United States General Accounting Office

GAO

Report to Congressional Requesters

March 1995

BACKGROUND INVESTIGATIONS

Impediments to Consolidating Investigations and Adjudicative Functions

RESTRICTED--Not to be released outside the General Accounting Office unless specifically approved by the Office of Congressional Relations.

RELEASED

GAO/NSIAD-95-101

GAO

United States
General Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

National Security and
International Affairs Division

B-260504

March 24, 1995

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye
Ranking Minority Member
Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate

The Honorable Frank R. Lautenberg
United States Senate

This report responds to your request that we review the federal processes for conducting background investigations, deciding an individual's suitability for government employment, and determining whether an individual meets established criteria for access to classified information. More specifically, we collected and analyzed information on (1) the feasibility of one central agency conducting all background investigations or adjudicative functions, (2) federal agencies' compliance with National Security Directive 63 on single scope background investigations for top secret clearances, and (3) costs of background investigations and number of security clearances.

Background

Title 5 of the U.S. Code, sections 3301 and 7301, authorizes the President to establish standards for admission and conduct of federal employees. Federal regulations authorize the Office of Personnel Management to investigate and adjudicate the qualifications and suitability of such employees consistent with protecting or promoting government efficiency and the integrity of government service. These background investigations are conducted to verify the qualifications of the applicant and to enforce applicable federal laws, rules, and regulations. Under the Federal Personnel Manual, the Office of Personnel Management delegated suitability determinations to the responsible federal agencies.

Executive Orders 10450 and 12356, as amended, establish uniform requirements for personnel security programs in the federal government. They require agency heads to (1) classify federal positions for sensitivity in relation to national security and (2) investigate each person as appropriate based on the position's level of access to national security information. These background investigations are used to determine whether an individual meets established criteria for access to classified information.

Executive Order 10450, as amended, directs the Office of Personnel Management to provide investigative services to federal agencies except those authorized to conduct their own investigations such as the Departments of Defense and State, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Central Intelligence Agency. In addition, the Office of Personnel Management has delegated to some agencies, such as the Department of Commerce, authority to use departmental or private sector investigators. The Office of Personnel Management retains oversight authority and the right to rescind the delegations, and conducts about 30 percent of all background investigations each year. Other investigative agencies conduct about 70 percent of the background investigations for the federal government. These agencies include the Departments of Defense, State, and the Treasury; the Agency for International Development; the Central Intelligence Agency; the Federal Bureau of Investigation; and the U.S. Information Agency.

Results in Brief

It may be feasible to have one central agency conduct all background investigations and adjudicative functions. However, most of the nine key agencies, accounting for more than 95 percent of the security clearances, oppose consolidation; and several concerns and impediments would have to be considered and resolved. Potential consolidation benefits include cost savings, fewer oversight agencies, standardized operating procedures and information systems, and more consistency in the application of standards. However, consolidation also could result in less agency control over the process, potentially reducing the extent to which an individual agency's requirements and priorities are met. For example, some agency officials expressed concern that one central agency could not adequately address their unique missions and needs, especially in terms of adjudicating an individual's suitability for employment or level of access to classified information. In addition, studies by the Heritage Foundation and the Joint Security Commission support consolidating investigative or adjudicative functions for some federal agencies, but not for all. A study by the Defense Personnel Security Research Center opposes consolidating adjudicative functions in the Department of Defense. Also, the consolidation would be inconsistent with the National Performance Review report,[1] and federal statutes, executive orders, and government regulations would have to be revised.

[1]From Red Tape to Results: Creating a Government That Works Better and Costs Less, report of the National Performance Review, Vice President Al Gore, Sept. 7, 1993.

Our work shows that federal agencies are complying with the investigative scope and standards of National Security Directive 63 on single scope background investigations for top secret clearances. The purpose of the directive was to eliminate redundant investigative practices for granting individuals access to top secret or sensitive compartmental information. Consistent with directive 63, some agencies have exceeded the minimum standards by requiring more background information to address their unique foreign relation and national security roles and missions. For example, because of its Presidential protection mission, the U.S. Secret Service conducts polygraph examinations of its agents and selected employees.

In fiscal year 1993, executive branch agencies spent $326 million on background investigations, $20 million of which went to private sector investigators. Appendix I lists costs by agency. More than 3.2 million people have federal security clearances, as shown in appendix II.

Agencies' Opinions About Consolidating Investigative Functions

Federal officials differ in their support for one central agency conducting all background investigations. Two-thirds of the key agencies in the process oppose consolidating investigative functions in one agency. Some believe that costs would increase, and that timeliness and quality would suffer under a consolidated system. Of the 51 agencies we polled, 37 percent do not support consolidating investigative functions, and 41 percent support the 1-agency concept. The remaining agencies are neutral or did not respond. A study by the Heritage Foundation supports consolidating investigative functions for selected federal agencies, but not for defense, intelligence, and law enforcement agencies because they have requirements that exceed those of other federal agencies. A study by the Joint Security Commission recommended the Secretary of Defense and the Director of Central Intelligence establish a joint investigative service, but the recommendation was limited to the Defense Department and intelligence agencies.

Most Key Agencies Oppose Consolidation

Two-thirds of the key federal agencies involved in using background investigations oppose consolidating investigative functions in one central agency. Nine key agencies have investigative authority or grant large numbers of security clearances, and represent more than 95 percent of the security clearances granted to government and contractor employees during fiscal year 1993. For a variety of reasons, six of these agencies oppose consolidation of background investigations, as shown in table 1.

For example, the Treasury Department stated that costs and timeliness could suffer under a consolidated system. The Department of State suggested that a centralized investigative system could cause less responsive, lower-quality investigations. In contrast, the Departments of Defense and Energy and the Office of Personnel Management support consolidation, stating that it could decrease costs and improve timeliness of background investigations. The Department of Defense added that consolidating the Defense Department's and the Office of Personnel Management's investigative functions could standardize the process and improve the quality of the investigations. It also reported that while there would be legal and technical issues associated with such a consolidation, none would be insurmountable.

Table 1: Key Agencies' Opinions About Consolidating Investigative Functions

	Support consolidating investigative functions	
Executive department or agency	**No**	**Yes**
Agency for International Development	X	
Central Intelligence Agency	X	
Department of Defense		X
Department of Energy		X
Department of Justice	X	
Department of State	X	
Department of the Treasury	X	
Office of Personnel Management		X
U.S. Information Agency	X	

In addition, four key agencies said that one central investigative agency could not adequately address the many unique roles and missions found in the federal government. For example, the Departments of State and the Treasury said that a central agency could not adequately address their unique roles and missions. Their explanations follow.

- The Department of State reported that no other federal agency has investigators stationed worldwide that can conduct background investigations overseas.[2] Its investigators have established liaisons with foreign police and security authorities that ease records searches and enhance overseas investigative capabilities. State Department investigators support other diplomatic missions and functions abroad, as well as conducting background investigations.

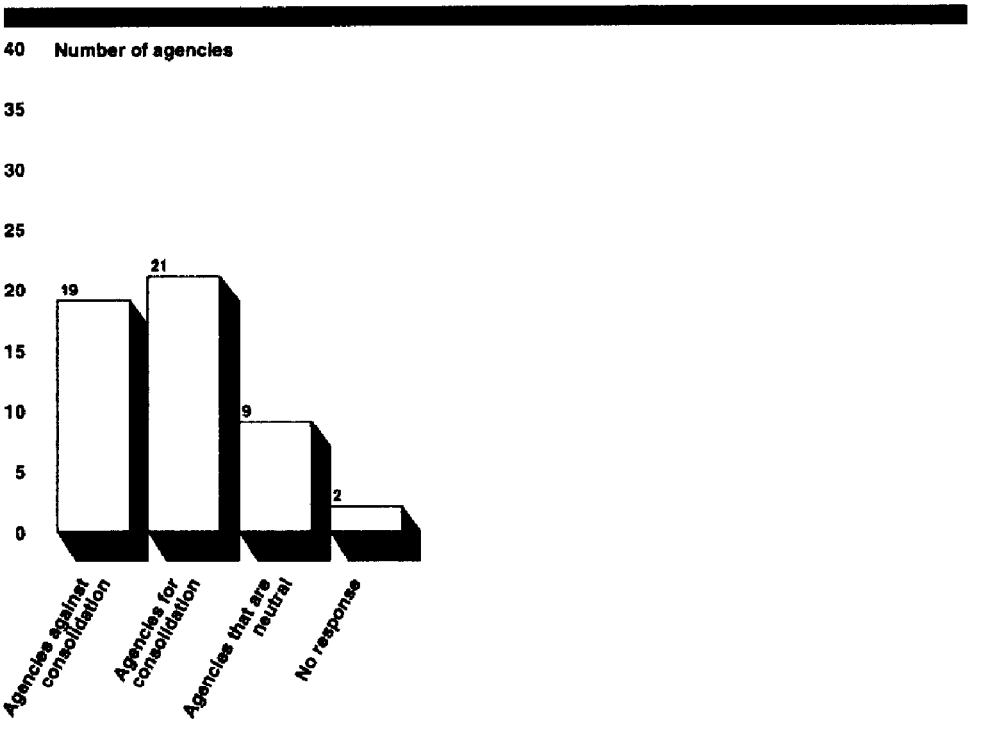
[2]According to Department of Defense officials, the Defense Department also has investigators stationed overseas that can conduct background investigations.

- The Department of the Treasury said that its investigative requirements vary to address specific issues related to each bureau's unique missions. For example, background investigations of (1) Internal Revenue Service employees contain tax information and verification, (2) law enforcement employees contain more stringent police checks and verification procedures than investigations of other employees, and (3) financial management employees contain more analysis of financial, credit, and tax issues.

Slightly More Agencies Support Consolidating Investigative Functions Than Oppose It

The number of federal agencies supporting the consolidation of investigative functions is slightly more than the number of agencies against consolidation, as shown in figure 1. Of the 51 federal agencies polled, 21 (41 percent) agencies support consolidation, while 19 (37 percent) agencies oppose it. Nine (18 percent) agencies are neutral on the issue, and two did not respond.

Figure 1: Agencies' Opinions About Consolidating Investigative Functions



Officials supporting consolidation said that it could save money and result in more consistent application of standards. For example, the Departments of Veterans Affairs and of Health and Human Services believe consolidation could standardize the investigative process. The Departments of Agriculture, the Interior, and Transportation; the U.S. Postal Service; the Federal Emergency Management Agency; the Federal Communications Commission and others also support a single-agency concept for background investigations.

In contrast, some officials believe consolidation could increase the costs, delay timeliness, or decrease the quality of background investigations. For example, the Department of Commerce said that the single-agency concept could cause a monopolistic bureaucracy lacking incentives to provide timely, good-quality investigations at low costs. The Peace Corps reported that there was no proof that consolidation would increase economies and efficiencies and the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency stated that consolidation could create a large, unnecessary bureaucracy.

Two Studies Support Consolidation for Some Agencies, but Not for All

Studies by the Heritage Foundation and the Joint Security Commission support consolidation of investigative functions for selected federal agencies, but not for all.

In 1983, the Heritage Foundation issued a report on the federal personnel security program.[3] The foundation concluded that the advantages of consolidating background investigations outweigh the disadvantages, except for the Department of Defense, the intelligence community, and law enforcement agencies, all of which have requirements that differ and exceed those of other federal agencies. The report stated that consolidating investigative functions could save money, enhance the quality of investigations, maintain high standards for investigators, and improve the application of uniform investigative standards.

On February 28, 1994, the Joint Security Commission issued a report describing the threats to the nation's security and proposing new personnel security strategies for the Department of Defense and intelligence agencies.[4] The commission recommended the Secretary of Defense and the Director of Central Intelligence establish a joint

[3]Screening Federal Employees: A Neglected Security Priority, The Heritage Foundation, 1983.

[4]Redefining Security, report to the Secretary of Defense and the Director of Central Intelligence, Joint Security Commission, Feb. 28, 1994.

investigative service to standardize background investigations, reduce costs, and improve timeliness. It also reported that contracting for investigations in special circumstances, such as priority cases, could enhance competitiveness, lower costs, and prevent backlogs and delays. However, the review was limited only to the Department of Defense and intelligence agencies.

Agencies' Opinions About Consolidating Adjudicative Functions

All but one key agency oppose consolidating adjudicative functions. In addition, most of the federal agencies we polled oppose consolidating adjudicative functions in one agency, while 22 percent support consolidation. The remaining agencies are neutral on the issue or did not respond. The studies by the Heritage Foundation and the Joint Security Commission support consolidating adjudicative functions for some federal agencies, but not for all. A study by the Defense Personnel Security Research Center opposes consolidating adjudicative functions in the Department of Defense.

Most Key Agencies Oppose Consolidation

For a variety of reasons, eight of the nine key federal agencies oppose consolidating adjudicative functions in one central agency. (See table 2.) Officials expressed concern that one agency could not adequately (1) adjudicate all federal suitability determinations and security clearances nor (2) address the various agencies' missions and needs in the adjudicative process. Some also express concerns that consolidation could increase costs and delay the adjudication process. In contrast, the Department of Energy supports consolidation, stating that it could decrease costs and improve timeliness of the process.

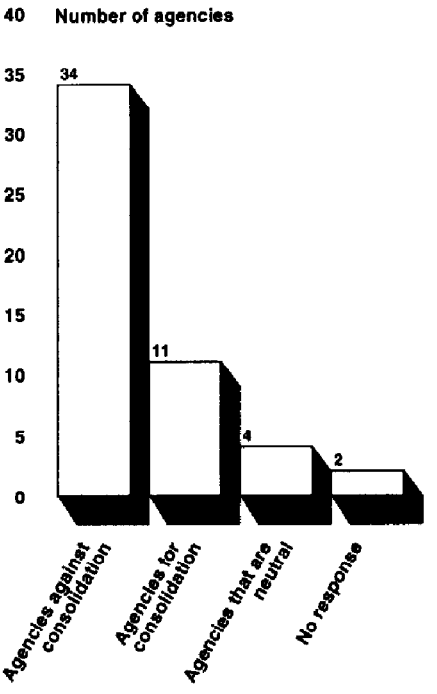
Table 2: Key Agencies' Opinions About Consolidating Adjudicative Functions

	Support consolidating adjudicative functions	
Executive department or agency	**No**	**Yes**
Agency for International Development	X	
Central Intelligence Agency	X	
Department of Defense	X	
Department of Energy		X
Department of Justice	X	
Department of State	X	
Department of the Treasury	X	
Office of Personnel Management	X	
U.S. Information Agency	X	

Most Agencies Oppose Consolidating Adjudicative Functions

As shown in figure 2, 34 (67 percent) federal agencies of the 51 agencies polled oppose consolidating adjudicative functions and procedures. Officials expressed concern that one agency could not adequately adjudicate all federal suitability determinations and classified information access levels. For example, the Department of Education and the Environmental Protection Agency said that deciding suitability is an integral part of their personnel systems. The Department of Commerce and the National Archives and Records Administration said that consolidating the adjudication function could make it more difficult to defend denials and revocations of security clearances. Eleven (22 percent) agencies support consolidation, some responding that it could save money and standardize the process. Four (8 percent) agencies are neutral on consolidation, and two did not respond.

Figure 2: Agencies' Opinions About Consolidating Adjudicative Functions



Studies Vary in Their Support for Consolidating Adjudicative Functions

Studies by the Heritage Foundation, the Defense Personnel Security Research Center, and the Joint Security Commission vary in their support for consolidating adjudicative functions. The Heritage Foundation supported consolidating adjudicative functions for some federal agencies,

but not for defense, intelligence, and law enforcement agencies because they have requirements that exceed those of other federal agencies. A study by the Defense Personnel Security Research Center opposed consolidating adjudicative functions in the Department of Defense. The Joint Security Commission recommended consolidating adjudicative functions for most of the Defense Department, but exempted the National Security Agency from the consolidation because of its unique hiring practices.

The 1983 Heritage Foundation report concluded that the advantages of consolidating adjudicative functions outweigh the disadvantages for most federal agencies. The foundation reported that consolidating adjudicative functions for most agencies could save money, improve the quality of the adjudications, maintain high standards for adjudicators, and provide for uniform standards. However, the Heritage Foundation also concluded that the Department of Defense, intelligence agencies, and law enforcement agencies have requirements that differ and exceed those of other federal agencies and should continue to operate their own adjudication programs.

In October 1991, the Defense Personnel Security Research and Education Center reported on the potential benefits of consolidating the Defense Department's adjudication facilities.[5] The center concluded that the increased risks to personnel security from consolidation outweigh the potential benefits. The center reported that one central adjudication agency could standardize operating procedures and information systems and result in more consistent application of standards. However, the center also concluded that consolidation could result in less agency control over the process, potentially reducing the extent to which any individual agency's requirements and priorities are met.

The Joint Security Commission recommended consolidation of adjudicative functions for the Department of Defense, except for the National Security Agency. According to the commission, a well-designed central agency could improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and consistency of the department's adjudicative system. However, the commission reported that the National Security Agency should be exempt from the consolidation because of its unique hiring practices. The commission's review was limited only to the Defense Department and intelligence agencies.

[5]Consolidation of Personnel Security Adjudication in DOD, Defense Personnel Security Research and Education Center, Oct. 1991.

Other Impediments to Consolidating Investigative and Adjudicative Functions

The consolidation of background investigations and adjudicative functions would be inconsistent with the National Performance Review report and would require federal statutes, executive orders, and government regulations to be revised.

The Departments of Commerce, Education, and the Treasury and the Office of Management and Budget believe a single-agency concept counters the National Performance Review proposal to decentralize federal personnel policy and to give managers more authority to hire, promote, reward, and terminate employees. For example, the National Performance Review recommended giving federal agencies authority to recruit potential employees and to abolish the standard job application form and central job registers. In addition, it reported that agencies should be permitted to conduct their own background investigations of job applicants. The Office of Personnel Management has partially implemented the recommendations. For example, the office has actions under way to revise the Federal Personnel Manual and has abolished the standard job application form and its central registers for entry-level professionals and administrative positions. As of December 31, 1994, no action had occurred allowing other federal agencies to conduct their own background investigations.

Federal statutes, executive orders, and regulations would have to be revised to allow for the consolidation of security investigations and related functions. For example, the Congress would have to amend the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, to replace the requirement that the Office of Personnel Management and the Federal Bureau of Investigation conduct background investigations for the Energy Department and its contractors and licensees; and the Arms Control and Disarmament Act of 1961, as amended, to revise the investigative requirements for the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and its contractors. The President would have to revise Executive Orders 10450 and 12356, as amended, to designate one central agency for all background investigations and related functions. In addition, federal agencies would have to revise their regulations and manuals to reflect the one-agency concept. We did not estimate the costs to make these revisions.

Federal Agencies Comply With National Security Directive 63

Federal executive agencies are meeting the requirements of National Security Directive 63 on single-scope background investigations for top secret clearances. Based on our review, agencies' internal standards and investigative results comply with the requirements established in the

directive. The purpose of the directive is to eliminate redundant and costly investigative practices employed throughout the executive branch. It establishes the minimum investigative scope and standards for top secret security clearances. The investigation consists of a personnel subject interview; law enforcement and credit checks; public records searches; verification of educational degree(s); and interviews with people knowledgeable of the subject's employment, residence, activities, and lifestyle. The investigation covers the subject's background during the previous 10 years.

Directive 63 also allows agencies to exceed the standards to resolve or address issues and requirements unique to individual agencies. Some agencies, such as the Central Intelligence Agency, the National Security Agency, and the Treasury Department, have exceeded the standards to address their unique foreign relation and national security roles and missions. For example, the Central Intelligence Agency and the National Security Agency use full-scope polygraphs to screen employment applicants, because their employees have access to a broad range of classified national security information. In addition, because of its presidential protection mission, the U.S. Secret Service conducts polygraph examinations of its agents and selected employees.

Costs of Investigations and Types of Security Clearances

In March 1994, we issued correspondence to the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Defense, Senate Committee on Appropriations, on the costs of background investigations and types of security clearances.[6] Since our correspondence, executive agencies reported to us that they spent an additional $1 million, for a total of $326 million, on background investigations in fiscal year 1993. More than $20 million went to private sector investigators. In addition, as shown in table 3, more than 3.2 million people have federal security clearances. Executive federal employees and military personnel account for almost 2.4 million clearances, and government contractors' employees account for 852,711 clearances. The totals do not include information from the Central Intelligence Agency.

[6]Personnel Security Investigations (GAO/NSIAD-94-135R, Mar. 4, 1994).

Table 3: Number of Executive Federal and Contractor Employees With Security Clearances

Figures in thousands

Clearance level	Federal employees, including military	Contractor employees	Total
Top secret	535	233	**768**
Secret	1,719	580	**2,299**
Confidential	114	40	**154**
Total	**2,368**	**853**	**3,221**

Note: In addition to these clearance levels, agencies also granted 256,399 federal and contractor employees access to Sensitive Compartmental Information.

Source: Executive agencies' responses to our request for personnel data.

Scope and Methodology

To assess the feasibility of consolidating background investigations or adjudicative functions in 1 central agency, we sent letters, dated May 31, 1994, to 51 federal agencies, offices, boards, commissions, and councils requesting their opinions on the single-agency concept and related legal issues. We received 45 written responses that included opinions from all except 2 of the 51 organizations. For example, the General Services Administration responded for the Board for International Broadcasting and the Marine Mammal Commission. We focused our analysis on responses from nine key departments and agencies that have investigative authority or grant large numbers of security clearances. They represent more than 95 percent of the security clearances granted to government and contractor employees during fiscal year 1993.[7] In addition, we interviewed and obtained information from officials of the Departments of Defense, Energy, Justice, State, and the Treasury; the Office of Personnel Management; and other federal agencies. We also collected and analyzed studies, policies, directives, and statutes on background investigations, adjudication procedures, and security clearances. We did not determine whether there would be any potential cost savings from consolidating background investigations or adjudicative functions in one agency.

To determine the level of compliance with National Security Directive 63, we compared agencies' internal standards and investigative results with the requirements established in the directive. To identify the costs and types of background investigations and security clearances, we collected and analyzed pertinent information from the organizations listed in

[7]These agencies are the Departments of Defense, Energy, Justice, State, and the Treasury; the Office of Personnel Management; the Agency for International Development; the Central Intelligence Agency; and the U.S. Information Agency.

appendixes I and II. The Central Intelligence Agency did not respond to our request for cost and security clearance data.

We conducted our review for this report from March 1994 to December 1994 according to generally accepted government auditing standards. As requested, we did not obtain official agency comments. We provided a fact sheet summarizing this report to the nine key agencies in the process and included their comments where appropriate.

Unless you publicly announce this report's contents earlier, we plan no further distribution until 30 days from its issue date. At that time, we will send copies to the Chairmen of the Senate and House Committees on Appropriations, the Senate Committee on Armed Services, and the House Committee on National Security; the Secretary of Defense; the Directors of the Office of Management and Budget and the Office of Personnel Management; and other interested parties. We will make copies available to others upon request.

Please contact me at (202) 512-8412 if you or your staff have any questions. Major contributors to this report are listed in appendix III.

Donna M. Heivilin
Director, Defense Management
and NASA Issues

Contents

Letter 1

Appendix I Cost to Conduct Background Investigations and Related Functions in Fiscal Year 1993 16

Appendix II Clearance Levels for Federal, Military, and Contractor Employees in Fiscal Year 1993 18

Appendix III Major Contributors to This Report 20

Tables

Table 1: Key Agencies' Opinions About Consolidating Investigative Functions 4

Table 2: Key Agencies' Opinions About Consolidating Adjudicative Functions 7

Table 3: Number of Executive Federal and Contractor Employees with Security Clearances 12

Figures

Figure 1: Agencies' Opinions About Consolidating Investigative Functions 5

Figure 2: Agencies' Opinions About Consolidating Adjudicative Functions 8

Cost to Conduct Background Investigations and Related Functions in Fiscal Year 1993

Dollars in thousands

	Cost			
Executive agency or office	**In-house**	**Reimbursement[a]**	**Contract**	**Total**
Agency for International Development	$686	$31	$644	**$1,361**
Arms Control and Disarmament Agency	3	159		**162**
Board for International Broadcasting	17	2		**19**
Central Intelligence Agency[b]				
Council of Economic Advisers				**0**
Department of Agriculture	177	1,562		**1,739**
Department of Commerce	90	965	567	**1,622**
Department of Defense	180,565	9,957	2,120	**192,642**
Department of Education		5		**5**
Department of Energy	5,116	57,289	6,663	**69,068**
Department of Health and Human Services	53	348		**401**
Department of Housing and Urban Development	168	675		**843**
Department of the Interior		2		**2**
Department of Justice	11,349	23,142	3,987	**38,478**
Department of Labor	39	33		**72**
Department of State	2,055	151	4,190	**6,396**
Department of Transportation	1,885	1,226		**3,111**
Department of the Treasury	473	398	781	**1,652**
Department of Veterans Affairs		309		**309**
Environmental Protection Agency	320	678		**998**
Export-Import Bank		87		**87**
Farm Credit Administration	8	36		**44**
Federal Communications Commission	30	16		**46**
Federal Emergency Management Agency		382		**382**
Federal Maritime Commission[c]				**0**
Federal Reserve System		104		**104**
General Services Administration	249	307		**556**
International Trade Commission		23		**23**
Interstate Commerce Commission		44		**44**
Marine Mammal Commission	17	1		**18**
Merit Systems Protection Board	1	6		**7**
National Aeronautics and Space Administration	785	969	625	**2,379**
National Archives and Records Administration	125	262		**387**
National Science Foundation		35		**35**
National Security Council				**0**
Nuclear Regulatory Commission	214	526	27	**767**

(continued)

Dollars in thousands

	Cost			
Executive agency or office	**In-house**	**Reimbursement[a]**	**Contract**	**Total**
Office of Administration	83			**83**
Office of Management and Budget	1			**1**
Office of Personnel Management	35			**35**
Office of Science and Technology Policy				**0**
Office of the U.S. Trade Representative		8		**8**
Office of the Vice President				**0**
Overseas Private Investment Corporation[d]				
Peace Corps	48	14	128	**190**
Securities and Exchange Commission		24		**24**
Selective Service System[c]				**0**
Small Business Administration		69		**69**
Tennessee Valley Authority	1	6		**7**
U.S. Information Agency	1,205	157	465	**1,827**
U.S. Postal Service	77	3		**80**
Total	**$205,875**	**$100,011**	**$20,197**	**$326,083**

[a]Reimbursement cost to other federal agencies.

[b]Did not provide cost data.

[c]Cost is less than $500.

[d]Cost is included in the Agency for International Development's total.

Source: Executive agencies' responses to our request for cost data. Not all costs are actual, some agencies provided estimates only.

Clearance Levels for Federal, Military, and Contractor Employees in Fiscal Year 1993

Executive agency or office	Top secret	Secret	Confidential	Total
Agency for International Development	2,402	906		**3,308**
Arms Control and Disarmament Agency	255			**255**
Board for International Broadcasting	14			**14**
Central Intelligence Agency[a]				
Council of Economic Advisers	23			**23**
Department of Agriculture	848	1,358	461	**2,667**
Department of Commerce	850	4,440	90	**5,380**
Department of Defense	449,506	1,652,360	111,806	**2,213,672**
Department of Education	39	15	6	**60**
Department of Energy	7,862	1,458		**9,320**
Department of Health and Human Services	300	385	40	**725**
Department of Housing and Urban Development	83	128		**211**
Department of the Interior	1,110	500		**1,610**
Department of Justice	34,207	6,034	236	**40,477**
Department of Labor	270	160		**430**
Department of State	16,154	773		**16,927**
Department of Transportation	2,569	24,041	297	**26,907**
Department of the Treasury	9,199	6,839	147	**16,185**
Department of Veterans Affairs	595	1,232		**1,827**
Environmental Protection Agency	164	860		**1,024**
Export-Import Bank	16	240		**256**
Farm Credit Administration	2	2		**4**
Federal Communications Commission	127	260		**387**
Federal Emergency Management Agency	1,557	355		**1,912**
Federal Maritime Commission	3	54		**57**
Federal Reserve System	113	38		**151**
General Services Administration	1,210	734	8	**1,952**
International Trade Commission	8	440		**448**
Interstate Commerce Commission	11	44		**55**
Marine Mammal Commission	2	6		**8**
Merit Systems Protection Board	49	14		**63**
National Aeronautics and Space Administration	483	5,759	55	**6,297**
National Archives and Records Administration	507	114	2	**623**
National Science Foundation	10	118		**128**
National Security Council	15			**15**
Nuclear Regulatory Commission	1,841	1,734		**3,575**
Office of Administration	82	53	2	**137**
Office of Management and Budget	181	273		**454**

(continued)

Executive agency or office	Top secret	Secret	Confidential	Total
Office of Personnel Management	43	133		**176**
Office of Science and Technology Policy	34	2		**36**
Office of the U.S. Trade Representative	73	43	12	**128**
Office of the Vice President	32	8		**40**
Overseas Private Investment Corporation[b]				
Peace Corps	297	128		**425**
Securities and Exchange Commission	13	30		**43**
Selective Service System	9	15	4	**28**
Small Business Administration	33	205	1	**239**
Tennessee Valley Authority	22	199	10	**231**
U.S. Information Agency	1,896	1,193	408	**3,497**
U.S. Postal Service		4,955		**4,955**
Subtotal	**535,119**	**1,718,638**	**113,585**	**2,367,342**
Contractor[c]	232,970	580,149	39,592	**852,711**
Total	**768,089**	**2,298,787**	**153,177**	**3,220,053**

Note: In addition to these clearance levels, agencies granted 256,399 federal and contractor employees access to Sensitive Compartmental Information. Some agencies also grant L and Q access authorizations, which are not included in this table.

[a]Did not provide data on clearance levels.

[b]Clearance levels are included in the Agency for International Development's total.

[c]Includes totals for all executive agencies.

Source: Executive agencies' responses to our request for personnel data. Not all figures are actual, some agencies provided estimates only.

Major Contributors to This Report

National Security and International Affairs Division, Washington, D.C.

David R. Warren, Associate Director
Thomas J. Howard, Assistant Director
Leo G. Clarke III, Evaluator-in-Charge
Claude T. Adrien, Evaluator
Jacqueline E. Snead, Evaluator

Ordering Information

The first copy of each GAO report and testimony is free. Additional copies are $2 each. Orders should be sent to the following address, accompanied by a check or money order made out to the Superintendent of Documents, when necessary. Orders for 100 or more copies to be mailed to a single address are discounted 25 percent.

Orders by mail:

U.S. General Accounting Office
P.O. Box 6015
Gaithersburg, MD 20884-6015

or visit:

Room 1100
700 4th St. NW (corner of 4th and G Sts. NW)
U.S. General Accounting Office
Washington, DC

Orders may also be placed by calling (202) 512-6000
or by using fax number (301) 258-4066, or TDD (301) 413-0006.

Each day, GAO issues a list of newly available reports and testimony. To receive facsimile copies of the daily list or any list from the past 30 days, please call (301) 258-4097 using a touchtone phone. A recorded menu will provide information on how to obtain these lists.

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

United States
General Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548-0001

Bulk Mail
Postage & Fees Paid
GAO
Permit No. G100

Official Business
Penalty for Private Use $300

Address Correction Requested