

GAO

United States General Accounting Office

Report to the Comptroller General



June 1990

**Women's  
Advisory  
Council 1989  
Annual Report**

GAO/WAC

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# Foreword

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This report describes the accomplishments of the Women's Advisory Council (WAC) during fiscal year 1989. Memorandums issued during the year are cited in the text, and copies are included in appendix I.

The Council's Executive Board wishes to thank all those who contributed to WAC's efforts during the past year.

Susan A. Sacco  
President

Diana M. Olmstead  
Executive Vice President

Mary D. Pniewski  
Vice President for Communications

Eileen Regen Larence  
Secretary

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**Abbreviations**

ACG-Ops	Assistant Comptroller General for Operations
APSS	Administrative, Professional, and Secretarial Support
DMTAG	Design, Methodology, and Technical Assistance Group
GAO	General Accounting Office
MSPB	Merit Systems Protection Board
OIP	Operations Improvement Program
PAB	Personnel Appeals Board
PFP	Pay-for-Performance
WAC	Women's Advisory Council
WRO	Washington Regional Office

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# Introduction and Overview

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## Background and Goals

The Women's Advisory Council (WAC) was officially sanctioned by the Comptroller General in 1976 as a permanent council to address the interests of women in GAO. In August 1989, the Council expanded to include representatives from regional and overseas offices and thereby became a national council.

The Council's overall goals, as stated in its bylaws, are to

- advance the interests of women in GAO in an environment of equal opportunity;
- advise and assist the Comptroller General and division and office senior managers on GAO policies and programs concerning women and an environment of equal opportunity;
- provide a representative forum for discussing and publicizing women's issues and problems; and
- apprise GAO managers and staff of any sexual stereotyping, discrimination, and sexual harassment issues that may occur and how these influence the agency's work and environment.

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## Organization and Issues

Three standing committees carried out the Council's work in fiscal year 1989: Career Development, Personnel, and Special Projects. Each WAC representative joined one of these committees. Committee members for fiscal year 1989 are listed in table 1.1. The Executive Board, composed of the Council's elected officers, also participated in projects and met with GAO officials to discuss Council issues throughout the year. The Council presented awards to representatives who made special contributions. Award recipients are listed on page 8.

Major committee activities included

- studying part-time work issues;
- monitoring alternative appraisal and compensation systems for administrative, professional, and secretarial support (APSS) staff;
- studying employee benefits and recruitment materials;
- surveying users of the child care information and referral service; and
- sponsoring a speakers' series.

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## Executive Board Projects

Executive Board activities included

- incorporating regional representation into the Council;
- commenting on draft GAO manuals and revised orders concerning GAO's Pay-for-Performance system; and
- commenting on the proposed revision to GAO's smoking policy.

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## Regional Representation on WAC

During fiscal year 1989, the Executive Board concluded its efforts to include regional representatives in the Council. In August 1989, special elections were held to elect representatives from each GAO regional office. Elections for headquarters' unit representatives were held in October. The first national WAC meeting was held in November 1989 in Arlington, Virginia.

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## Pay-For-Performance (PFP) System

In April 1989, the Council commented on the draft manuals for Bands I/II and Band III Appraisal Systems. (See app. I, p. 18.) Generally, WAC believed that the changes in the appraisal manuals greatly helped to simplify appraisal procedures and facilitate GAO's shift to a Pay-for-Performance system. However, Council members did have some difficulty with the format of the Band I/II manual, which was confusing at times. Further, the Council noted that the job dimension task lists for certain dimensions appeared to greatly change the level of responsibilities expected of Developmental and Full-Performance staff.

In June 1989, WAC also commented on revised GAO Orders 2335.8, Merit Selection Plan for Evaluator and Evaluator-Related Positions, and 2430.2, Annual Assessment. (See app. I, p. 20.) In reviewing these two orders, the Council found that the revisions improved upon existing guidance because they complemented the draft performance appraisal system manuals issued for use in GAO's PFP system. Further, the changes were beneficial because employees would be able to find needed information more quickly than with the prior guidance.

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## Proposed Revision to GAO Smoking Policy

In May 1989, the Council commented on a memorandum issued by the Assistant Comptroller General for Operations (ACG-Ops) titled "Smoking in GAO Facilities." (See app. I, p. 22.) The Council commended GAO management's decision to designate the GAO building a nonsmoking building, effective January 1, 1991.

The Council was pleased that the proposed revision called for the designation of one person in each unit as a contact for employee concerns on this issue. Further, WAC strongly agreed that GAO audit sites and regional offices should, to the extent that GAO space is physically separate from other building space, follow GAO's smoking policy. WAC's June 1988 study of the implementation of GAO's smoking policy recommended these measures.

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## President's Message

Fiscal year 1989 saw great changes for WAC because during this year the Council grew from a headquarters-based organization to a national council, with the addition of regional representatives. The Council can now provide a truly representative forum for women throughout GAO.

During the year, the Council's efforts included monitoring the development of alternative appraisal and compensation systems for administrative, professional, and secretarial support staff; completing an employee benefits and recruitment materials study; administering a survey to gauge employee satisfaction with GAO's child care information and referral service; preparing a survey on sexual harassment at GAO; and continuing to sponsor a speakers' series.

I would like to thank the members of this past year's Council for their hard work and dedication in advancing the interests of women in GAO. I also wish the fiscal year 1990 Council much success in their endeavors.

**Chapter 1**  
**Introduction and Overview**

**Table 1.1: Women's Advisory Council  
Members for Fiscal Year 1989**

<b>Executive Board</b>		
Susan Sacco	RCED	President
Diana Olmstead	IMTEC	Executive Vice President
Mary Pniewski	RCED	Vice President for Communications
Eileen Regen Larence	NSIAD	Secretary
<b>Career Development Committee</b>		
Leah Cates	GGD	Cochair
Delores Crawford	OGC	Cochair
Marianna Dunn	COMB	
Lise Levie	HRD	
Ronni Schwartz	GS&C	
Cindy Strite	HRD	
<b>Personnel Committee</b>		
Linda Johnson	AFMD	Cochair
Patricia Zemple	GGD	Cochair
Suzanne Burns	IMTEC	
Mary Pniewski	RCED	
Frankie Shannon	Personnel	
Magdalene Siew	AFMD	
Kathleen White	PEMD	
<b>Special Projects Committee</b>		
Kathleen Hancock	NSIAD	Cochair
Inez Minor	COMB	Cochair
Ellen Aronson	GS&C	
Kimberly Caprio <sup>a</sup>	AFMD	
Jackie Council	GS&C	
Beverly Cox	PERS	
Beth Hoffman	NSIAD	
Eileen Regen Larence	NSIAD	
Susan Lieber	GGD	
Charlotte Merritt	NSIAD	
Maureen Murphy	OGC	
Ellen Radish <sup>a</sup>	HRD	
Violet Simmons-Stith	PEMD	
Sherry Gilmore Taylor <sup>a</sup>	RCED	
Sarah Veale	RCED	

<sup>a</sup>Resigned from Council during year



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Women's Advisory  
Council Fiscal Year  
1989 Award  
Recipients

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Distinguished  
Achievement Award

Diana Olmstead  
Sherry Gilmore Taylor

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Outstanding Service  
Award

Leah Cates  
Linda Johnson  
Judy Pagano

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Special Recognition

Delores Crawford  
Jackie Council  
Marianna Dunn  
Kathleen Hancock  
Eileen Regen Larence  
Mary Pniewski  
Patricia Zemple

# Career Development Issues

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During fiscal year 1989, as part of its career development efforts, the Council

- initiated a study of part-time work opportunities,
- consulted with management and monitored the early stages of the development of alternative appraisal and compensation systems for GAO employees not covered by the PFP system,
- continued exploring ways to enhance administrative roles, and
- continued its support for the Upward Mobility Program.

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## Studying Part-Time Work Opportunities

The Council initiated a study of part-time work opportunities in GAO. Council members met with Personnel staff to identify the number and distribution of part-time employees and began developing a part-time work survey. The survey, which will be sent to part-time employees in late fiscal year 1990, will include such issues as reasons for working part-time and perceptions of part-time work's effects on both job responsibilities and career advancement.

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## Monitoring Alternative Appraisal Systems

In early 1989, the Council was apprised of a Civil Rights Office study showing that staff not covered by PFP are predominantly women and minorities. As a result, WAC decided to monitor development of the alternative appraisal and compensation systems that GAO is planning for these administrative, professional, and secretarial support staff.

Council members met with the Acting Director of the Civil Rights Office for a briefing on the study and organized a similar briefing for other employee council representatives. To monitor progress and give informal feedback on employees' concerns, WAC members (1) met with the Special Assistant to ACG-Ops, (2) met often with the Deputy Director of Personnel in charge of developing alternative compensation systems, and (3) organized a meeting with the Deputy Director of Personnel for other employee council representatives.

With implementation of PFP for evaluators and evaluator-related staff, questions arose about how or if those not covered by PFP will be similarly rewarded for excellent performance and the agency's ability to attract and retain excellent performers in the non-evaluator series. The Council supported GAO's development of alternative appraisal and compensation systems and recognizes that GAO has nearly completed developing a standard appraisal system for APSS employees. The Council,

however, urges a clearer statement on how these employees will be compensated. Specifically, WAC urges developing a written plan, including objectives and milestones, that describes the agency's approach to this issue.

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## Enhancing Administrative Roles

The Council continued to support development of an Operations Improvement Program (OIP) project to test a new administrative position. Such a position, tentatively titled administrative processing specialist, could serve as an alternative upward step for employees in secretarial and clerical positions. Administrative processing specialists could perform many of the administrative duties performed by evaluators and could work on several assignments at once.

The Council consulted with the Office of Organizational Development and with several divisions to identify similar projects that might enhance administrative roles. After gathering information about these projects, the Council decided to proceed with its own proposal. A Council member agreed to draft a prototype project and encourage a division or region to adopt the proposed position as an OIP project.

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## Supporting Upward Mobility

The Council has always supported the Upward Mobility Program and its efforts to give secretarial and clerical staff additional promotion opportunities. Further, the Council has supported an expansion of the program to include positions other than those solely in the evaluator and DMTAG series.

During fiscal year 1989, the Council was informed that the program had been temporarily suspended. Council members met with program staff to learn the reasons for the temporary suspension and to encourage its resumption. Council members were informed that the program has been suspended since the devolution of the Washington Regional Office (WRO). WRO had guaranteed staff years for Upward Mobility participants, and, since its devolution, no other GAO organization has assumed WRO's role in the program. The Office of Internal Evaluation is completing an Upward Mobility study to consider program improvements and how GAO should proceed with this program in a pay-for-performance environment. Results of this study will be released sometime in fiscal year 1990.

The Council encouraged the resumption of the Upward Mobility Program because the program is an opportunity for GAO to increase its

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appeal to and help retain staff who want additional promotion opportunities.

# Personnel Issues

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The Women's Advisory Council's efforts in the personnel issue area include reviewing draft revisions of major personnel directives, monitoring the agency's affirmative action efforts and activities of the Personnel Appeals Board (PAB), and studying the impact of personnel practices on women. In fiscal year 1989, WAC

- continued work on an employee benefits and recruitment materials study to compare benefits and recruitment efforts at private firms with those at GAO;
- obtained promotion data by gender for 1985 through 1989 from the Office of Affirmative Action Plans;
- obtained clarification of GAO's temporary leave transfer program and suggested that the Personnel Office publish clearer information on this program (See app. I, p. 24.);
- continued to monitor the meetings of the Personnel Appeals Board; and
- reviewed personnel orders, including those on the PAB charter and PFP banding and grievance procedures.

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## Studying Employee Benefits and Recruitment Materials

In fiscal year 1989, the Council continued work on a study comparing GAO employee benefits and recruitment materials with those of private firms. Following are summaries regarding each area.

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### Employee Benefits Comparison

To obtain information on employee benefits offered by private firms, Council members, using standardized questions, interviewed by telephone personnel from 10 companies in the Washington area representing the accounting, management consulting, information systems, and financial services fields. Companies in these fields were chosen because they hire employees with job and education experience similar to GAO hires. The survey focused on benefits of special interest to women: maternity/paternity leave, leave to care for older relatives, part-time employment, flexitime, on-site child care, and child/elder care referral services.

The survey revealed that, overall, GAO benefits for most of the areas surveyed appear comparable. The majority of the companies surveyed had child care referral systems, part-time opportunities, and 6 or more months' leave without pay for employees after childbirth. Five of the ten companies surveyed also had flexible starting times. GAO also has these benefits and generally allows 6 months' leave without pay for

childbirth. GAO fared better than the majority of surveyed companies in providing compressed work schedules and an in-house child care center for employees.

Some companies provided benefits that GAO does not. Of the seven firms that gave this information, all had separate provisions for disability insurance and allow this benefit to be used for maternity leave. Half of the companies had a dependent care expense account that allows employees to set aside \$5,000 (tax-free) and draw down the account as child care expenses accrue. Three companies allowed use of sick leave for caring for an older relative, and one had an elder care referral service. The Council plans to research the possibility of providing these benefits at GAO.

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## Recruitment Materials Comparison

The Council found differences between GAO and the companies reviewed in comparing recruitment materials. On the whole, the recruitment materials used by the companies studied reflect sophistication and professionalism that GAO materials do not match. For example, the companies' materials use state-of-the-art graphics, imaginative text layouts, eye-catching headlines, and bold, dynamic colors. The Office of Recruitment is currently designing a new recruitment strategy and recruiting materials with the help of professional consultants.

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## Monitoring Affirmative Action Statistics

As part of its responsibility to monitor the advancement of women in GAO, the Council obtained promotion data on women since 1985 from the Office of Affirmative Action Plans. The data includes the number of women eligible for promotion, on the best-qualified list, and promoted. The Council worked with the Office of Affirmative Action Plans to ensure that it will continue to generate promotion data by gender for the Council. (See app. I, p. 25.) The Council plans to analyze the information regularly and alert the Office of Affirmative Action Plans to any problems the statistics may reveal about the advancement of women in GAO.

# Special Projects

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The Women's Advisory Council performed the following special projects' activities during fiscal year 1989:

- administered a survey on employee satisfaction with GAO's child care information-and-referral service and provided results and recommendations to the Comptroller General;
- prepared a survey on sexual harassment for distribution to GAO employees during fiscal year 1990;
- continued to sponsor a speakers' series;
- provided suggestions for a survey of newly hired employees being carried out by the Office of the Assistant Comptroller General for Operations;
- canvassed GAO employees on the types of services they would like for the renovated GAO headquarters building and provided the results to the Executive Assistant to CG-Ops (See app. I, p. 27.); and
- encouraged the Office of Security and Safety to publish information about health and safety issues related to the use of personal computers, including the availability of eye-protection screens.

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## Child Care Information and Referral Service

The Council conducted a telephone survey of a random sample of GAO employees at headquarters and in the regions to determine user satisfaction with the agency's child care information and referral service provided by the Child Care Solution/Partnership Group, Inc. The service provided referral information about child care providers, distributed printed materials, and offered information about child care concerns, such as licensing regulations. The survey revealed that most users rated the service excellent or good. Most employees telephoned the service to obtain child care referrals, while requesting printed materials was the second most common reason for calling.

In a memorandum to the Comptroller General in January 1989, the Council recommended that GAO extend the contract with Child Care Solution/Partnership Group, Inc., investigate the possibility of the contractor providing child care workshops to employees, and publicize the service more broadly. (See app. I, p. 28.) Council members also met with staff from ACG-Ops, the Office of Counseling and Career Development, and with a representative from Child Care Solution/Partnership Group, Inc. to discuss the survey results and suggest improvements to the extended contract.

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GAO has decided not to extend the contract with Child Care Solution/ Partnership Group, Inc. because of its high cost but is keeping the contract open until the child care center is established at GAO headquarters. ACG-Ops is considering other options for continuing child care referral services after this point. One option is to have the Office of Career Counseling and Development and liaisons in the regional offices provide a referral data base.

The Council took the position that the child care information and referral service provides an important benefit to GAO employees and should be continued. Although GAO headquarters is opening a child care center, it will not have space for all GAO employees needing child care. In addition, no regional offices have child care centers. Therefore, many employees will still have a need for this service. WAC encouraged GAO to find a cost-effective way to continue this service. Sharing the service with another agency might be one option to lessen costs.

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## Sexual Harassment Survey

The Council prepared to conduct a survey of sexual harassment at GAO using the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) survey instrument. During 1988 and 1989, the MSPB survey was administered to 22 of the largest federal departments and agencies. WAC administered this survey to all GAO employees, both men and women, in mid-1990. The Council plans to inform ACG-Ops of the survey results and publish the findings in fiscal year 1991.

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## Speakers' Series

WAC sponsored six seminars during fiscal year 1989. The topics, speakers, and affiliations are listed below:

### Self-Defense

Lt. Jim Boulard, Retired

Memphis, Tennessee, Police Department

### Women's Executive Leadership Development Program

Aletha Brown

Information Management and Technology Division

### GAO's Process for Handling Sexual Harassment Complaints

Nilda Aponte

Civil Rights Office



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Women's Issues in GAO  
Rosslyn Kleeman  
General Government Division

Drug Awareness  
Officer Purvis Dawson, Jr.  
Fairfax County, Virginia, Police Department

Women's Health Issues  
Damian Alagia, M.D.  
Columbia Hospital for Women



# Memoranda Issued

**GAO**

 United States  
 General Accounting Office

## Memorandum

**Date:** April 28, 1989  
**To:** Deputy Assistant Comptroller General for Human Resources - Joan M. McCabe  
**From:** President, Women's Advisory Council - Susan A. Sacco *Diana Almstead for*  
**Subject:** Comments on Draft Manuals for Bands I/II and Band III Appraisal Systems

The Women's Advisory Council has reviewed the draft manuals describing the appraisal systems which take effect on June 16, 1989. Generally, we believe that the changes in the appraisal manuals go a long way towards simplifying the appraisal procedures and facilitating GAO's shift to a pay-for-performance system. The Council believes the Pay-for-Performance Task Group, Personnel, and the OOD specialists have developed very comprehensive guidance. WAC does, however, have the following comments on the Bands I/II manual format and job dimension task lists.

### Bands I/II manual format

In reviewing the manual for Bands I and II, Council members had difficulty at times following the guidance primarily because of the manual's format. The performance standards and job dimension task lists for Developmental, Full Performance, and Band II employees are listed in a "building block" approach which could lead to confusion among employees. Further, the manual's Table of Contents does not show the page numbers for the performance standards (Appendix IV) for Developmental/Full Performance employees and Band II employees. We feel that the guidance could be clarified by having separate manuals - one for Band I employees and one for Band II employees - rather than a single manual for the two Bands. This seems logical in light of the fact that Band I includes Developmental staff whose tasks are less complex than those performed by Band II staff.



Operations Improvement

**Bands I/II job dimension task lists**

The job dimensions task lists for the dimensions concerning Data Gathering and Documentation, Data Analysis, Written Communication, and Oral Communication on pages 41-52 appear to place the onus of the assignment on the shoulders of the Developmental and Full Performance staff employees. More specifically, many of the tasks listed under the Full Performance level for these particular dimensions are tasks which are typically performed under the present appraisal system by Evaluators-in-Charge, who are generally GS-13's and 14's. We believe the tasks are more "developmental" in nature for GS-12's, and that few opportunities exist to perform these tasks routinely. For example presently GS-13/14's are responsible for preparing job progress and report processing documents and for preparing issue area plans. In addition, as a general rule GS-12's do not attend meetings with Congressional staff nor do they have any contact with the press, which would make it extremely difficult for them to write OCR or press contact memorandums, as is noted in the new manual. These are but a few examples of the discrepancies we found. WAC believes that these changes represent a major shift in the level of responsibility expected of a GS-12 or "full performance level" staff member.

Regarding Band II employees, WAC is also concerned about the wording of the narrative for the dimensions on Data Gathering and Documentation and Data Analysis. We believe this narrative is ambiguous and needs clarification. For example, what is the meaning of "...a broad range of technical skill exhibited by Band II staff"? Further, in reviewing the Oral Communication dimension for Band II for example, it should be noted that presently GS-13/14's do not usually chair GAO policy meetings, present testimony, or represent GAO with the press. These tasks are generally performed by Assistant Directors.

The Council appreciates the opportunity to comment on the manuals and trusts that our comments will be given due consideration. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me on 366-1791.



United States  
General Accounting Office

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## Memorandum

Date: June 6, 1989

To: Personnel - Policy and Program Development Group

From: President, Women's Advisory Council - *Susan A. Sacco* Susan A. Sacco

Subject: Comments on Revised GAO Orders 2335.8, Merit Selection Plan for Evaluator and Evaluator-Related Positions, and 2430.2, Annual Assessment

The Women's Advisory Council has reviewed the two subject orders and believes that they offer comprehensive guidance to employees on both the merit selection and annual assessment programs. It appears from our review that the revisions are complementary to the draft performance appraisal system manuals recently issued for use in GAO's pay-for-performance system. However, we do have some comments and questions regarding the revisions.

### GAO Order 2335.8

In comparison to existing 1987 guidance, the revised GAO order on the Merit Selection Program contains the same basic information in a slightly different format. For example, headings identifying important sections have been added in Chapter 2 - "Promotion Process for Generalist Evaluators" - and Chapter 4 - "Selection". The Council believes these changes are beneficial in that employees should be able to find needed information more quickly.

WAC does have questions concerning some deletions from the revision. We have found that the former Chapter 3 section entitled "8. Provisions for Positions Announced Government-wide" is no longer included in the revision. Why has this section been deleted from the revised order? Also, Chapter 6 - "Responsibilities" - indicates that the responsibilities listed for the Assistant Comptroller General for Human Resources (presently deemed the Deputy Assistant Comptroller General for Human Resources) in the existing order have been transferred to the Director of Personnel. Why were these responsibilities given to the Director of Personnel and not to the Deputy ACG for Human Resources?



Operations Improvement

GAO Order 2430.2

In comparison to existing guidance, the revised order on the annual assessment process contains guidance which is complementary to the new pay-for-performance system. The Council believes that the format change which divides the former Chapter 2 - "The Annual Assessment Form and Process" - into 3 distinct chapters dealing with bonuses, promotion, and outstanding achievement awards is a good change.

We do have a question concerning several deletions from the revision. In Chapter 1 - "Purpose and General Information" - three sections have been deleted, namely, "6. Relationship to Other Personnel Policies", "9. Responsibilities of Management Panels", and "10. Training of Panel Members". Why have these sections been deleted from the revised order?

The Council appreciates the opportunity to comment on the two orders. If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me on 366-1791.



United States  
General Accounting Office

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## Memorandum

Date: May 26, 1989

To: Executive Assistant to the ACG/Operations -  
Claudia G. Cooper

From: President, Women's Advisory Council - Susan A. Sacco

Subject: Proposed Revision to Smoking Policy

The Women's Advisory Council has reviewed the revised smoking policy for GAO facilities and commends management's decision to designate the GAO headquarters building as a "non-smoking" building, effective January 1, 1991. As recognized in the draft revision, GAO's smoking policy was not entirely effective and some changes were needed.

The Council is pleased that the proposed revision calls for the designation of one person as the focal point for employee concerns on this issue in each unit. Further, we strongly agree that GAO audit sites and regional offices should, to the extent that GAO space is physically separate from other building space, follow GAO's smoking policy. WAC's June 1988 study of the implementation of GAO's smoking policy recommended these measures.

Overall, WAC believes that the draft revision is a much needed improvement upon GAO's current smoking policy. However, we believe some changes need to be made under the Interim Facilities section on page three of the draft revision.

-- A misspelling was found in the second "bulleted" sentence - the word "faculty" should be changed to "facility".

-- The third bulleted sentence dealing with "staff who smoke but do not work in designated areas where smoking is permitted..." lends itself to too broad an interpretation. The policy should specifically state that smoking at secretaries' desks and at personal computers located in corridors or aisles (where both secretaries and evaluators can spend a great deal of time) is prohibited. It is unfortunate that



Operations Improvement

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**Appendix I**  
**Memoranda Issued**

secretaries' desks are generally located in aisles and that some computer workstations are in similar places, but non-smokers must be protected from smoke filtering from these areas into cubicles and offices.

The Council hopes that our comments will be useful to you. If WAC can provide any further assistance on this issue, please contact me on 366-1791.





United States  
General Accounting Office

## Memorandum

Date: April 25, 1989

To: Director of Personnel - Felix R. Brandon

Thru: President, Women's Advisory Council - Susan A. Sacco

From: Co-Chair, WAC Personnel Committee - Patricia C. Zempel

Subj: Temporary Leave Transfer Program

After reviewing the Temporary Leave Program Notice, the Council has a few questions. These questions pertain mainly to the limitation on the donation of annual leave. It appears that paragraph 5(b) of the notice is stating that a leave donor who has use or lose annual leave may only donate that number of hours he or she will work for the remainder of the year (subject, of course, to the other restrictions). Is this interpretation correct? If it is, why does this restriction apply? It would seem that a person who has use or lose annual leave should be able to donate all such leave regardless of the number of hours that employee will work, as long as the number of donated hours do not exceed the 50 percent mark as noted in paragraph 5a. The Council urges that should our interpretation be correct and no legal rationale exists for the restriction, that the restriction be lifted.

Because the popularity of the leave program appears to be growing, the Council would also suggest that Personnel provide the program information in a use-friendly format such as the question and answer pamphlet issued on maternity/paternity benefits issued by WAC in 1986. Such a format would provide interested employees with readily discernable information, which could increase their willingness to participate. The Council would, of course, assist you in such an endeavor should you so desire.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at 452-2528.



Operations Improvement



United States  
General Accounting Office

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## Memorandum

Date: June 22, 1989

To: Director, Office of Affirmation Action Plans -  
Lowell Dodge

Thru: President, Women's Advisory Council -  
Susan A. Sacco *Susan A. Sacco*

From: Co-Chairs, WAC Personnel Committee - Patricia  
Zemple and Linda Johnson *Susan A. Sacco for*

Subject: Request for Information from Monitoring Systems

The Women's Advisory Council is requesting that it be provided on a regular and continuing basis statistical reports relating to the representation of women in GAO. WAC is interested in any information which affects the advancement and quality of work life of women in GAO. Our concern about how job assignments and performance of women in GAO translate into promotions and rewards in comparison to their male colleagues is highlighted even more by the change to pay-for-performance.

WAC is interested in an analysis of the hiring, promotion, award, and job assignment patterns for women in the agency as a whole and for each organizational unit. We would like these gender analyses to be provided for all occupational series, including the evaluator, non-evaluator, and clerical job series.

It is our understanding that the Office of Affirmative Action Plans (OAAP) currently collects certain data by gender which can be provided to us. Therefore, we request we be provided an analysis by gender, for GAO as a whole, if available, and for each organizational unit, for the years 1986-1988 of the following:

1. goals set and met;
2. year-end and quarterly profile data; and
3. distribution of job roles in the evaluator and evaluator-related occupational series.



Operations Improvement

Appendix I  
Memoranda Issued

If OAPP does not have the staff to prepare these analyses, the WAC Personnel Committee is willing to work with your office in determining the level of assistance on a part-time basis it could provide to this effort. In addition, if data is not currently being collected by gender, we request OAPP begin compiling data on performance appraisals and awards for women in GAO. With the move to pay-for-performance, we are even more interested in having statistics compiled on the number of women receiving bonuses and permanent pay increases as well as the dollar amount they receive in comparison to their male counterparts.

We understand that currently there are not plans to capture by gender the number and amount of PFP bonuses and permanent pay increases. We urgently request that OAPP take action to correct this oversight.

We are also concerned that data by gender be collected beyond the evaluator population since women in the agency appear to occupy, in disproportionate numbers, the lower paying clerical occupations. We know there is an effort under way to develop a PFP system for this group, but our interest lies in obtaining a snapshot of GAO's hiring, promotion, and awards profile at the present to help with future analyses.

It is our understanding that the Employee Promotion Review Panel (EPRP) will focus solely on race. We request that a review by gender also be considered. In particular, we would like to know if an analysis has been made to determine if a disparity exists for women. Have statistics been compiled or are they being captured on the rates at which women in GAO are certified as "best-qualified" or selected for promotion to determine if rates for women are significantly less than comparable for males?

We are available to discuss any of the information we have requested in this memorandum. We would like to obtain your insight on the kinds and manner in which statistics on women in GAO may be compiled which would assist us in advancing the interests of women in the agency. If you have any questions, please call Patricia Zemple at 272-3076, or Linda Johnson at 275-9419.



United States  
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## Memorandum

Date: May 22, 1989

To: Executive Assistant to the Assistant  
Comptroller General for Operations

Thru: President, Women's Advisory Council - Susan Sacco

From: Chair, WAC, Special Projects Committee - Inez Minor

Subject: Suggested Service Facilities in the GAO Building

The Women's Advisory Council canvassed our constituents for suggestions of service facilities which they felt should be considered for the renovated GAO Headquarters building. Following are the "strong" suggestions received:

- Money Machine (e.g., MOST, Cashflow, etc.)
- Cleaners/Seamstress
- Shoe Repair/Shine
- Post Service (full service)
- Pharmacy (for simple drugs and cards)
- Florist
- Barber/Beauty Shop
- Newsstand (e.g., books, magazines, periodicals)
- More Permanent/Temporary Parking Spaces in the Garage

We hope these suggestions will be helpful in the renovation plans for GAO.



Operations Improvement



United States  
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## Memorandum

Date: January 23, 1989

To: The Comptroller General of the United States

Thru: President, Women's Advisory Council - Susan A. Sacco  
*Susan A. Sacco*

From: WAC Special Projects Committee - Eileen Regen Larence  
*Susan A. Sacco for*

Subject: Survey on Employee Satisfaction with GAO's Child  
Care Information and Referral Service

The Women's Advisory Council has conducted a telephone survey of a random sample of GAO employees who used the agency's child care information and referral service provided by the Partnership Group/Child Care Systems, Incorporated.

Our major findings indicate that most employees called the Partnership Group to obtain child care referrals. Requesting printed materials was the second most common reason for calling the Partnership Group. Most employees rated the Partnership Group as excellent or good. We also determined that although few employees attended a workshop provided by the Partnership Group, most employees said they were likely to attend a future workshop if it was near their worksite and on a topic of interest to them. Details of our results follow, as well as our recommendations to you.

Appendix I includes a more detailed discussion of our scope and methodology. Appendix II is a copy of the telephone survey instrument annotated with the results of our survey including sampling errors. Appendix III lists the Council members who participated in this project.

### Objective

The Council decided to conduct a survey of GAO's child care information and referral service because of your interest in such a project. GAO has offered this benefit to employees for about two years and will be renewing a contract with the Partnership Group in early 1989. In addition, the issue is of great interest to the Council's constituency group within the agency. Our objective was to determine the satisfaction of a



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random sample of GAO employees who had used the services provided by the Partnership Group.

Methodology

We completed a telephone survey instrument for a random sample of GAO employees using the Partnership Group service between April 1987 and July 1988. Our completed surveys are representative of 147 ( $\pm 16$ ) of the 206 individuals who called the child care information and referral service provided by the Partnership Group between April 1987 and July 1988. Because we reviewed a statistical sample of callers, each estimate developed from the sample has a measurable precision, or sampling error. The sampling error is the maximum amount by which the estimate obtained from a statistical sample can be expected to differ from the true universe characteristic (value) we are estimating. Sampling errors are stated at a certain confidence level--in this case, 95 percent. This means that the chances are 19 out of 20 that, if we called all employees using the Partnership Group, the results of those calls would differ from the estimates obtained from our sample by less than the sampling errors of such estimates.

We have included the sampling errors at the 95-percent confidence level for specific estimates presented in this memo in parentheses following the estimate. We presented them in either of two ways, depending on the sampling error calculation: "23 ( $\pm 7$ ) percent," for example, means that the chances are 19 out of 20 that the true value could be as low as 16 percent--23 minus 7--or as high as 30 percent--23 plus 7. This same information could also be presented as "23 (16 to 30) percent."

Results

The Partnership Group staff:

- provides information over the telephone about a variety of child care concerns, including licensing regulations and desired number of children per care giver;
- distributes printed materials; and
- gives referral information by sending lists of child care providers and brief descriptions of their services, fees, locations, etc.

The two main reasons for employees calling the Partnership Group were (1) to obtain referral information--70 ( $\pm 9$ ) percent, and (2) to request printed materials--25 ( $\pm 9$ ) percent. Only 5 ( $\pm 5$ ) percent of the employees we contacted cited obtaining information over the telephone as the main reasons for calling the Partnership Group.

General information

Of the employees who obtained information over the telephone from the Partnership Group, 77 ( $\pm 12$ ) percent were at least somewhat satisfied with the information they obtained. A few employees indicated they would have preferred more specific solutions to their child care concerns.

Printed materials

Of the employees who were sent printed materials by the Partnership Group, 80 ( $\pm 9$ ) percent were at least somewhat satisfied with the information received. Some employees commented that the information provided was too general or incomplete.

Referrals

The majority of employees calling the Partnership Groups were primarily interested in obtaining referral information--70 ( $\pm 9$ ) percent. If callers are included who obtained referral information even though that was not the main reason for their calls, this figure is increased to 74 ( $\pm 9$ ) percent. Of all employees obtaining referral information, 88 ( $\pm 8$ ) percent said some or all of the referral information they received was new to them. Of the employees who obtained referral information, 68 ( $\pm 12$ ) percent followed-up on the Partnership Group's information. Most of these follow-up calls or visits found the Partnership Group's information to be at least somewhat accurate--75 ( $\pm 13$ ) percent. Of the employees receiving referral information, 29 ( $\pm 11$ ) percent placed children with one of the referrals provided.

Workshops

Few employees--9 ( $\pm 6$ ) percent attended any of the workshops provided by the Partnership Group under GAO's original contract. In contrast, 74 ( $\pm 9$ ) percent of the employees said they would be likely to attend a workshop held in the future near their worksite on a topic of interest to them. Some informal comments by employees indicate that the workshops were not adequately publicized.

Quality of service

In terms of overall satisfaction with the services provided, 96 ( $\pm 4$ ) percent of the employees said that the Partnership Group staff showed a least moderate concern and interest in their requests for assistance. A majority of employees--83 ( $\pm 8$ ) percent--said that the Partnership Group staff always or almost always returned their calls. Of the employees represented by our survey, 84 ( $\pm 7$ ) percent were at least

somewhat satisfied with the service, and 84 ( $\pm 7$ ) percent gave the Partnership Group an overall rating of excellent or good. Only 9 ( $\pm 6$ ) percent rated the Partnership Group as fair, and 7 ( $\pm 5$ ) percent rated it as poor.

Limitations:

We note that our survey projections represent only 147 ( $\pm 16$ ) employees using the Partnership Group's services between April 1987 and July 1988. In 1987, GAO had a staff of about 5,100 at headquarters and in regional and foreign offices. We do not know how many of these employees had or planned families that would make them possible users of the Partnership Group's services. We do not know why some possible users did not avail themselves of the services of the Partnership Group or if they would have used the services of another company. We also do not know if users of the Partnership Group's services in some other period of time would differ from our universe of GAO callers.

Recommendations

Based on the results of our survey, the Women's Advisory Council recommends that the Comptroller General:

(1) consider extending the contract with the Partnership group to provide child care information and referral services to GAO employees.

(2) investigate further the feasibility and desirability of contracting with the Partnership Group to provide child care workshops for GAO employees throughout the organization on topics of interest to employees. This might include gauging employee interest in selected topics or popular locations.

(3) assure that if workshops are to be offered, the Partnership Group thoroughly publicizes the workshops well in advance of the scheduled date(s). Also, any workshops could be included in the Office of Counseling and Career Development's (OCCD) Lunchtime Seminar brochure.

cc: Mr. Goldstein (ACG-OPER)  
Ms. McCabe (ACG-OPER)