

FOR RELEASE ON DELIVERY
Expected at 9:30 A.M. E
THURSDAY, APRIL 26, 198

TESTIMONY OF
CHARLES A. BOWSHER
COMPTROLLER GENERAL
OF THE UNITED STATES
BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON POST OFFICE AND CIVIL SERVICE
ON
GAO'S REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL SES POSITIONS



126106

Madam Chairwoman and Members of the Subcommittee:

I am pleased to discuss GAO's request for additional Senior Executive Service (SES) positions and an increase in our authority hire experts and consultants for periods not in excess of 3 years.

We are requesting an additional 19 SES positions. These positions are needed to provide the necessary leadership to effectively our work for the Congress.

In some cases, our current management is spread too thin to effectively manage the scope and complexity of the work GAO must do. We need additional leadership to plan and direct our work in the Defense, Accounting and Financial Management, and Natural Resources areas. Each of these represent major areas of focus for GAO and areas in which the Congress is extremely interested.

In the ADP and Communications area, we simply do not have staff with sufficient technical expertise to lead our work. The use of computers to manage and direct federal programs has grown dramatically in recent years. The major ADP systems in government support such vital functions as national security, air travel, and the control of billions of dollars in fund transfers for our social and economic programs. These systems have received little or no in-depth review by us. We are building our Information Management and Technology Division to review the acquisition of new or upgraded systems and to audit computer systems currently in operation. We must have senior executives with the proper technical skills to provide adequate supervision and leadership for this work.

We have an immediate critical need for 14 of the 19 positions requested. The remaining 5 positions will not be allocated at the present time. We will hold these in reserve to fill future needs.

We are also requesting an increase of 5 in our authority to hire experts and consultants for periods not in excess of 3 years. This authority is an excellent way to hire senior-level staff for relatively short periods of time to help us focus on areas needing our attention. We need experts to help us design our approach to evaluating the overall management of federal agencies and to bring our staff up-to-date on the latest accounting policies and practices.

This concludes my prepared statement. We would be pleased to respond to any questions you or other members may have.