

## CIVIL AGENCY CONSTRUCTION

In the civilian agency construction area, we have intensified our audit efforts, and have reported on a wide range of subjects relating to construction directly managed by Federal agencies. Our reviews have led to recommendations that:

The Department of the Interior make a study to determine the full extent of the differences in transmission line construction practices of the Bureau of Reclamation and Bonneville Power Administration to determine the degree of construction coordination necessary and practicable, and adopt more uniform construction practices where possible.

The Post Office Department use standards comparable to those established by the General Services Administration for determining the office space needs of other Federal agencies in planning of office space in new postal facilities.

The Federal Aviation Agency amend its orders and issue appropriate instructions to clarify its policy relating to the selection of designs for use in the construction of airport traffic control towers.

The General Services Administration develop soils and foundation engineering capability within the Public Buildings Service to assist in avoiding or minimizing construction difficulties and related costs associated with foundation design problems and unanticipated soils conditions.

The General Services Administration (1) strengthen controls over on-site inspection of building construction to help assure compliance with contract specifications related to delivery and placement of concrete and (2) revise its policies and procedures so that laboratories engaged to test concrete for compliance with specifications would be responsible directly to the Government rather than to the contractor.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs revise their school construction standards to avoid excess seating capacity in school dining facilities.

The Corps of Engineers formally amend its existing regulations to require that field requests for permission to enter into fixed-price contracts for major relocations be supported by detailed cost analyses or other justifications to enable the headquarters office to properly evaluate the circumstances requiring a deviation from the prescribed procedures.

I cite these, Mr. Chairman, to emphasize that we feel that this is an important area for the GAO and as illustrations of our recommendations.

In general, we have found agency management receptive to our suggestions. Actions have been taken or planned in response to most of our recommendations which, if effectively implemented, should result in significant improvements and economies in construction activities.

In a closely related area, we recently reported on our review of the interpretation by Federal agencies of statutory limitations on fees paid for architect-engineer services and related matters. I have included a summary of the results of our review in Appendix No. 11. (See p. 27.) In brief, we concluded that the present limitations are impracticable and unsound and we recommend that they be repealed by the Congress. We believe that the requirements for competitive