



Highlights of [GAO-03-34](#), a report to Danny K. Davis, Ranking Minority Member, House Subcommittee on Civil Service, Census and Agency Organization, House Committee on Government Reform, and Representatives Elijah E. Cummings, Eleanor Holmes Norton, and Edolphus Towns

Why GAO Did This Study

The federal government faces large losses in its Senior Executive Service (SES), primarily through retirement but also because of other normal attrition. This presents the government with substantial challenges to assuring an able management cadre and also provides opportunities to affect the composition of the SES. GAO estimated the number of SES members who would actually leave service through fiscal year 2007 and reviewed the implications for diversity, as defined by race, ethnicity, and gender, of the estimated losses. Specifically, GAO estimated by race, ethnicity, and gender the number of members of the career SES who will leave government service from October 1, 2000, through September 30, 2007, and what the profile of the SES will be if appointment trends do not change. GAO made the same estimates for the pool of GS-15s and GS-14s, from whose ranks the vast majority of replacements for departing SES members come, to ascertain the likely composition of that pool.

www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-03-34.

To view the full report, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact Victor S. Rezendes at (202) 512-6806 or rezendesv@gao.gov.

SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE

Enhanced Agency Efforts Needed To Improve Diversity As The Senior Corps Turns Over

What GAO Found

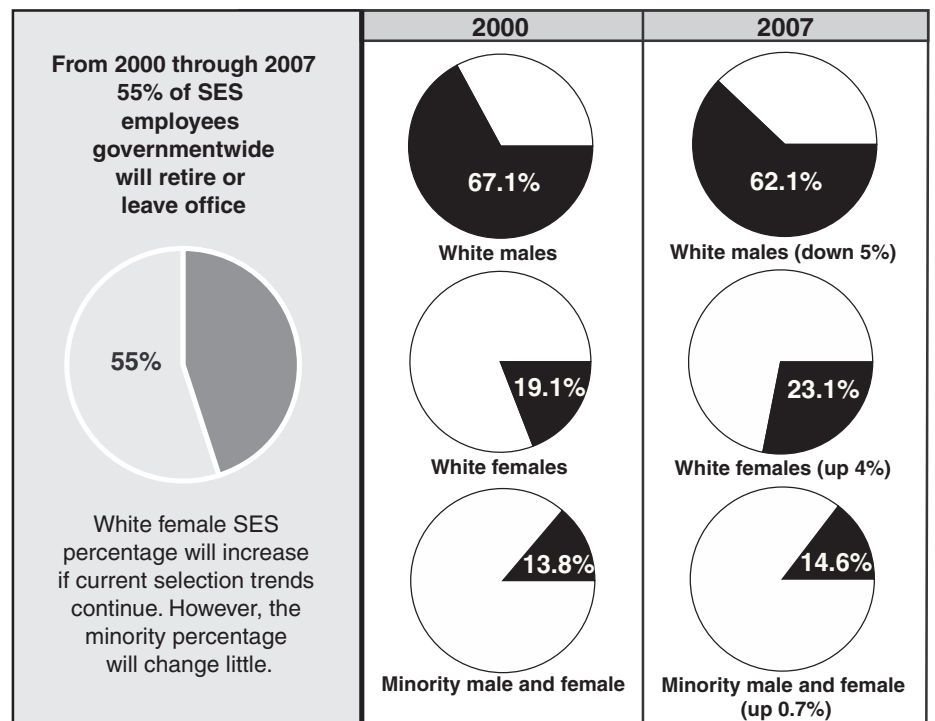
More than half of the 6,100 career SES members employed on October 1, 2000, will have left service by October 1, 2007. Using current SES appointment trends, the only significant changes in diversity will be an increase in the number of white women and an essentially equal decrease in white men.

About 46 percent of GS-15s and 34 percent of GS-14s on board in October 2000 will leave by October 2007, but the number of minorities still in the GS-15 and GS-14 workforce will provide agencies the opportunity to select minority members for the SES.

Estimates for 24 large agencies showed substantial variation in SES losses in the proportion leaving and the effect on agencies' racial, ethnic, and gender profiles, with 10 agencies with decreases in minority representation and 12 with increases.

The 6 agencies GAO visited recognize that the SES needs to be more diverse than GAO's projections estimate and have efforts under way to address SES diversity. They also recognize that more will have to be done than in the past if diversity is to be enhanced.

Changes in the SES from Fiscal Years 2000 through 2007



Source: GAO.