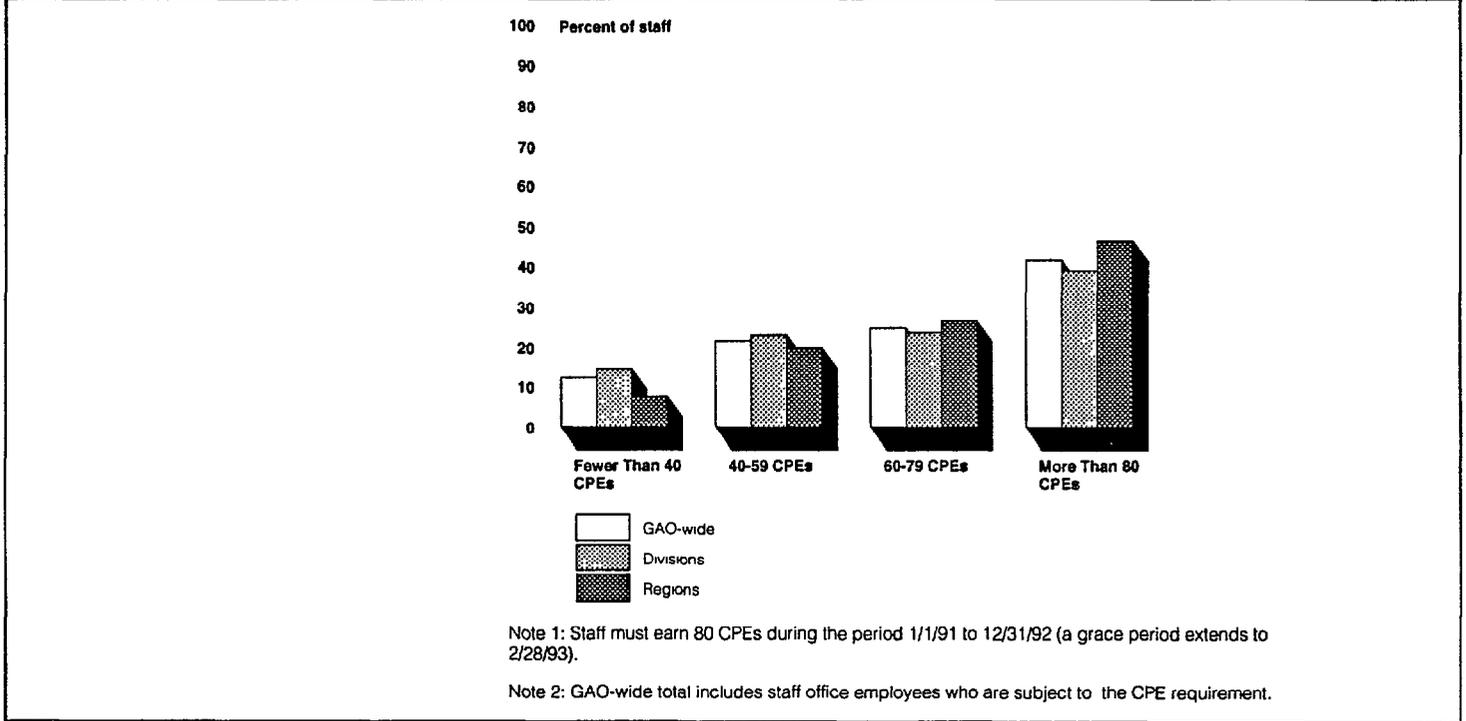
Numbers of Entry-Level Applications, Certified Candidates, Selections, and Job Offers Accepted at Midyear



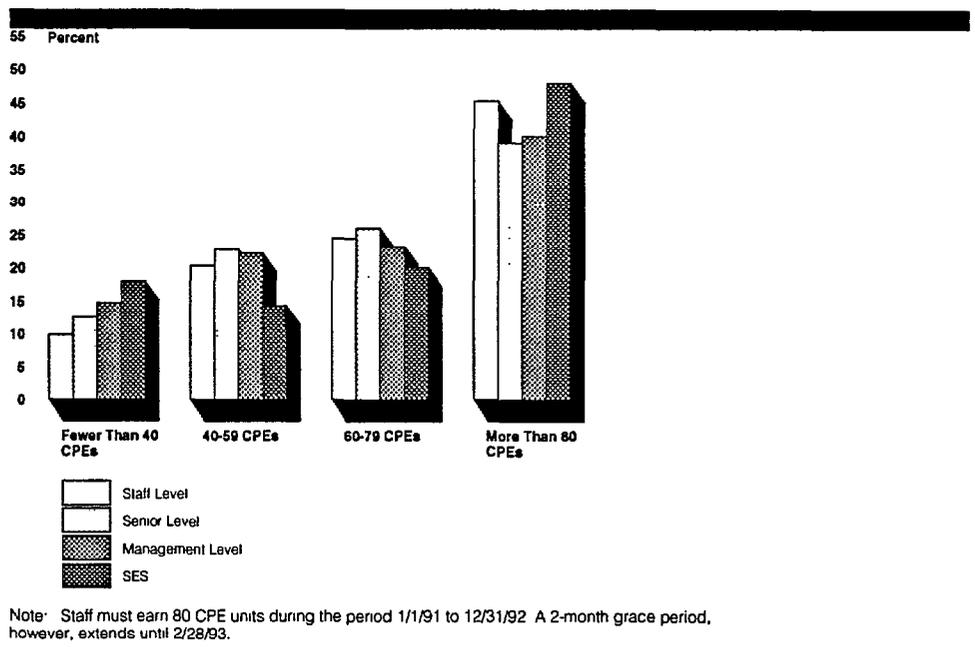
# Training

As of March 31, 1992, more than 87 percent of all GAO staff had earned 40 or more CPE units required for the 2-year period ending December 31, 1992. More than 41 percent have already met the requirement. Staff-level employees and senior executives made the most progress toward meeting the CPE requirement.

**Key Indicator: Progress Toward 1991-92 CPE Requirement by Unit at Midyear**



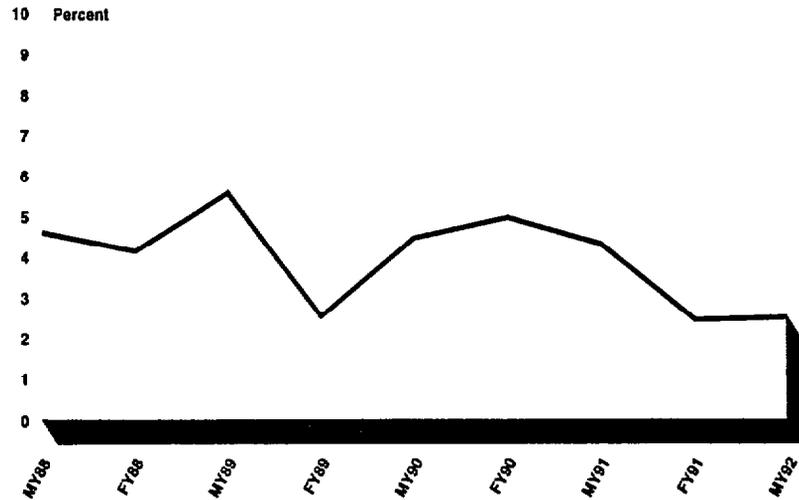
**Progress Toward 1991-92 CPE Requirements by Staff Level at Midyear**



# Attrition

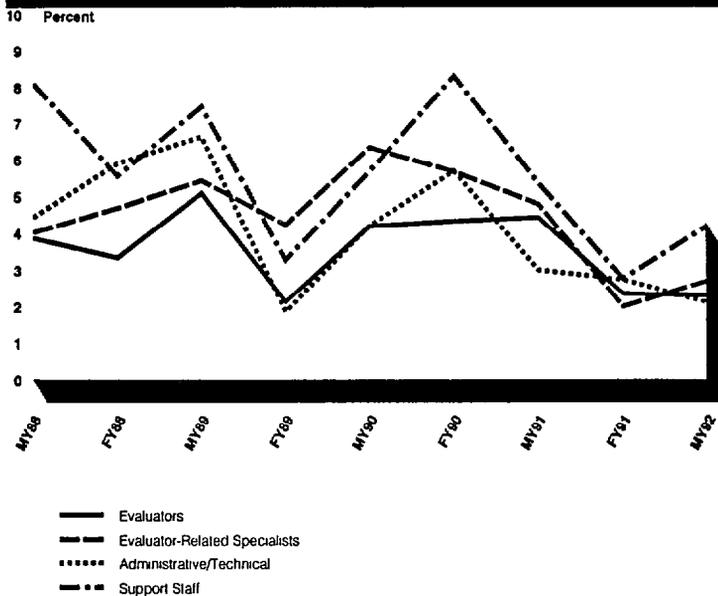
During the last 6-month period, attrition continued at a slow pace, with only 2.48 percent of GAO employees leaving the agency. Turnover continues to be highest among support staff. Compared to the attrition rate experienced during the second half of 1991, attrition increased among specialists but decreased for evaluators and administrative/technical staff.

## Key Indicator: Overall Attrition Rate at Midyear



Note: Attrition percentages (rates) are computed on a 6-month basis (that is, total losses are computed for each period as a percentage of average staff level for each 6-month period).

## Professional Staff Attrition Rates by Job Categories



Note: Attrition rates are for the 6-month periods shown.

# GAO-Wide Key Performance Indicators

	MY88	MY89	MY90	MY91	MY92
<b>SECTION I: Results of GAO's Work</b>					
<b>Product volume</b>					
Total products	539	538	587	538	597
Congressional written reports/testimonies	434	434	491	435	510
Chapter and letter reports	207	306	261	312	334
Chapter reports	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>a</sup>	108	95	96
Letter reports	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>a</sup>	153	217	238
Testimonies	95	67	141	65	123
Briefing reports	88	29	48	33	26
Fact sheets	44	32	41	26	27
Agency reports	24	23	23	37	12
Congressional briefings	81	81	73	66	75
<b>Testimony</b>					
Number of appearances	95	67	141	65	123
House committees	74	49	100	48	91
Senate committees	21	18	40	16	32
Joint committees/other	0	0	1	1	0
Number of different lead witnesses	43	33	49	32	57
<b>OGC output</b>					
Total external products	1,850	1,954	1,921	1,966	2,073
Opinions for the Congress	99	119	126	103	117
Bid protest decisions	1,501	1,550	1,511	1,556	1,706
Executive branch decisions	250	285	284	307	250
<b>SECTION II: Managing GAO's Work</b>					
<b>Direct assistance to the Congress</b>					
Percent of GAO's audit staff-years assisting the Congress	79.8	81.0	80.1	<sup>a</sup>	78.5
New congressional starts	643	550	748	<sup>a</sup>	720
<b>Active assignments</b>					
Total assignments	1,177	1,205	1,293	<sup>a</sup>	1,347
By age (percent)					
Less than 12 months	79.5	76.3	80.5	<sup>a</sup>	78.8
12 to 18 months	<sup>a</sup>	14.6	12.3	<sup>a</sup>	14.6
18 to 24 months	<sup>a</sup>	6.8	4.9	<sup>a</sup>	4.8
Over 24 months	2.3	1.7	1.9	<sup>a</sup>	1.9
<b>Completed assignments</b>					
Total assignments	604	582	732	728	686
Headquarters led	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>a</sup>	519	502	457
Region led	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>a</sup>	213	226	229
Duration (months)					

(continued)

**Appendix I  
GAO-Wide Key Performance Indicators**

	MY88	MY89	MY90	MY91	MY92
Median duration (all)	a	a	7.5	8.9	8.2
Average duration (all)	9.8	9.7	9.3	9.2	9.4
Chapter and Letter Reports to committees, members, and the Congress	14.3	13.1	14.2	13.5	13.2
Briefing reports and fact sheets	9.6	8.9	8.8	8.4	7.0
Testimonies	3.4	4.2	2.7	2.9	2.8
Agency reports	14.8	15.9	10.4	12.3	11.6
All other products	a	a	a	5.1	5.7
<b>Cost</b>					
Median cost (thousands)	a	a	\$105	\$94	\$88
Average cost (thousands)	\$214	\$194	\$219	\$193	\$179
<b>Timeliness</b>					
Blue book reports (percent)					
By target date	14.8	14.0	15.7	24.0	22.0
1 day to 2 months late	32.1	27.8	26.4	28.0	26.0
2 to 6 months late	28.0	35.0	35.4	32.0	39.0
Over 6 months late	25.0	23.3	22.6	16.0	13.0
All external products by target date (percent)	a	a	a	43.0	41.0
<b>Resource utilization (percent)</b>					
Administrative support time	a	a	a	a	22.1
Investment time	a	a	a	a	5.9
Direct time	a	a	a	a	72.0
<b>SECTION III: Profile of GAO's Human Resources</b>					
<b>Work force</b>					
Total work force	5,121	5,116	5,133	5,156	5,179
Divisions	2,193	2,378	2,343	2,398	2,393
Staff offices	928	925	960	965	974
Regional offices	2,000	1,813	1,830	1,793	1,812
Work force by job category					
Evaluators	3,052	3,031	3,034	3,003	2,997
Evaluator-related specialists	568	593	579	634	680
Lawyers	137	149	155	151	154
Administrative/technical	410	411	455	478	486
Support staff	954	932	771	709	718
Senior management	130	137	139	140	141
Professional work force by level/grade					
SES	130	137	139	140	141
Management level and GS-15	486	501	532	567	621
Senior level and GS-13/14	1,928	1,943	1,950	1,981	2,042
Staff level and GS-7 to GS-12	1,745	1,734	1,741	1,718	1,654

(continued)

**Appendix I  
GAO-Wide Key Performance Indicators**

	MY88	MY89	MY90	MY91	MY92
<b>EEO</b>					
Women and minorities in the professional staff					
Women	1,410	1,507	1,580	1,674	1,744
Blacks	519	548	581	598	622
Hispanics	129	136	150	172	179
Asians	99	118	120	141	147
Others	10	10	7	8	9
Women and minorities at the staff and GS-7 to GS-12 levels					
Women	927	950	958	962	935
Blacks	319	327	336	326	324
Hispanics	89	91	94	104	99
Asians	64	70	65	76	77
Others	6	6	3	3	4
Women and minorities at the senior and GS-13/14 levels					
Women	415	467	511	576	649
Blacks	183	197	212	233	250
Hispanics	35	40	51	59	69
Asians	25	36	41	50	52
Others	4	4	4	5	5
Women and minorities at the management and GS-15 levels					
Women	55	70	90	114	137
Blacks	10	16	25	31	39
Hispanics	4	2	2	5	7
Asians	9	11	12	12	14
Others	0	0	0	0	0
Women and minorities in the SES					
Women	16	20	21	22	23
Blacks	7	8	8	8	9
Hispanics	1	3	3	4	4
Asians	1	1	2	3	4
<b>Recruitment/hiring</b>					
Total hires	163	189	156	155	151
Professional	114	130	118	120	103
Support staff	51	63	38	35	48
Hires by job category					
Evaluators (headquarters)	18	32	28	23	29
Evaluators (regions)	34	43	49	31	34
Evaluator-related specialists	30	32	23	50	26
Lawyers	13	11	3	4	3

(continued)

**Appendix I  
GAO-Wide Key Performance Indicators**

	MY88	MY89	MY90	MY91	MY92
Administrative/technical	19	12	15	11	11
Support staff	51	63	38	35	48
<b>Training</b>					
Percent of staff with 80 or more CPE units					
GAO-wide	a	a	29.2	43.8	41.5
Divisions	a	a	31.2	44.9	38.9
Regions	a	a	26.5	42.8	46.2
Percent of staff with 40 or more CPE units					
GAO-wide	a	a	79.4	91.6	87.8
Divisions	a	a	78.3	91.4	85.7
Regions	a	a	80.7	92.3	92.5
<b>Attrition</b>					
Total	236	284	229	222	129
Professional	164	219	185	182	99
Support staff	72	65	44	39	30
Attrition by job category					
Evaluators	119	155	128	134	68
Evaluator-related specialists	23	32	37	30	18
Lawyers	4	5	1	4	3
Administrative/technical	18	27	19	14	10
Support staff	72	65	44	39	30
Professional staff attrition					
Headquarters	82	141	119	92	69
Regions	70	78	66	90	30
Professional staff attrition by level/grade					
Staff level and GS-7 to GS-12	80	99	97	78	50
Senior level and GS-13/14	54	94	57	82	40
Management level and GS-15	18	26	26	18	9
SES	4	4	5	4	0

<sup>a</sup> Data not available