

GAO Highlights

Highlights of [GAO-19-397](#), a report to congressional requesters

Why GAO Did This Study

Since 1988, a series of laws have been enacted and executive orders issued related to federal goals of reducing federal fleets' petroleum use and greenhouse gas emissions. For fiscal year 2017, federal agencies were required to: (1) to acquire certain types of vehicles, (2) to use more alternative fuel, and (3) to meet targets for reducing petroleum use and per-mile greenhouse gas emissions. Federal agencies were also under a directive to increase acquisitions of zero emission (electric) vehicles.

GAO was asked to review federal agencies' efforts related to these fiscal year 2017 requirements. This report addresses: (1) how agencies reported meeting fleet energy requirements and how agencies efforts changed their fleets and (2) challenges agencies face related to further meeting fleet energy goals.

To conduct this review, GAO surveyed 29 federal agencies subject to fleet energy requirements and selected 5 agencies—of a variety of sizes and missions—for case studies. The case studies results are not generalizable to all agencies. GAO also: (1) reported on DOE's and GSA's data on federal fleets for fiscal years 2008 through 2017, including GSA's acquisition and cost data for fiscal year 2017, the most current data available; (2) reviewed DOE's and EPA's information on agencies' performance related to fiscal year 2017 requirements; and (3) interviewed federal officials. The directives to reduce per-mile greenhouse gas emissions and increase acquisitions of electric vehicles were revoked by an Executive Order issued in May 2018.

View [GAO-19-397](#). For more information, contact Andrew Von Ah at (202) 512-2834 or vonaha@gao.gov.

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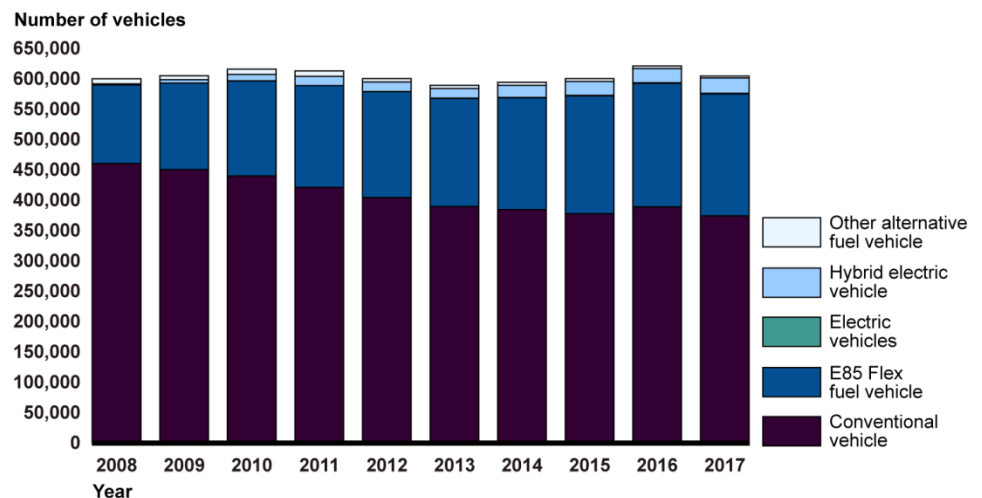
FEDERAL VEHICLE FLEETS

Agencies Have Continued to Incorporate Alternative Fuel Vehicles into Fleets, but Challenges Remain

What GAO Found

In responding to fleet management requirements over the past 10 years, agencies have incorporated an increasing number of alternative fuel vehicles into their fleets. These have been predominantly flex-fuel vehicles, as hybrid and battery electric vehicles continue to make up a small percentage of agencies' fleets (see figure). The Department of Energy (DOE) is responsible for overseeing agencies' compliance by analyzing fleet data. Most agencies reported meeting the fiscal year 2017 requirements to reduce petroleum use and per-mile greenhouse gas emissions. DOE and other agency officials attributed agencies' success in meeting these requirements to (1) acquiring low greenhouse-gas-emitting and alternative fuel vehicles, and (2) improving general fleet management such as by reducing miles traveled.

Total Numbers of All Domestic Alternative Fuel Vehicles for Federal Agencies Subject to the Energy Policy Act, by Type, for Fiscal Years 2008 through 2017



Source: GAO analysis of Federal Automotive Statistical Tool data. | GAO-19-397

According to agency officials, three challenges have continued to hinder agencies' efforts to further the goals of reducing federal fleets' petroleum use and greenhouse gas emissions. First, while hybrid and electric vehicles can offer reductions in petroleum use and greenhouse gas emissions, the costs of these vehicles and their charging infrastructure make it challenging for agencies to acquire them on a large scale. According to GSA data, agencies purchased 373 electric vehicles (sedans and minivans) in fiscal year 2017—along with about 4,500 hybrid electric sedans—out of a total of over 16,000 sedans and minivans acquired. In total, agencies spent about \$10.5 million more to purchase hybrid or electric vehicles than they would have to purchase comparably sized conventionally fueled vehicles. However, agencies did not consistently track the life-cycle costs of these vehicles. Second, agencies also stated that a lack of fuel and infrastructure availability limits agencies' use of alternative fuel. Third, agency officials stated that a continuing need for larger vehicles limits the number of low greenhouse-gas-emitting vehicles agencies can acquire.