

REPORT  
ON THE  
ACQUISITION  
WORK FORCE  
OF THE GENERAL SERVICES  
ADMINISTRATION  
FISCAL YEAR 1987

Federal Acquisition Personnel

Information System

October 1988

Federal Acquisition Institute  
Office of Acquisition Policy  
General Services Administration

## Highlights

- √ During FY87, the Contract Specialist (GS-1102) series rebounded from its FY86 low of 1,062 positions, with a net gain of 39 positions between September 30, 1986 and September 30, 1987 (see Pages 3 and 4). On September 30, 1987, GSA employed 1,101 Contract Specialists.
- √ High turnover continues; 195 individuals entered the Contract Specialist series during FY 1987, while 156 departed (see Page 3). In the last four fiscal years (FY84-87), GSA has hired more than a 100 Contract Specialists per year every year—from a low of 110 hires in FY86 to a high of 296 hires in FY85.
- √ High turnover is expected throughout the next decade. Nearly a third of all presently employed GS-1102's will be eligible for retirement by FY 1997 (see Page 3). Moreover, the annual loss rate for GS-1102 positions in GSA has ranged from fifteen to seventeen percent during the last three fiscal years—which amounts at present to about 175 losses per year (see page 4).
- √ Many Contract Specialists are relatively inexperienced. Forty-six percent have less than four years of GS-1102 experience (see Page 13).
- √ In filling Contract Specialist positions, GSA continues to rely heavily on inservice placement (i.e., hires from clerical and technical personnel) for new hires. During FY87, two out of every three new hires came from inservice placement. The remaining one third was evenly split between outside hires and transfers from other Federal agencies (see page 11). Of the seventeen major employing agencies (i.e., Federal departments and agencies that each employ more than a hundred Contract Specialists), only the Veterans Administration and Agriculture relied more heavily on inservice placement than GSA during FY87.
- √ GSA has one of the most poorly educated workforces. Only a third of GSA's Contract Specialists are college graduates—compared with a Governmentwide average of fifty-one percent (see page 5). Of the major employing agencies, only the Veterans Administration has fewer college graduates among its Contract Specialist workforce.
- √ GSA has done less well than the Government as a whole in recruiting college graduates from business, law, and public administration disciplines. Only forty-eight percent of GSA's college graduates have majored in those disciplines, compared with a Governmentwide average of fifty-nine percent (see page 5).

These facts reinforce the need for greater efforts and investments to sustain and improve the professionalism of the GSA procurement work force. In particular, these facts spell the need for a GSA-wide staffing plan based on the new qualification standard with a strong commitment to outside recruitment

Jack Livingston  
Director  
Federal Acquisition Institute

## Technical Notes

**Source of data** The data in this report were derived from the Central Personnel Data File (CPDF), which is established and maintained by the Office of Personnel Management. The Federal Acquisition Institute annually purchases a copy of the end-of-year (Fiscal Year) CPDF files on active, full-time employees in acquisition fields. Data in this report, unless otherwise noted, are as of September 30, 1987.

**Retirement Eligibility** This report includes data only on employees who are eligible for regular retirement. No data is provided on employees eligible for "Early" retirement in the event of a Reduction-in-Force. The minimum combinations of age and years of service qualifying for regular retirement:

- √ Age 62 with 5 years of service.
- √ Age 60 with 20 years of service.
- √ Age 55 with 30 years of service.

**Turnover** Turnover data in this report were derived by tracking data on each individual in the work force across fiscal years. Social Security Numbers were used to locate and merge files from different fiscal years on the same individual.

For example, an individual's occupational code might read as follows:

	FY84	FY85	FY86	FY87
Series: <sup>1</sup>	1105	1105	1102	0

<sup>1</sup>At the Fiscal Year's end.

In this report, the individual would be reported as a "loss" to the GS-1105 series during Fiscal Year 1986 and an "internal hire" for the GS-1102 series in Fiscal Year 1986. The individual would also be counted as a "loss" to the GS-1102 series in Fiscal Year 1987.

## Technical Notes (Con't)

### Losses

Losses include employees who left the series for any reason, such as separations from Government service or promotions to positions in a different series.

### Hires

Hires include employees who entered the series from any source, such as outside hires, transfers from other series, and return to active duty following extended leave without pay. For the purposes of this report, "internal" hires include both:

- Movement from one to another of the 5 principal series (i.e., GS-1101, GS-1102, GS-1105, GS-1106, and GS-1150) tracked in this report. For example, if an employee began the fiscal year in a Purchasing Agent (GS-1105) position and ended the year in a Contract Specialist (GS-1102) position, that employee has been counted as a GS-1102 internal hire.
- Hires of Tenure Group I employees. Tenure Group I, for the most part, includes "career" employees—that is, employees with at least three years of *substantially continuous creditable* civilian Federal service. (See Federal Personnel Manual Chapters 315 and 351)

"External" hires, in contrast, include any hire of a Tenure Group II employee who was not employed in any of the five principal series at the beginning of the fiscal year. Tenure Group II, for the most part, consists of "career-conditional" employees (i.e., employees with less than three years of *substantially continuous creditable* civilian service). (Tenure Group III employees are classified as "Other".)

### Education Levels

In 1974, the educational levels attained by all full-time, permanent employees were recorded in their CPDF files. Since that time, Federal agencies have been required to report educational level at accession of new employees. Agencies also may, on a voluntary basis, update employee CPDF files to record changes in their educational levels after accession. Thus, data in this report probably understate both educational levels and the number of employees with relevant academic majors.

### Average Grade

Average grade computations exclude employees in the Senior Executive Service and others whose grades are not specified.

### FAI ADDRESS

Federal Acquisition Institute (VF)  
General Services Administration  
18th & F Streets, NW  
Washington, DC 20405  
202-523-5968

## Acknowledgments

*We wish to express our profound gratitude to Dr. Philip A. D. Schneider, James L. Hall, and their co-workers at the Office of Personnel Management. Without their patience, assistance, advice, and data, this report would not be possible.*

## Contents

Summary Statistics.....	Page 1
Statistics on Federal Contract Specialists.....	Page 9

# SUMMARY STATISTICS

PROCUREMENT WORK FORCE AT A GLANCE<sup>1</sup>

	<i>Gen Bus./Ind. GS-1101</i>	<i>Contract Spec. GS-1102</i>	<i>Property Disposal GS-1104</i>	<i>Purchasing GS-1105</i>	<i>Pro. Cler/Asst. GS-1106</i>
Population	268	1,100	180	158	225
Average Age	44.5	42.6	46.5	40.7	40.1
Female	51.9%	61.8%	40.0%	84.2%	83.6%
Eligible To Retire	11.2%	6.4%	16.6%	5.1%	5.8%
Eligible To Retire By FY97	39.2%	31.7%	48.6%	27.8%	25.2%
College Graduates	42.2%	33.6%	23.2%	11.4%	6.2%

<sup>1</sup>As of September 30, 1987.

TURNOVER DURING FISCAL YEAR 1987

	<i>Gen Bus./Ind. GS-1101</i>	<i>Contract Spec. GS-1102</i>	<i>Prop. Disposal GS-1104</i>	<i>Purchasing GS-1105</i>	<i>Pro. Cler/Asst. GS-1106</i>
<u>Beginning Strength</u>	<u>232</u>	<u>1,062</u>	<u>174</u>	<u>154</u>	<u>222</u>
<u>Losses</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>156</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>88</u>
Loss Rate <sup>1</sup>	20.3%	14.7%	13.8%	43.5%	39.7%
<u>Total Hires</u>	<u>83</u>	<u>195</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>71</u>	<u>92</u>
Ratio Internal: External Hires <sup>2</sup>	5.8:1	4.6:1	6.5:1	3.4:1	1.1:1
% Hires With College Degrees	53.0%	39.5%	16.1%	12.7%	7.6%
<u>Net Change</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>39</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>End Strength</u>	<u>268</u>	<u>1,101</u>	<u>181</u>	<u>158</u>	<u>226</u>

<sup>1</sup>As a percentage of beginning year strength. Includes personnel who transferred to other agencies.

<sup>2</sup>Excludes personnel who switched agencies.



### GROWTH OF THE PROCUREMENT WORK FORCE

	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987
Gen. Bus & Ind.	233	250	250	232	268
Contract Spec.	927	1,014	1,137	1,062	1,101
Property Disposal	179	205	197	174	181
Purchasing	115	140	152	154	158
Proc. Cler. & Ass't	208	221	223	222	226

### LOSSES—FROM PROCUREMENT POSITIONS

	1984	1985	1986	1987
Gen. Bus	50	75	53	47
Contract Spec.	92	173	185	156
Property Disposal	11	40	36	24
Purchasing	29	66	41	67
Proc. Cler/Ass't	67	111	81	88

### HIRES FOR THE PROCUREMENT WORK FORCE

	1984	1985	1986	1987
Gen. Bus	67	75	35	83
Contract Spec.	179	296	110	195
Property Disposal	37	32	13	31
Purchasing	54	78	43	71
Proc. Cler/Ass't	80	113	80	92

EDUCATIONAL LEVELS BY OCCUPATION FY87

	<i>Gen Bus./Ind. GS-1101</i>	<i>Contract Spec. GS-1102</i>	<i>Prop. Disposal GS-1104</i>	<i>Purchasing GS-1105</i>	<i>Pro. Cler/Asst. GS-1106</i>
No Degree	155	731	139	140	212
BA-BS	68	251	32	14	12
Post Grad. Study	45	119	10	4	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>1,101</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>226</b>
% Coll. Grads.	42.2%	33.6%	23.2%	11.4%	6.2%

ACADEMIC MAJORS OF COLLEGE GRADUATES (FY87), BY OCCUPATION

	<i>Gen Bus./Ind. GS-1101</i>	<i>Contract Spec. GS-1102</i>	<i>Prop. Disposal GS-1104</i>	<i>Purchasing GS-1105</i>	<i>Pro. Cler/Asst. GS-1106</i>
Unknown	1	0	0	0	0
Business	25	153	16	9	5
Information Mgt.	0	2	0	1	0
Engineering	7	10	1	0	0
Law	3	12	1	0	0
Mathematics	1	5	0	0	0
Physical Sciences	3	4	1	0	0
Public Admin.	2	12	0	0	1
Other	71	172	23	8	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>14</b>
Business, Law & Pub. Admin.	27%	48%	40%	50%	43%

EMPLOYMENT BY METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREAS FY87

	<i>Gen.Bus./Ind.</i> GS-1101	<i>Contract Spec.</i> GS-1102	<i>Prop. Disposal</i> GS-1104	<i>Purchasing</i> GS-1105	<i>Pro. Clerl/Asst.</i> GS-1106	<i>Total</i>
AKRON OH	0	0	0	1	0	1
ALBUQUERQUE NM	0	0	1	2	0	3
ANAHEIM CA	0	0	0	2	1	3
ANCHORAGE AK	0	0	2	0	2	4
ATLANTA GA	7	53	15	1	15	91
AUGUSTA GA	0	0	1	0	0	1
AUSTIN TX	0	0	0	2	0	2
BALTIMORE MD	2	0	0	2	0	4
BANGOR ME	1	0	0	0	0	1
BATTLE CREEK MI	0	0	0	2	0	2
BEAUMONT TX	0	0	0	1	0	1
BILLINGS MT	0	0	1	0	0	1
BIRMINGHAM AL	0	1	0	0	1	2
BOSTON MA	3	23	7	0	5	38
BREMERTON WA	0	1	0	0	0	1
BUFFALO NY	0	0	0	0	1	1
CASPER WY	0	0	0	1	0	1
CHICAGO IL	4	40	10	6	7	67
CINCINNATI OH	0	0	0	2	0	2
CLEVELAND OH	0	0	0	3	0	3
COLUMBUS OH	0	0	0	2	0	2
DALLAS TX	33	120	13	24	36	226
DENVER CO	1	8	7	4	3	23
DETROIT MI	0	2	0	1	0	3
EL PASO TX	0	0	0	1	0	1
FARGO ND	0	0	0	1	0	1
FORT LAUDERDALE F	0	0	0	1	0	1
GARY IN	0	1	0	0	0	1
GRAND RAPIDS MI	0	0	0	2	0	2
HARRISBURG PA	0	0	1	1	0	2
HONOLULU HA	1	0	1	1	2	5
HOUSTON TX	0	0	0	3	0	3
HUNTSVILLE AL	0	2	0	0	0	2
INDIANAPOLIS IN	0	0	1	2	0	3
JACKSON MS	0	0	0	0	1	1
KANSAS CITY MO	23	40	11	15	12	101
LAS VEGAS NV	0	0	0	0	1	1
LITTLE ROCK AR	0	0	0	1	0	1
LOS ANGELES CA	2	0	5	3	4	14
MANCHESTER NH	1	0	0	0	0	1
MCALLEN TX	0	0	0	1	0	1
MELBOURNE TX	0	0	2	0	0	2
MEMPHIS TN	0	0	1	0	1	2
MIAMI FL	0	1	0	0	2	3
MILWAUKEE WI	0	0	0	1	0	1
MINNEAPOLIS MN	0	0	1	2	0	3
NEW ORLEANS LA	0	0	0	2	0	2
NEW YORK NY	11	113	10	5	23	162
NORFOLK VA	0	0	2	0	0	2
NORTHEAST PA	0	0	0	1	0	1

EMPLOYMENT BY METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREAS FY87 (CON'T)

	<i>Gen Bus./Ind.</i> GS-1101	<i>Contract Spec.</i> GS-1102	<i>Prop. Disposal</i> GS-1104	<i>Purchasing</i> GS-1105	<i>Pro. Clerl/Asst.</i> GS-1106	<i>Total</i>
OAKLAND CA	1	0	1	0	1	3
OKLAHOMA CITY OK	0	0	2	2	0	4
OMAHA NE	0	0	0	1	0	1
PARKERSBURG WV	0	0	0	1	0	1
PHILADELPHIA PA	14	37	14	4	7	76
PHOENIX AZ	1	0	0	1	1	3
PITTSBURGH PA	0	0	0	1	0	1
PORTLAND OR	0	0	0	0	2	2
RALEIGH NC	0	0	0	0	1	1
RENO NV	0	0	0	1	0	1
RICHMOND VA	0	0	1	0	0	1
SACRAMENTO CA	2	0	0	0	3	5
ST. LOUIS MO	0	0	0	8	1	9
SALT LAKE UT	0	0	1	0	0	1
SAN ANTONIO TX	0	0	2	3	0	5
SAN DIEGO CA	1	0	1	1	2	5
SAN FRANCISCO CA	43	59	15	5	15	137
SEATTLE WA	7	55	7	7	18	94
SHREVEPORT LA	0	0	0	1	0	1
SPOKANE WA	0	0	0	1	2	3
SPRINGFIELD IL	0	0	0	1	0	1
SYRACUSE NY	0	0	0	0	1	1
TAMPA FL	0	0	0	0	1	1
TEXARKANA TX	0	0	1	0	0	1
TUCSON AZ	1	0	2	0	2	5
WASHINGTON DC	108	542	41	18	51	760
UNKNOWN	1	3	1	3	1	9
TOTAL	268	1,101	181	158	226	1,934

### OCCUPATION BY GRADE (AS OF FY87)

	<i>Gen Bus./Ind. GS-1101</i>	<i>Contract Spec. GS-1102</i>	<i>Property Disposal GS-1104</i>	<i>Purchasing GS-1105</i>	<i>Pro. Cler/Asst. GS-1106</i>
NS	1	2	1	0	0
3	1	0	0	0	1
4	6	0	0	12	44
5	18	48	7	68	111
6	5	0	0	40	43
7	20	99	15	38	26
8	3	0	0	0	1
9	19	146	22	0	0
11	50	239	53	0	0
12	79	317	52	0	0
13	43	150	27	0	0
14	16	74	3	0	0
15	7	26	1	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	268	1,101	181	158	226
Average Grade	10.74	10.97	10.85	5.66	5.23

NS: Grade level was not specified. Includes SES positions.

Avg: Average grade. Excludes positions for which no grade level was specified.

CONTRACT  
SPECIALISTS

FEMALES, SUPERVISORS, MANAGERS, & COLLEGE GRADUATES, BY GRADE

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Supervisory</i>	<i>Managerial</i>	<i>College Graduates</i>
5	48	81.3%	0%	0%	31.3%
7	99	81.8%	0%	0%	35.4%
9	145	75.9%	2.1%	0%	21.9%
11	239	71.1%	1.7%	0%	20.5%
12	317	58.4%	18.6%	0%	31.5%
13	150	46.7%	47.3%	0%	46.0%
14	74	28.4%	73.0%	4.1%	63.5%
15	26	15.4%	96.2%	0%	80.8%
NS	2	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,100</b>	<b>61.8%</b>	<b>19.6%</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>33.6%</b>

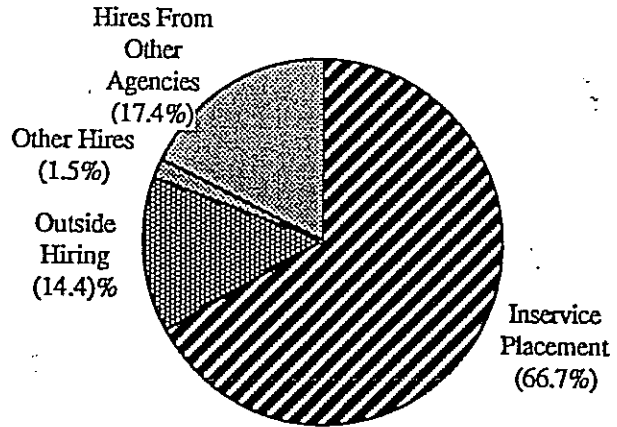
NS: Grade level was not specified. Includes SES positions.

ACADEMIC MAJORS OF COLLEGE GRADUATES, BY GRADE LEVEL

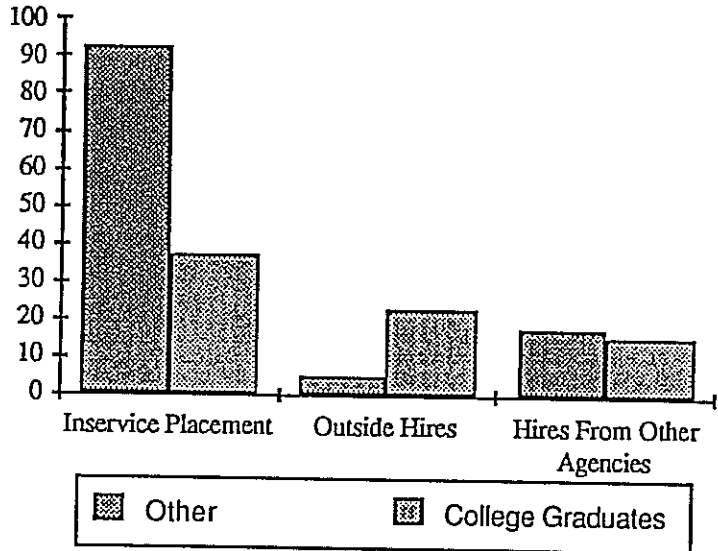
<i>Grade</i>	<i>Business</i>	<i>Infor. Mgt.</i>	<i>Engin.</i>	<i>Law</i>	<i>Math.</i>	<i>Phy. Sci.</i>	<i>Public Admin.</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>% Bus, Law &amp; Pub. Adm.</i>
5	5	0	0	0	2	0	0	8	15	33%
7	14	1	0	1	0	0	0	19	35	43%
9	11	1	0	2	0	0	1	17	32	44%
11	18	0	0	0	2	1	2	26	49	41%
12	41	0	1	2	0	3	5	48	100	48%
13	37	0	6	3	1	0	1	21	69	59%
14	18	0	2	1	0	0	2	24	47	45%
15	8	0	1	2	0	0	1	9	21	52%
NS	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>48%</b>

## INSERVICE PLACEMENT CONTINUES AS THE PRIMARY CAREER PATH INTO CONTRACT SPECIALIST POSITIONS

During Fiscal Year 1987, 195 individuals were hired for GSA Contract Specialist (GS-1102) positions. Only 28 (14.4%) of those individuals were recruited from outside the Government. Another 34 (17.4%) transferred from other agencies; the hiring source was not indicated for 3 other hires (1.5%). The balance—130 hires (66.7%)—came from various clerical, technical, and administrative fields within the Government.



Among the college graduates hired for Contract Specialist positions in FY87 were 23 outside hires (82% of all such hires) and 16 of the transfers from other agencies (47% of all transferees). On the other hand, only 37 (28%) of the inservice hires were college graduates.





**CONTRACT SPECIALISTS HIRED DURING FY 1987**

	<i>Internal Hires</i>	<i>External Hires</i>	<i>Other Hires</i>	<i>Changed Agencies</i>	<i>No Change</i>	<i>Total</i>
Total	130	28	3	34	906	1,101
% FY87 Work Force	12%	3%	0%	3%	82%	100%
College Graduates	28%	82%	33%	47%	32%	34%
Business, Law, or Pub. Admin. majors <sup>1</sup>	32%	43%	0%	50%	50%	48%
Average Age	36.9	31.4	55.0	40.6	43.7	42.6
Eligible To Retire In FY87	1.5%	0.0%	66.7%	0.0%	7.3%	6.4%
Eligible To Retire In FY92	5.4%	3.6%	66.7%	5.9%	20.1%	17.6%
Eligible To Retire In FY97	12.3%	3.6%	66.7%	17.6%	35.8%	31.7%

<sup>1</sup>Of college graduates. Does not include the majors of those who attended college but did not graduate.

**CONTRACT SPECIALISTS HIRED DURING FY 1987, BY GRADE LEVEL**

<i>GS Grade</i>	<i>Internal Hires</i>	<i>External Hires</i>	<i>Other Hires</i>	<i>Changed Agencies</i>	<i>No Change</i>	<i>Total</i>
5	36	12	0	0	0	48
7	36	16	0	0	47	99
9	19	0	1	4	122	146
11	15	0	2	19	203	239
12	17	0	0	7	293	317
13	4	0	0	3	143	150
14	3	0	0	1	70	74
15	0	0	0	0	26	26
NS	0	0	0	0	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>906</b>	<b>1,101</b>

\*NS: Not specified.

LOSSES DURING FY87, BY GRADE LEVEL

<i>GS Grade</i>	<i>FY87 Beginning Strength</i>	<i>% Quit The Series</i>	<i>% Changed Agencies</i>
5	39	12.8%	10.3%
7	88	13.6%	2.3%
9	157	9.6%	3.8%
11	211	9.0%	5.2%
12	309	9.1%	5.8%
13	153	6.5%	4.6%
14	77	19.5%	2.6%
15	27	7.4%	0.0%
NS	1	0.0%	0.0%

\*NS: Not specified.

EXPERIENCE OF PERSONS EMPLOYED BY GSA IN CONTRACT SPECIALIST POSITIONS

Of the 1,101 Contract Specialists employed by GSA on Sept. 30, 1987, only 596 (54.1%) have had 4 or more years of continuous service in the GS-1102 series.