

# People with Disabilities in the Federal Government

- A Statistical Profile -



Prepared by:  
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Washington, DC 20415  
202-606-2817

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# PREFACE

On March 13, 1998, the President issued Executive Order 13078, which is aimed at increasing the employment of adults with disabilities to a rate that is as close as possible to the employment rate of the general adult population. The Order establishes an interagency task force, of which U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is a member, to accomplish this mission. Section 2(g) of the Order calls for all executive agencies to: "...review their programs and policies to ensure that they are being conducted and delivered in a manner that facilitates and promotes the employment of adults with disabilities."

OPM has produced this statistical profile as part of its governmentwide responsibility in policy development for the recruitment, placement, advancement and retention of people with disabilities. This responsibility includes providing agencies with up-to-date information to conduct workforce analyses, develop strategic affirmative recruiting plans, and to make informed and cost effective human resource decisions. We welcome your comments.

The profile covers Federal employees with disabilities, including those with "targeted" disabilities\*. A glossary of terms appears at the end of this profile. All material in this profile may be copied.

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NOTE: STATISTICS IN THIS PROFILE MAY VARY FROM OTHER RELEASES DUE TO DIFFERENCES IN COVERAGE (e.g., AGENCY, WORK SCHEDULE, TENURE, AND AS-OF DATES).

\* Targeted disabilities, as defined by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), are disabilities "targeted" for emphasis in affirmative action planning. These are: deafness, blindness, missing extremities, partial paralysis, complete paralysis, convulsive disorders, mental retardation, mental illness, and genetic or physical condition affecting limbs and/or spine. EEOC recognizes that some disabilities that are not targeted are nevertheless just as severe or more severe than some disabilities that are targeted.

# PROFILE HIGHLIGHTS

Despite a decline of approximately 346,000 Federal non-postal civilian employees between 1992 and 1997, persons with disabilities have maintained their overall participation in the Federal workforce. A few Executive Departments employ the majority of persons with disabilities. Although overall trends are encouraging, a more detailed analysis reveals several items deserving management attention and consideration. These include:

**Veteran Considerations** -- About 39 percent of employees with disabilities in the Federal workforce are veterans eligible for preference because they served in combat or suffered a service-connected disability. Their presence in the workforce reflects the impact of Veterans Preference, related affirmative employment programs, and the use of the 30% or more disabled veteran hiring provisions. The pool of preference eligibles is getting smaller.

**Use of Certain Hiring Authorities** -- Five special hiring authorities for persons with disabilities account for 11 percent of all new hires of employees with disabilities. Three agencies accounted for over half the use of these special hiring authorities for persons with disabilities during the last five years. Four non-veteran specific hiring authorities are used in the placement of non-veterans who are employees with disabilities. The continued use of these four authorities is key to non-veteran workforce representation in future "pipelines" that include women and minorities with disabilities.

**Occupational Distributions** -- Over 60 percent of the jobs cuts between 1992 and 1997 were in clerical and blue-collar occupations. Many employees with disabilities are employed in these occupations. Few persons with disabilities are employed in the emerging growth occupations.

**Grade Distributions** -- The average General Schedule (GS) grade of a Federal employee is 9.3, while persons with disabilities have an average grade of 8.5. Their representation is low at grade levels above GS-12. Persons with targeted disabilities have an average grade of only 7.5.

**Age/Tenure** -- Employees with disabilities are older (48 versus 45) and average more years of service (16.7 versus 16.3) than the average Federal employee. These characteristics require careful scrutiny in workforce planning, especially as downsizing continues in non-Defense agencies.

**PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

**IN THE NATION AND THE  
FEDERAL WORKFORCE**

# PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN THE NATION AND THE FEDERAL WORKFORCE

- ◆ **According to Census Bureau data, there were 49 million Americans with disabilities in 1992. They formed approximately 19 percent of the nation's nearly 252 million population.**
- ◆ **The 1994 Census Bureau's Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) showed that 52 percent (15.4 million) of all working age Americans with disabilities (29.4 million) were employed. This compares with 82 percent of the general population.**
- ◆ **The 1994 Census Bureau's Survey also showed that 26 percent (3.71 million) of all working age Americans with severe disabilities (14.2 million) were employed. [The Census survey defines a person with a severe disability as one who is unable to perform one or more activities of daily living; or, has one or more specific impairments; or, is a long term user of assistive devices]**

## **PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN THE NATION AND THE FEDERAL WORKFORCE (continued)**

- ◆ **According to the March 1997 Current Population Survey (CPS), annual earnings of workers with moderate disability (\$19,900) is 30 percent less than for workers without a disability (\$28,300). Among workers with a significant disability, average earnings (\$9,400) are 67 percent less than workers without a disability.**
- ◆ **The representation of people with disabilities in Federal Executive Branch agencies was 7.2 percent (127,000) of the workforce in 1997 despite a decline of approximately 346,000 employees in Federal civilian employment between September 1992 (2,176,000) and September 1997 (1,830,000).**
- ◆ **In September 1997, 1.2 percent of Federal civilian employees were people with targeted disabilities; the same percentage as in September 1992.**

# PROFILE OF EMPLOYEES WITH DISABILITIES IN THE FEDERAL WORKFORCE

1997

Demographic Indicator	All Federal Civilian Employees	Federal Employees with Disabilities	Federal Employees with Targeted Disabilities
Average Age (years)	45.1	47.9	44.9
Average Years of Service	16.3	16.7	15.7
Education (percent with Bachelor's Degree or higher)	39.8	32.2	30.4
Gender (percent)			
- Men	55.8	62.9	59.5
- Women	44.1	37.1	40.5
Veteran's with Preference (percent)	25.2	39	20.1
Vietnam Era Veterans (percent)	14.7	22.8	12
Race & National Origin (percent)			
- White	71.9	73.6	75.5
- Black	16.7	15.6	14.9
- Hispanic	6.3	5.7	5.7
- Asian/Pac.Islander	4.4	3.1	2.5
- Native American	2	2	1.4

# PROFILE OF EMPLOYEES WITH DISABILITIES IN THE FEDERAL WORKFORCE (continued)

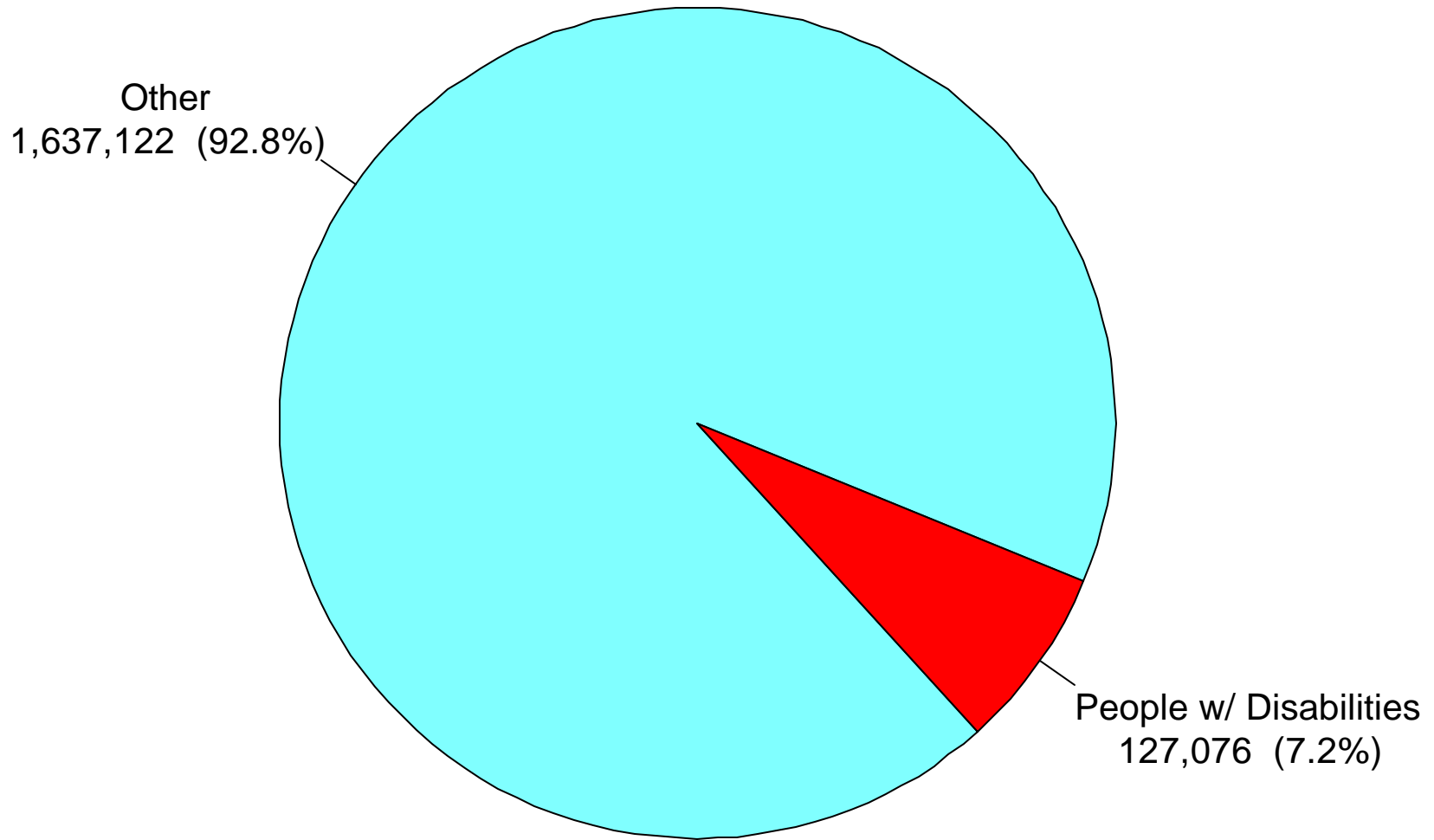
1997

Employment Indicator	All Federal Civilian Employees	Federal Employees with Disabilities	Federal Employees with Targeted Disabilities
<b>Average Adjusted Basic Pay (\$)</b>			
- Worldwide	43,318	39,395	34,917
- Washington, DC MSA	55,571	51,477	43,435
<b>Average GS Grade</b>	9.3	8.5	7.5
<b>Pay Systems (percent)</b>			
- General Schedule	73	74	77
- Wage	14	17	17
- Others	13	9	5
<b>Work Schedule (percent)</b>			
- Full-time	93	95	95
- Part-time	3	3	4
- Intermittent	4	2	1
<b>Tenure (percent)</b>			
- Permanent	90	93	95
- Temporary	10	7	5
<b>Position Occupied (percent)</b>			
- Competitive	77.4	83.5	82.3
- Excepted	22.2	16.2	17.5
- Senior Executive Service	0.4	0.2	0.2
<b>Supervisory Status (percent)</b>	11.1	8.8	4.8



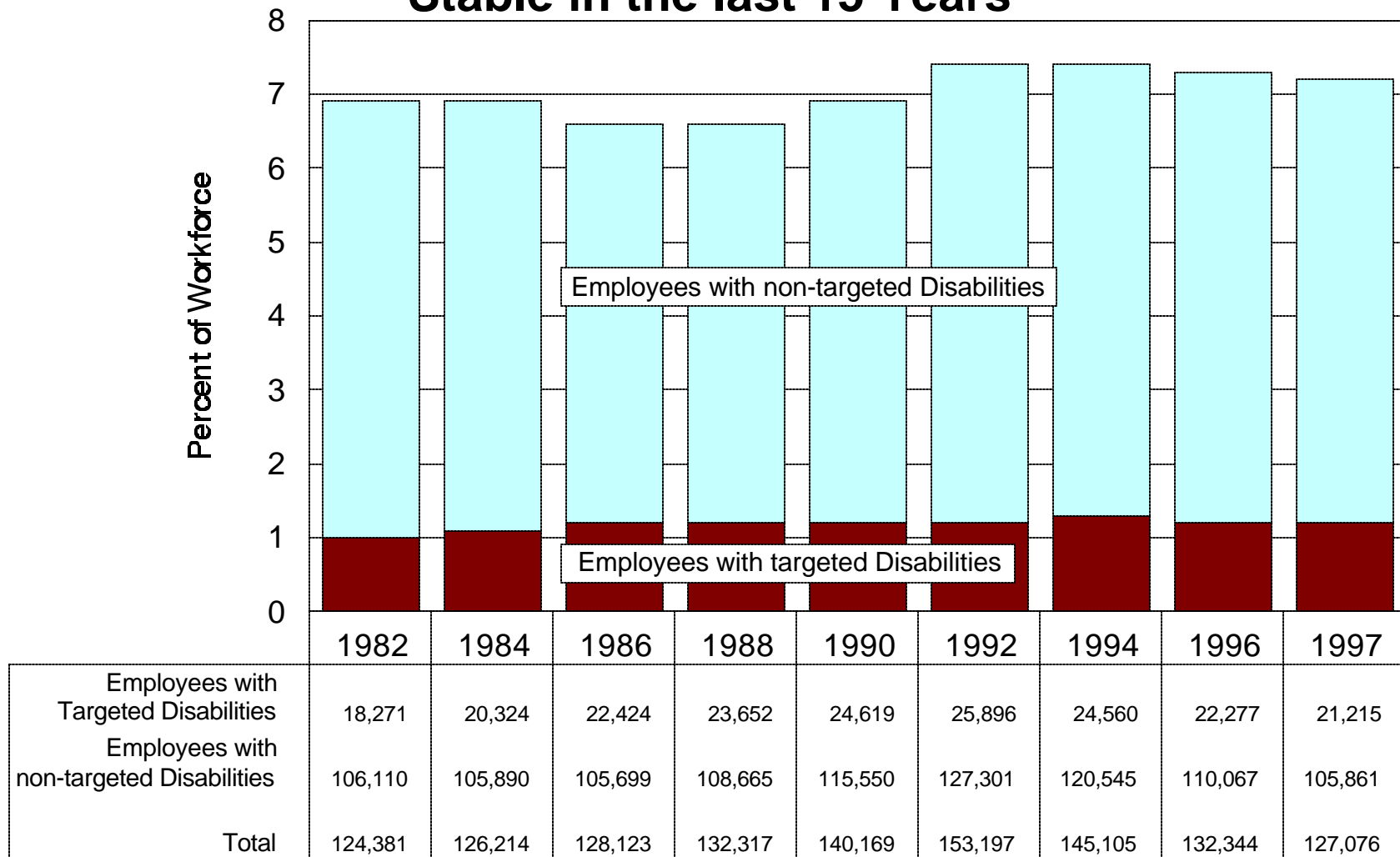
# People with Disabilities Represent 7.2 Percent of All Civilian Employees in the Federal Executive Branch Workforce

September 30, 1997



Source: Demographic Profile of the Federal Workforce, September 30, 1997 (unpublished), OPM - Office of Workforce Information  
OTHER excludes non-identified (in terms of disability) count of 66,102 (3.6%)

## Representation of People with Disabilities in the Federal Executive Branch Workforce has Remained Stable in the last 15 Years



**EMPLOYEES WITH DISABILITIES**

**IN THE  
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT**

# **DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYEES WITH DISABILITIES AMONG FEDERAL AGENCIES**

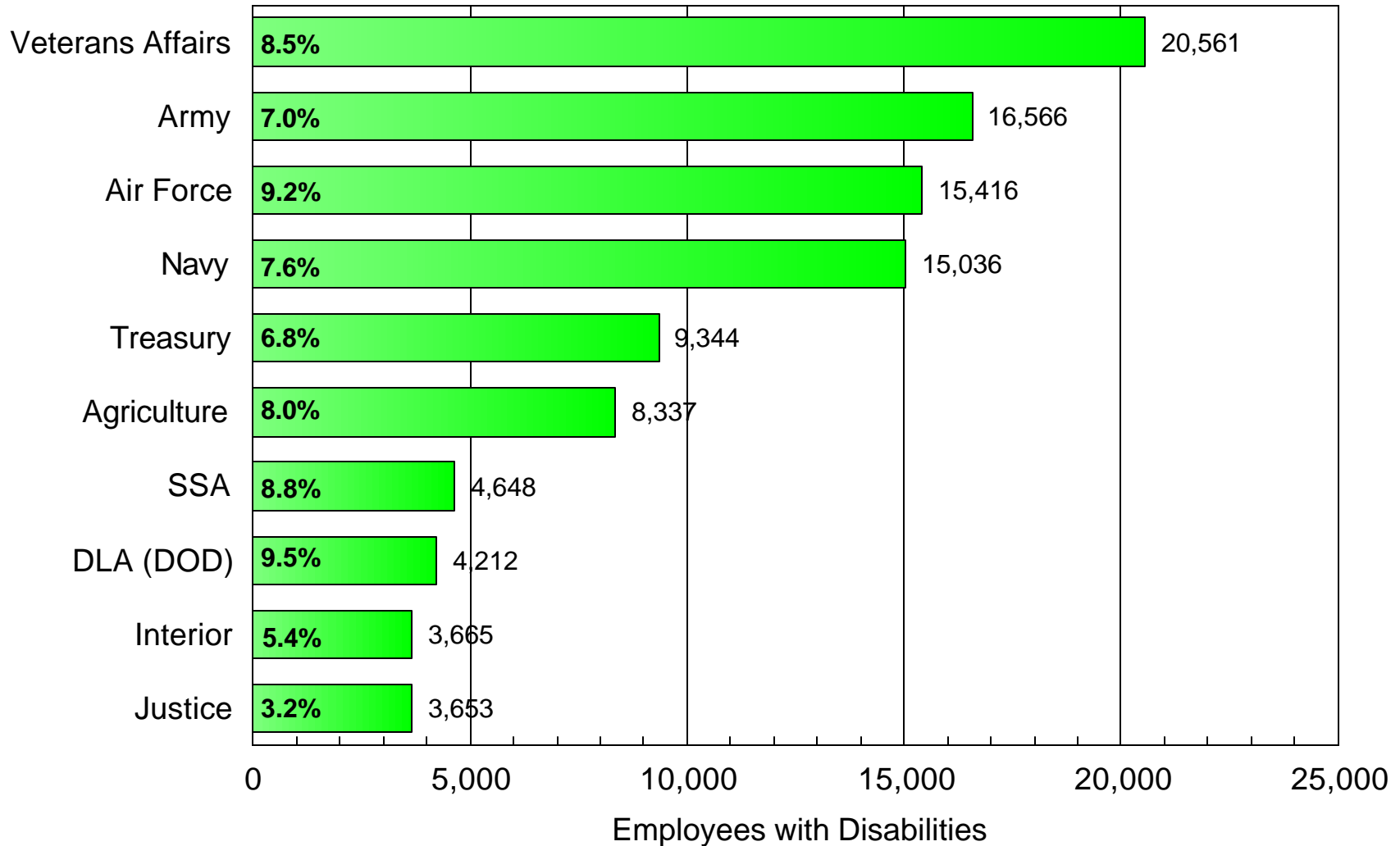
**1997**

**◆ The agencies below employ approximately 55 percent of the Federal workforce and 61 percent of the people with disabilities:**

- Veterans Affairs**
- Army**
- Navy**
- Air Force**
- Treasury**

**◆ The Department of Veterans Affairs employs 20,561 people with disabilities. This represents 8.5 percent of their workforce.**

# Non-Postal Executive Branch Federal Agencies With the Largest Employment of People with Disabilities September 30, 1997



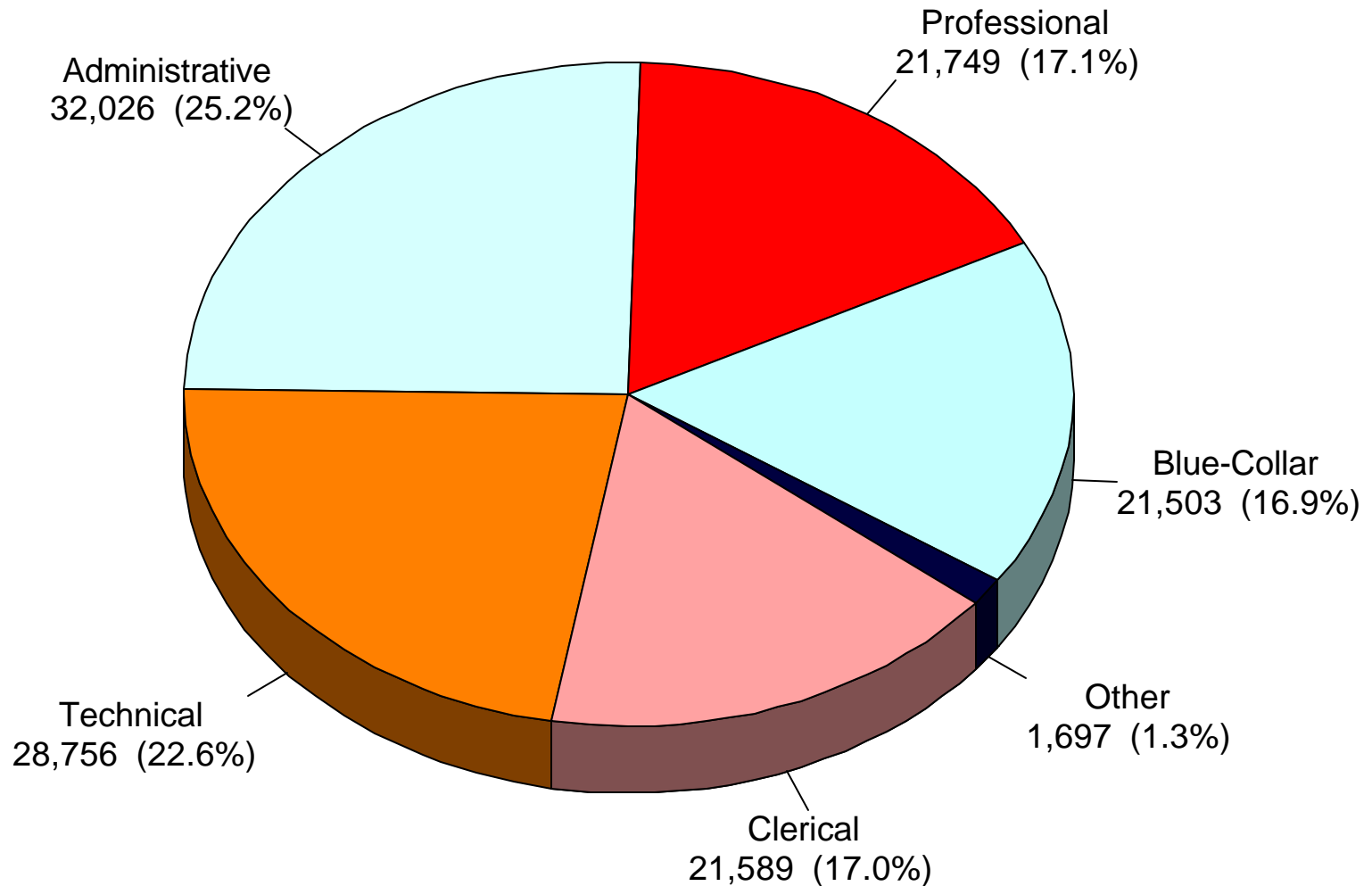
# **PARTICIPATION OF EMPLOYEES WITH DISABILITIES IN DIFFERENT OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS**

**1997**

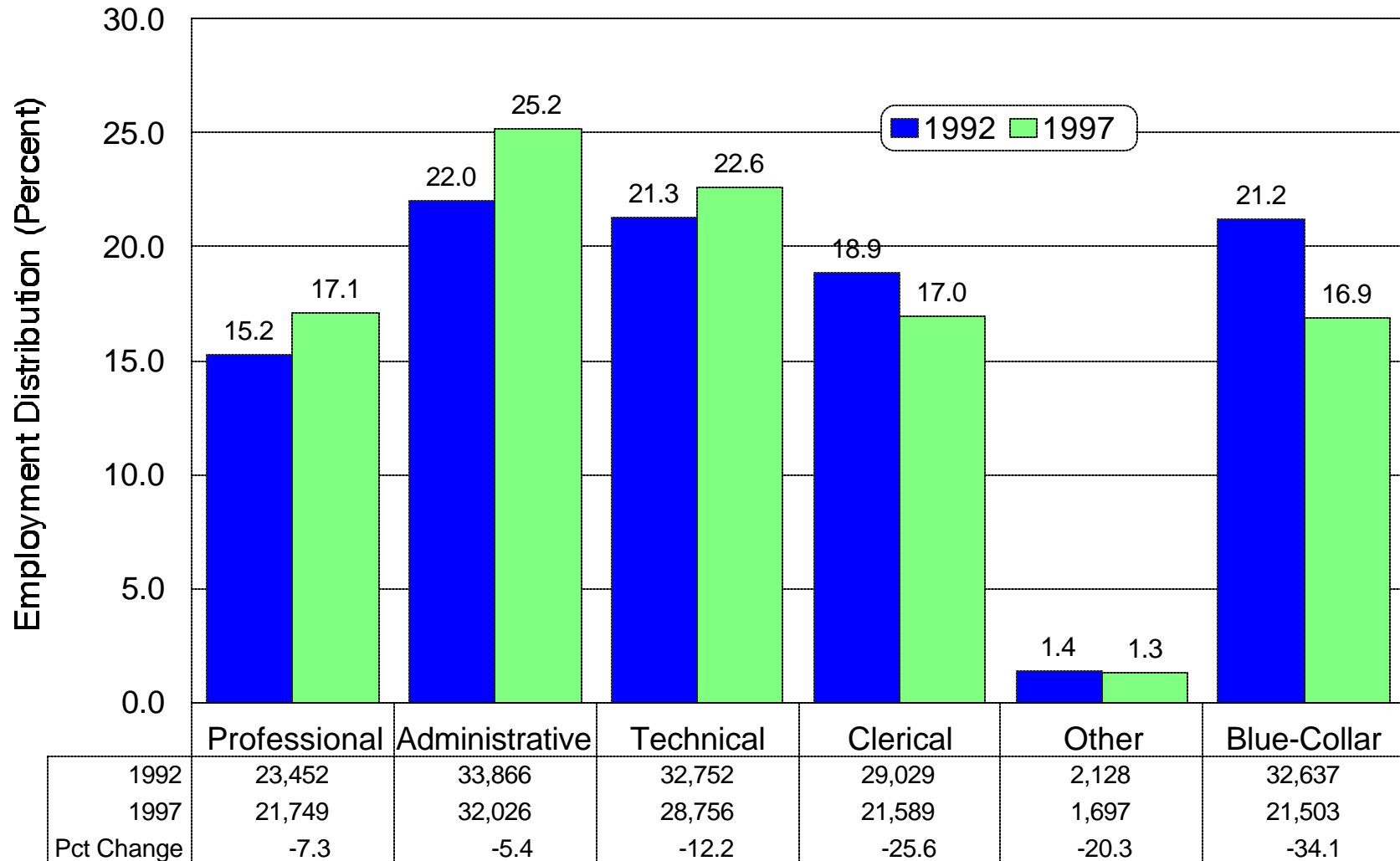
- ◆ **Sixty-five percent of employees with disabilities held positions in professional, administrative, or technical occupations.**
- ◆ **Since 1992, the percentage of Federal employees with disabilities in professional, administrative, and technical jobs has increased during downsizing.**
- ◆ **Employees with disabilities are most concentrated in GS and related pay plan grades 9-12.**

# Sixty-five Percent of Employees with Disabilities Held Professional, Administrative, or Technical Occupations

## September 30, 1997

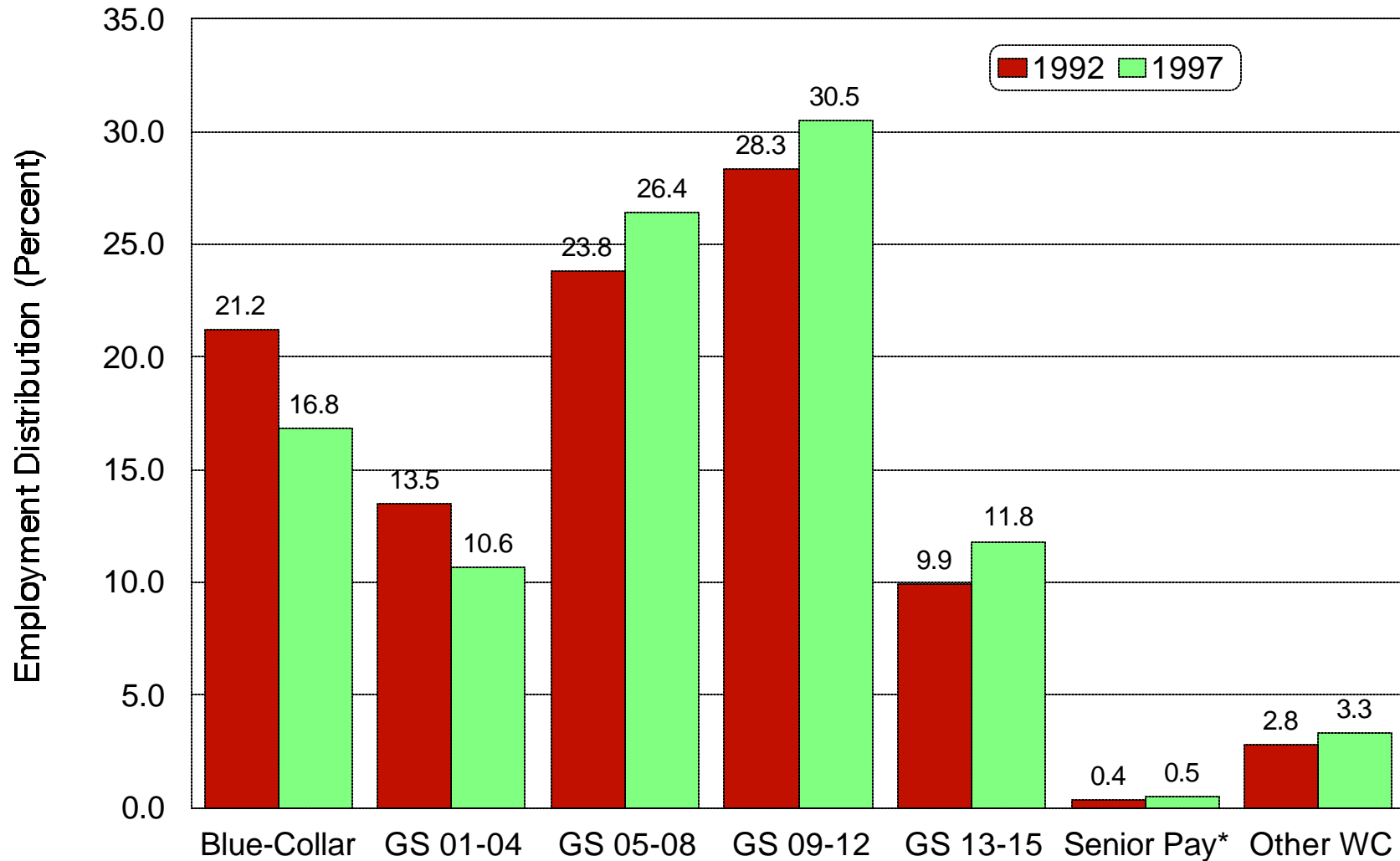


## The Percentage of Federal Employees with Disabilities in Professional, Administrative, and Technical Occupations has Increased during Downsizing





# Employees with Disabilities remain Concentrated in GS and Related Pay Plan Grades 9-12



Source: U.S. OPM's Central Personnel Data File

\* Senior Pay includes the Senior Executive Service as well as other employees at senior pay levels

# **PARTICIPATION OF EMPLOYEES WITH DISABILITIES IN POPULOUS AND GROWING OCCUPATIONS**

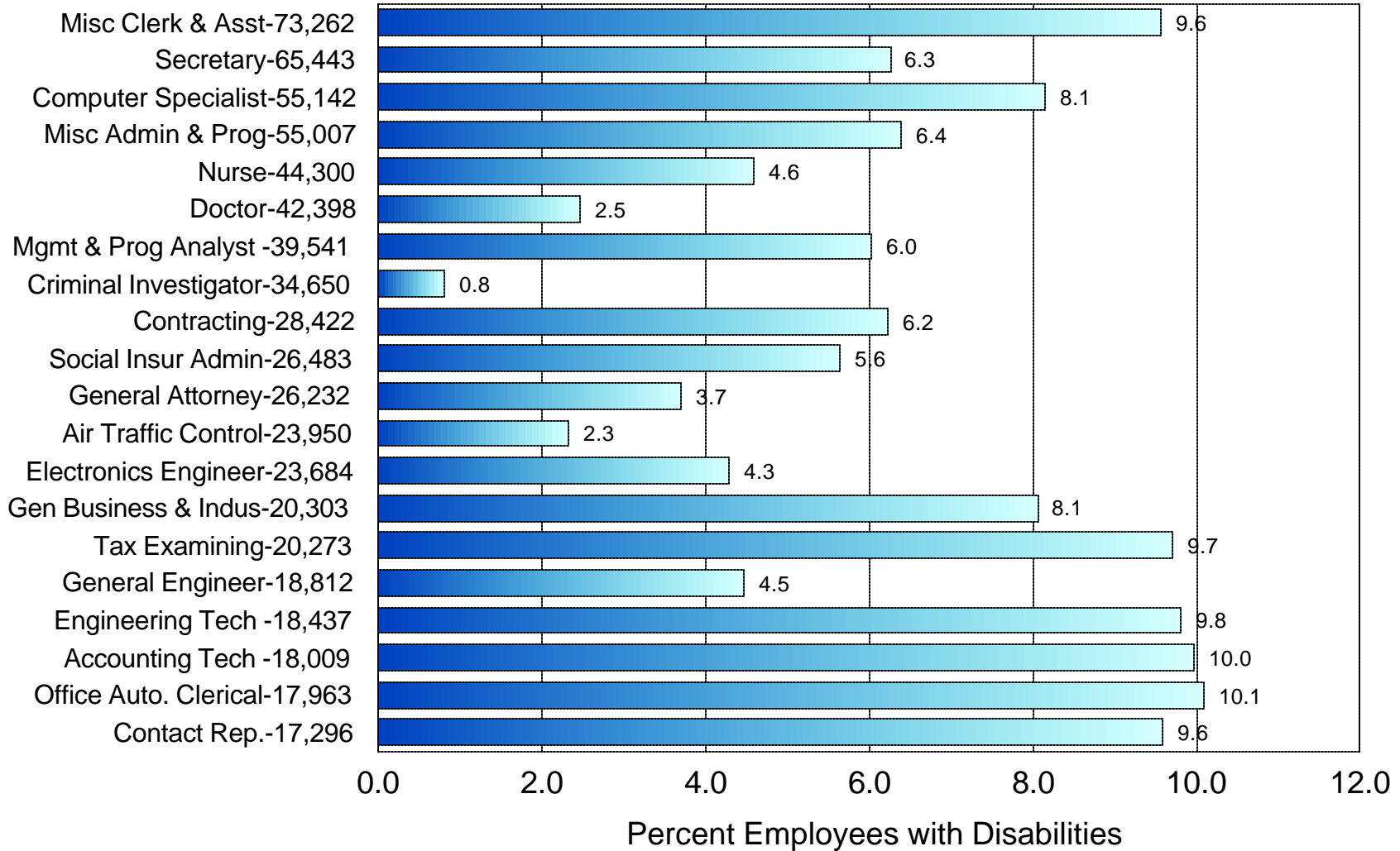
**1997**

- ◆ **Among populous occupations, employees with disabilities represent 10 percent of all Office Automation Clerks and Accounting Technicians.**
- ◆ **Among growing occupations, employees with disabilities are well represented in the Social Science as well as General Business and Industry occupational series. They have low representation in law enforcement occupations such as Border Patrol, Correctional Officer, and Criminal Investigator.**
- ◆ **Miscellaneous Clerk and Assistant is the occupational series with the largest number of employees with disabilities (7,014).**

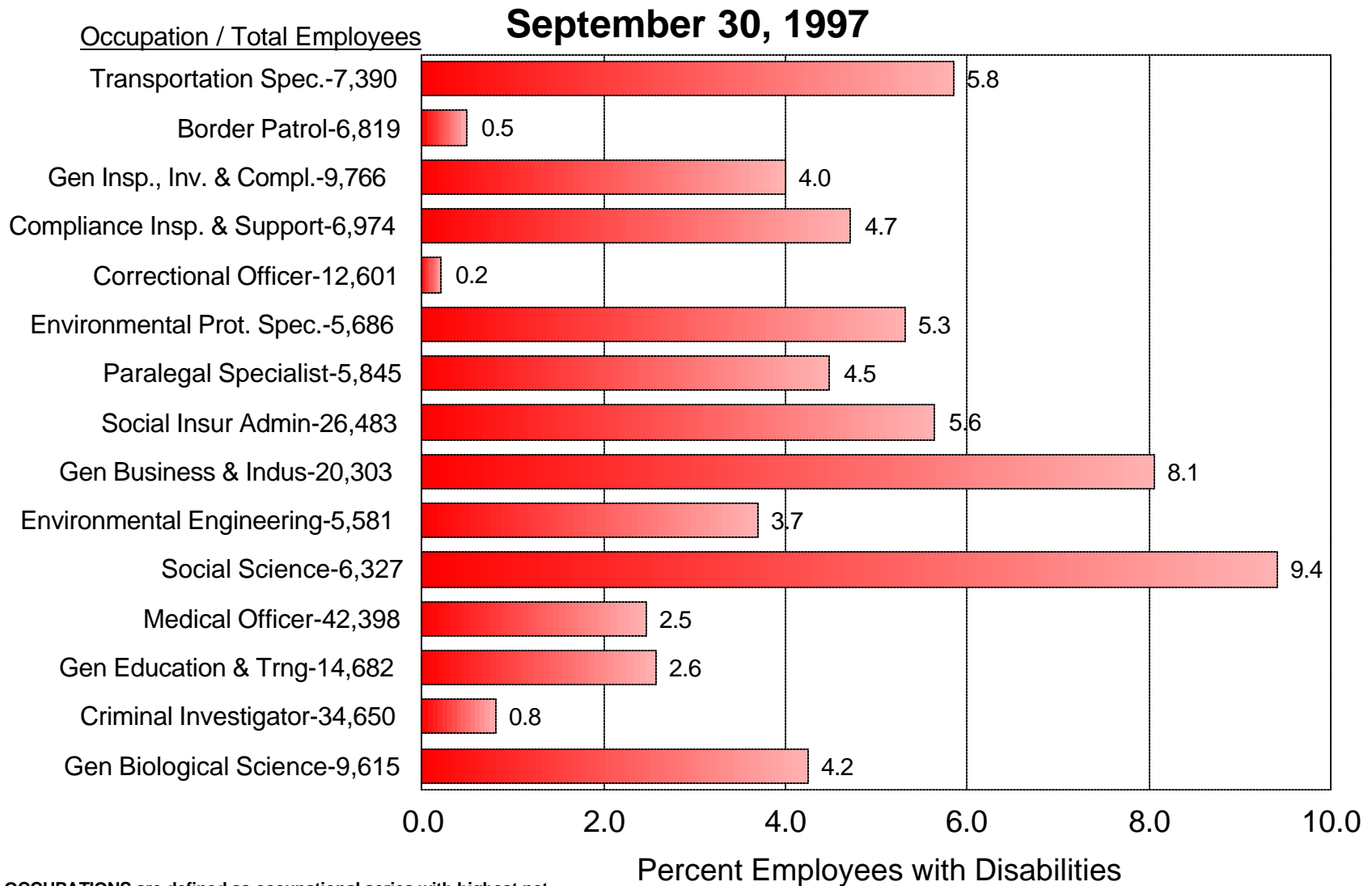
# Representation of Employees with Disabilities in the 20 Most Populous Occupations in the Federal Workforce

September 30, 1997

Occupation / Total Employees

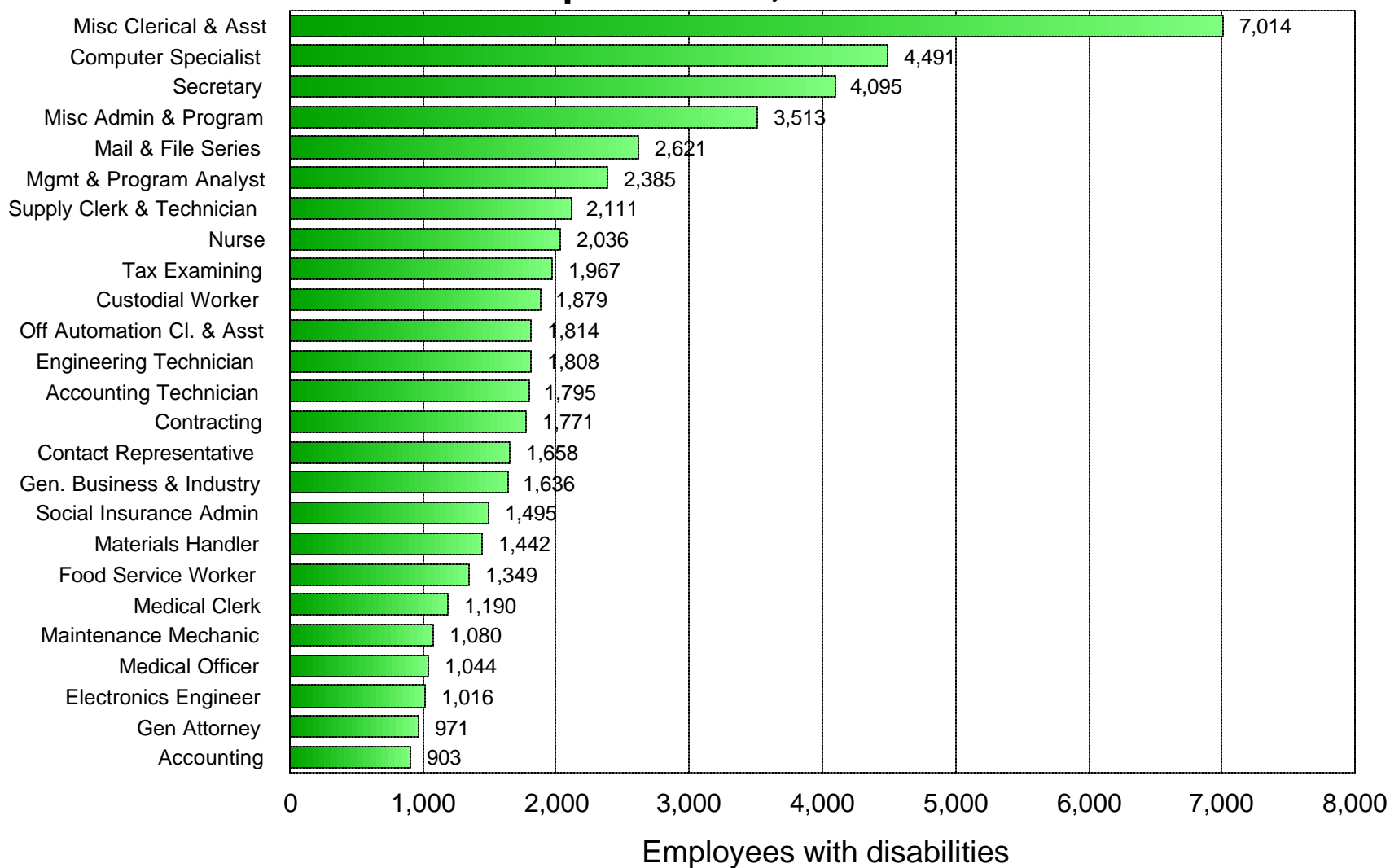


# Representation of Employees with Disabilities in the Top 15 Growing Occupations in the Federal Workforce



GROWING OCCUPATIONS are defined as occupational series with highest net increase in employment from 1993 to 1997 due to new hiring or job reclassification.  
 Source: U.S. OPM's Central Personnel Data File.

# Top Twenty-Five Occupational Series for Federal Employees with Disabilities September 30, 1997



**EMPLOYEES  
WITH  
TARGETED DISABILITIES  
  
IN THE  
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT**

# **DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYEES WITH TARGETED DISABILITIES AMONG FEDERAL AGENCIES**

**1997**

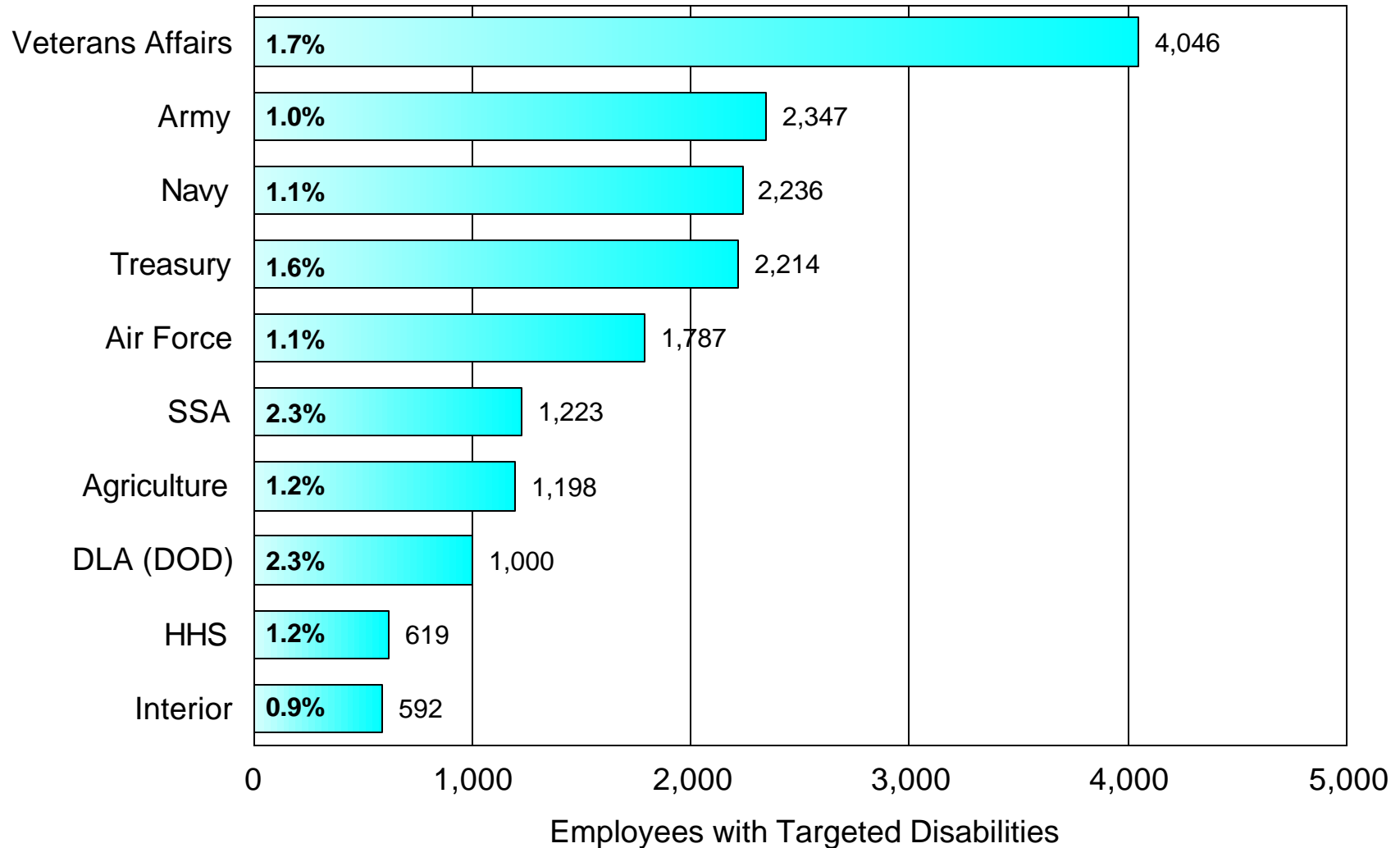
**◆ The agencies below employ approximately 55 percent of the Federal workforce and 60 percent of the people with targeted disabilities:**

- Veterans Affairs**
- Navy**
- Army**
- Treasury**
- Air Force**

**◆ The Department of Veterans Affairs employs 4,046 people with targeted disabilities. This represents 1.7 percent of their workforce.**

# Non-Postal Executive Branch Federal Agencies With the Largest Employment of People with Targeted Disabilities

September 30, 1997





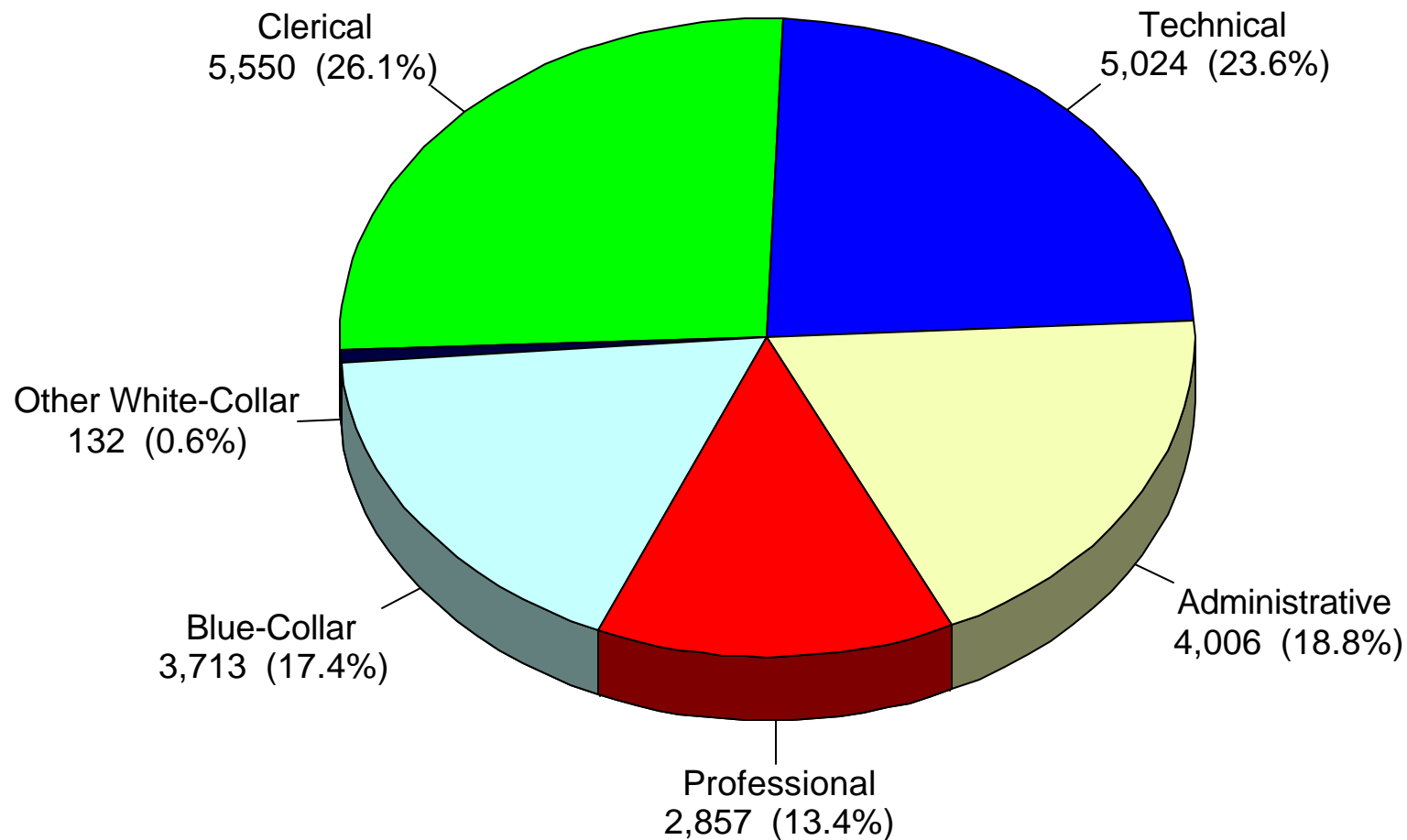
# **PARTICIPATION OF EMPLOYEES WITH TARGETED DISABILITIES IN DIFFERENT OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS**

**1997**

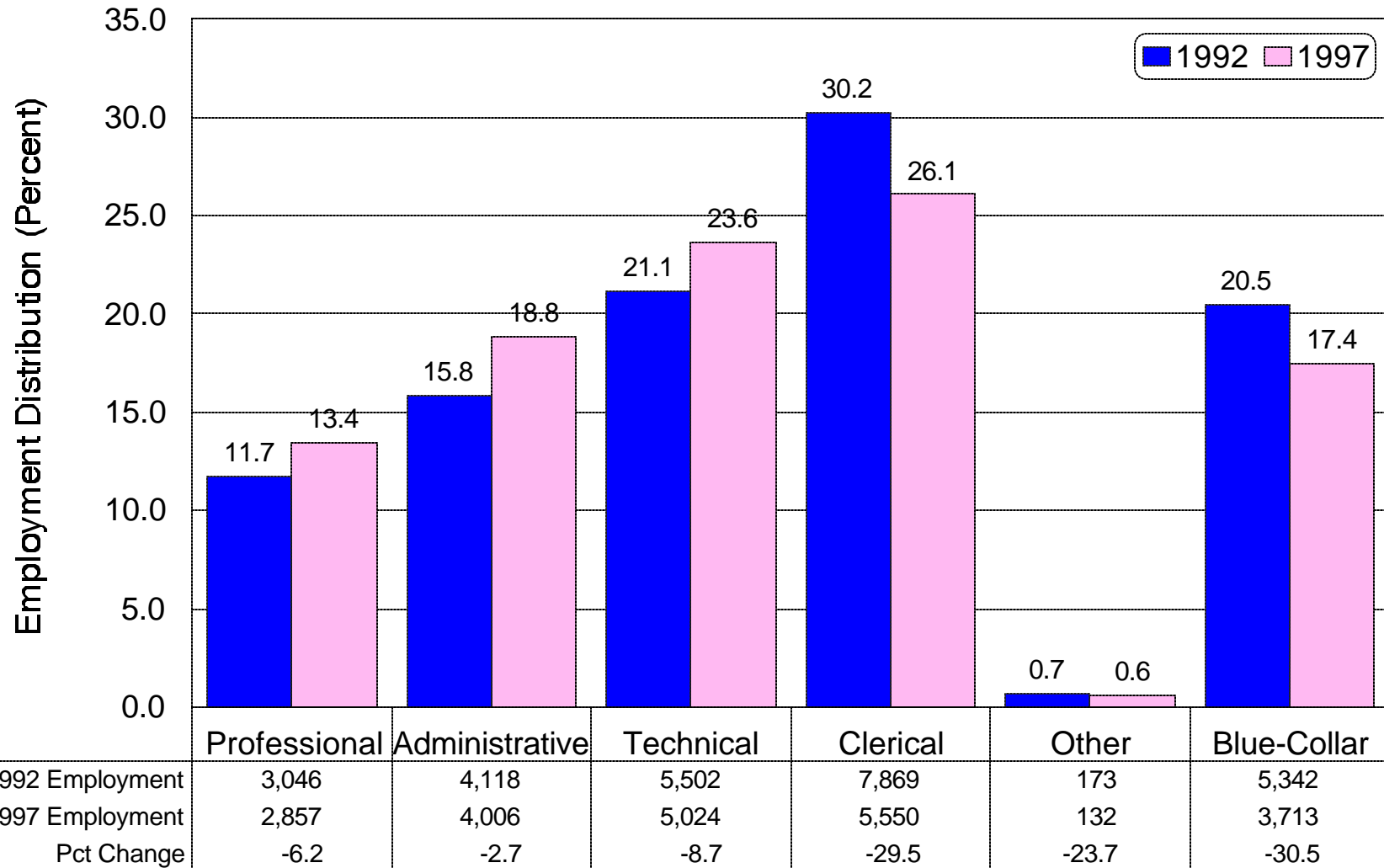
- ◆ **Fifty-six percent of employees with targeted disabilities held positions in professional, administrative, or technical occupations.**
- ◆ **Since 1992, the percentage of Federal employees with targeted disabilities in professional, administrative, and technical jobs has increased.**
- ◆ **Employees with targeted disabilities are most concentrated in GS and related pay plans grades 5-8.**

# Fifty-six Percent of Employees with Targeted Disabilities Held Positions in Professional, Administrative, or Technical Occupations

September 30, 1997

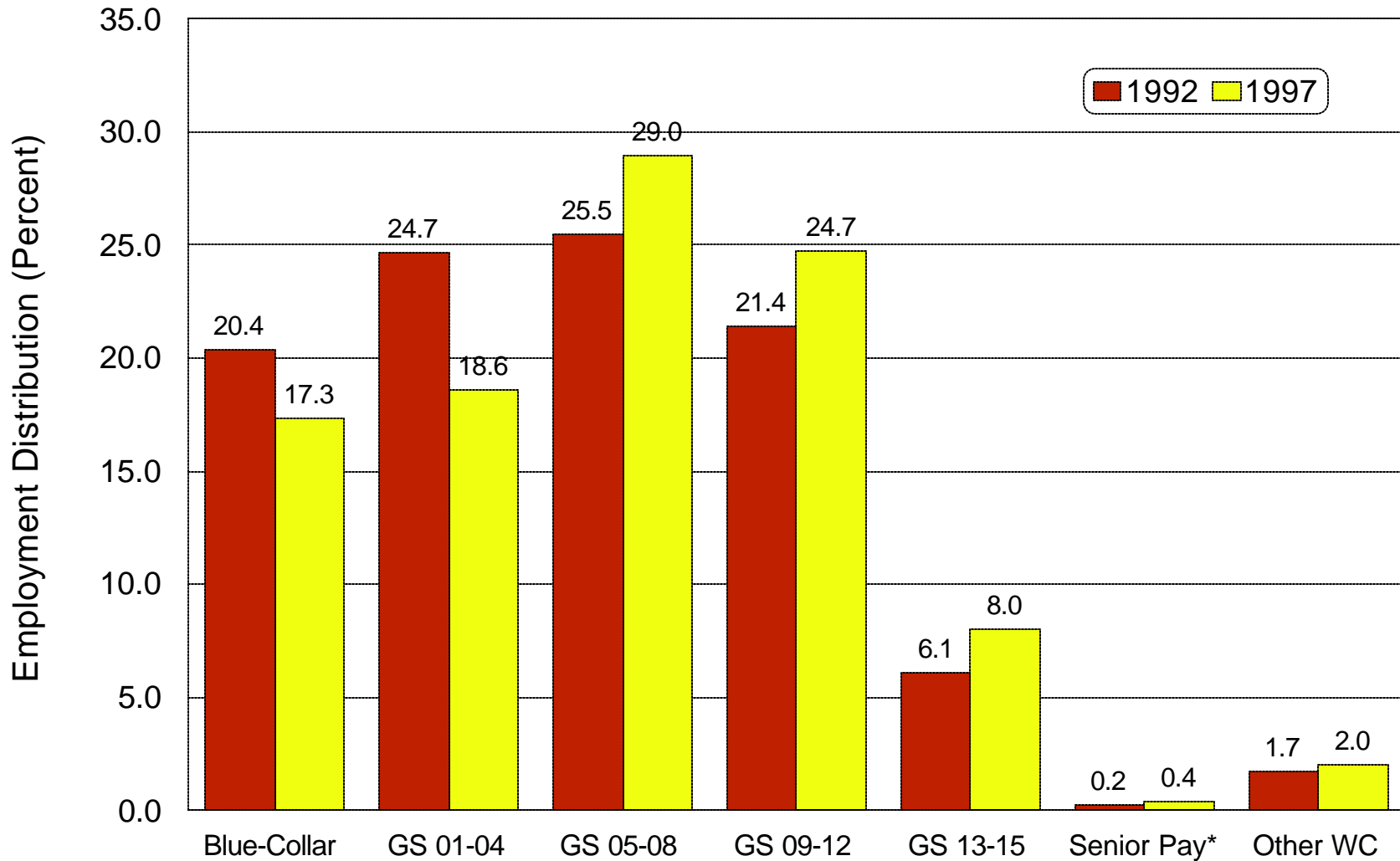


# The Percentage of Federal Employees with Targeted Disabilities in Professional, Administrative, and Technical Occupations has Increased during Downsizing



# Employees with Targeted Disabilities remain Concentrated in GS and Related Pay Plan Grades 5-8

## Fiscal Years 1992 & 1997



Source: U.S. OPM's Central Personnel Data File

\* Senior Pay includes the Senior Executive Service as well as other employees at senior pay levels

**PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

**FEDERAL WORKFORCE DYNAMICS**

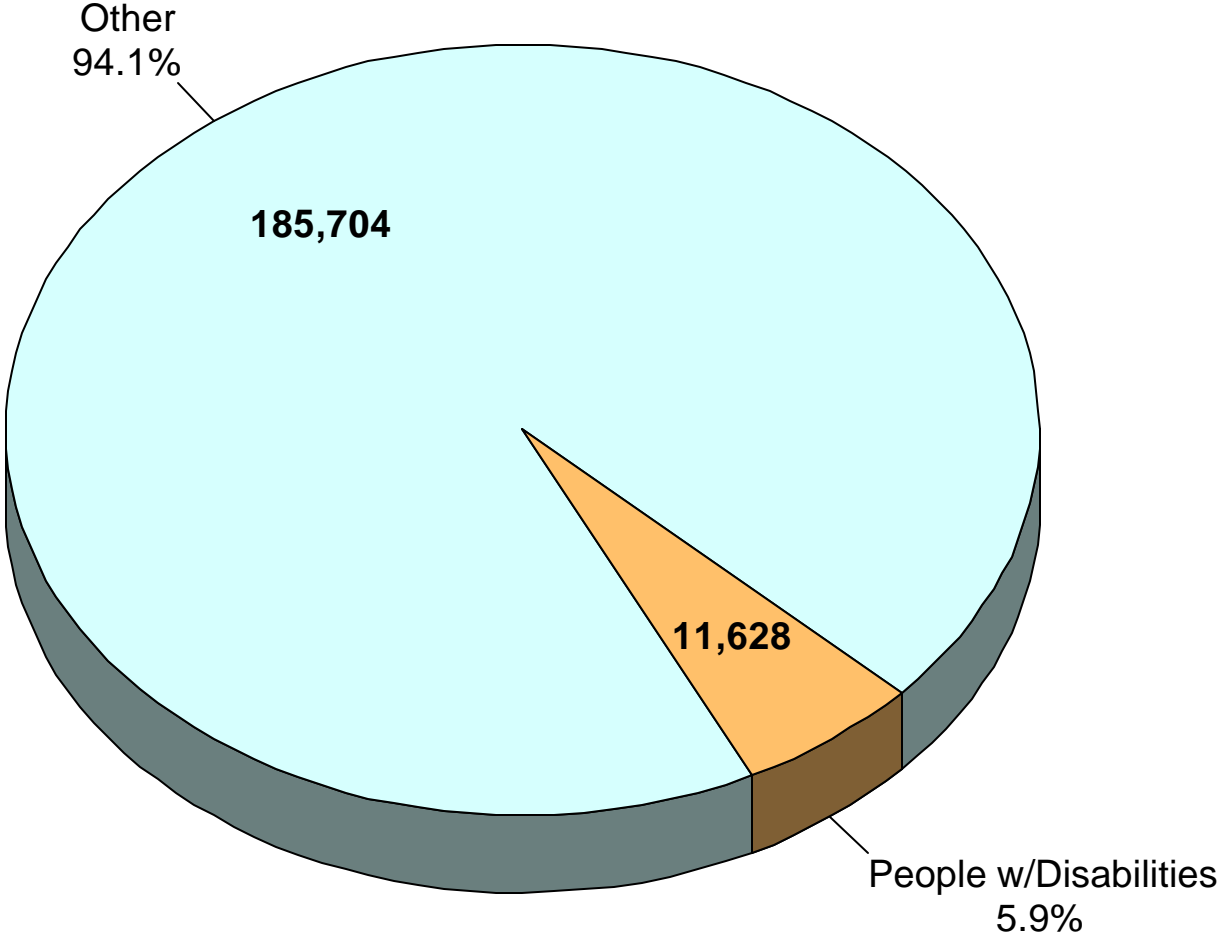
# **PROMOTION AND HIRING DYNAMICS OF EMPLOYEES WITH DISABILITIES IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT**

**1997**

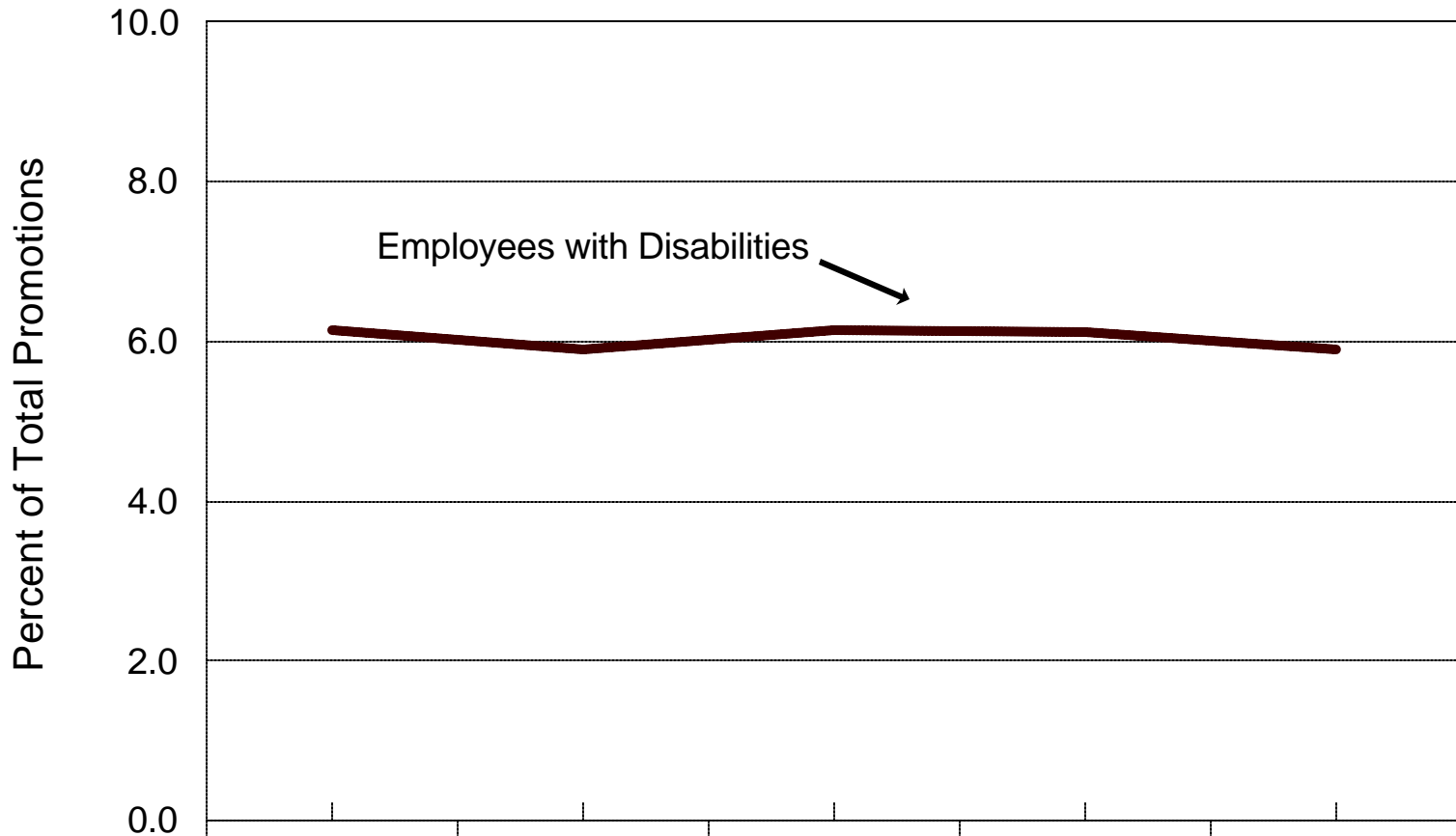
- ◆ **Employees with disabilities accounted for 5.9 percent of all promotions during FY 1997.**
- ◆ **Promotions of employees with disabilities as a percentage of all promotions during the last five years has remained stable.**
- ◆ **Employees with disabilities accounted for 5.7 percent of all new hires during FY 1997.**
- ◆ **Hiring of employees with disabilities as a percentage of all hiring during the last five years has remained stable.**
- ◆ **Over half (54 percent) of all new hires with disabilities during FY 1997 were hired for occupations within Clerical and Blue-Collar occupational groups.**
- ◆ **The top fifteen occupations for new hires of employees with disabilities accounted for 51 percent of all new hires with disabilities.**

# Employees with Disabilities Accounted for 5.9 Percent of All Promotions During FY 1997

FY 1997



## Promotions of People with Disabilities as a Percent of All Promotions Since FY 1993 Have Remained Stable

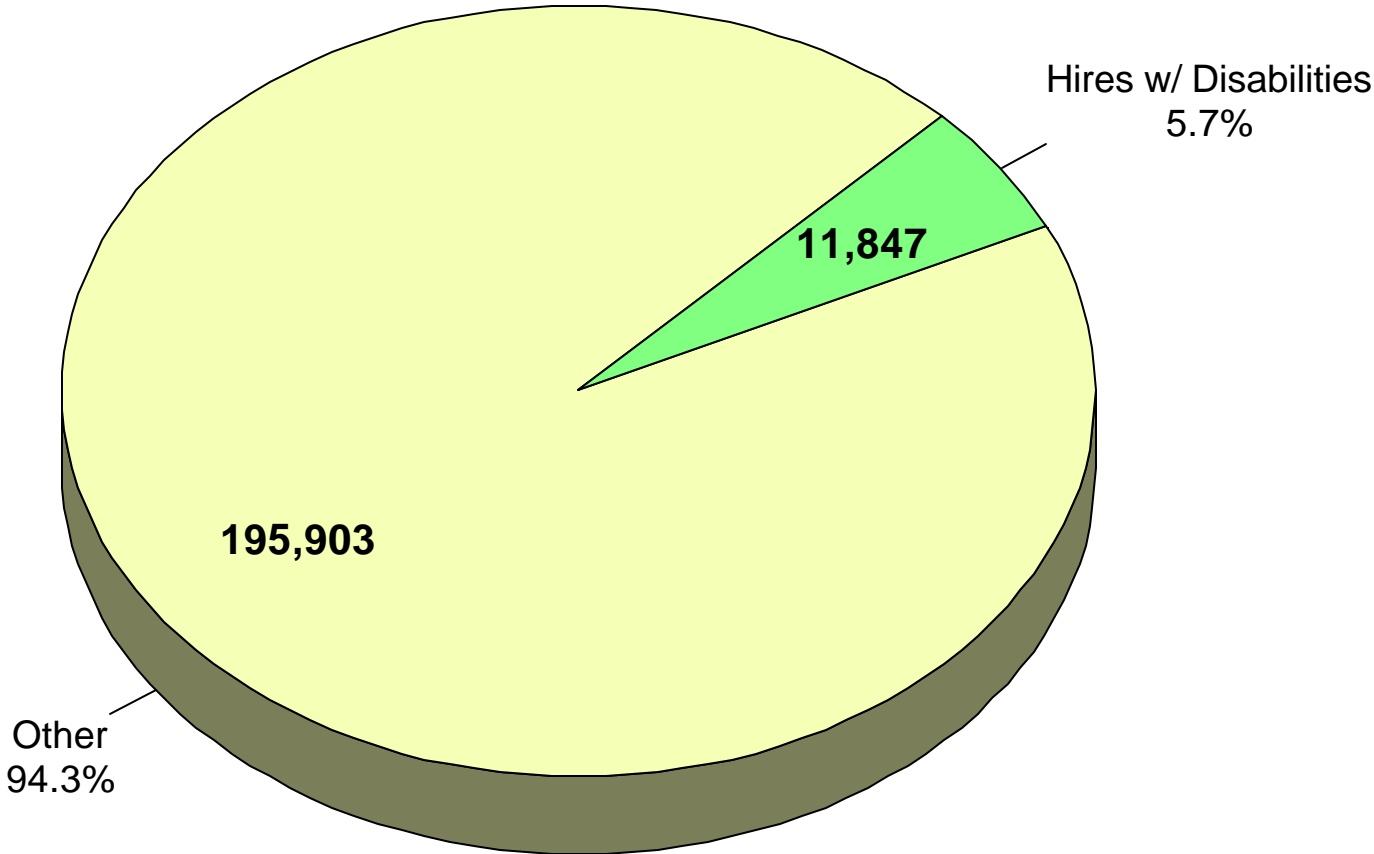


	FY 1993	FY 1994	FY 1995	FY 1996	FY 1997
Employees with Disabilities(Promotions)	16,023	13,480	13,599	13,230	11,628
Total Federal Promotions	260,615	228,641	221,337	216,417	197,332

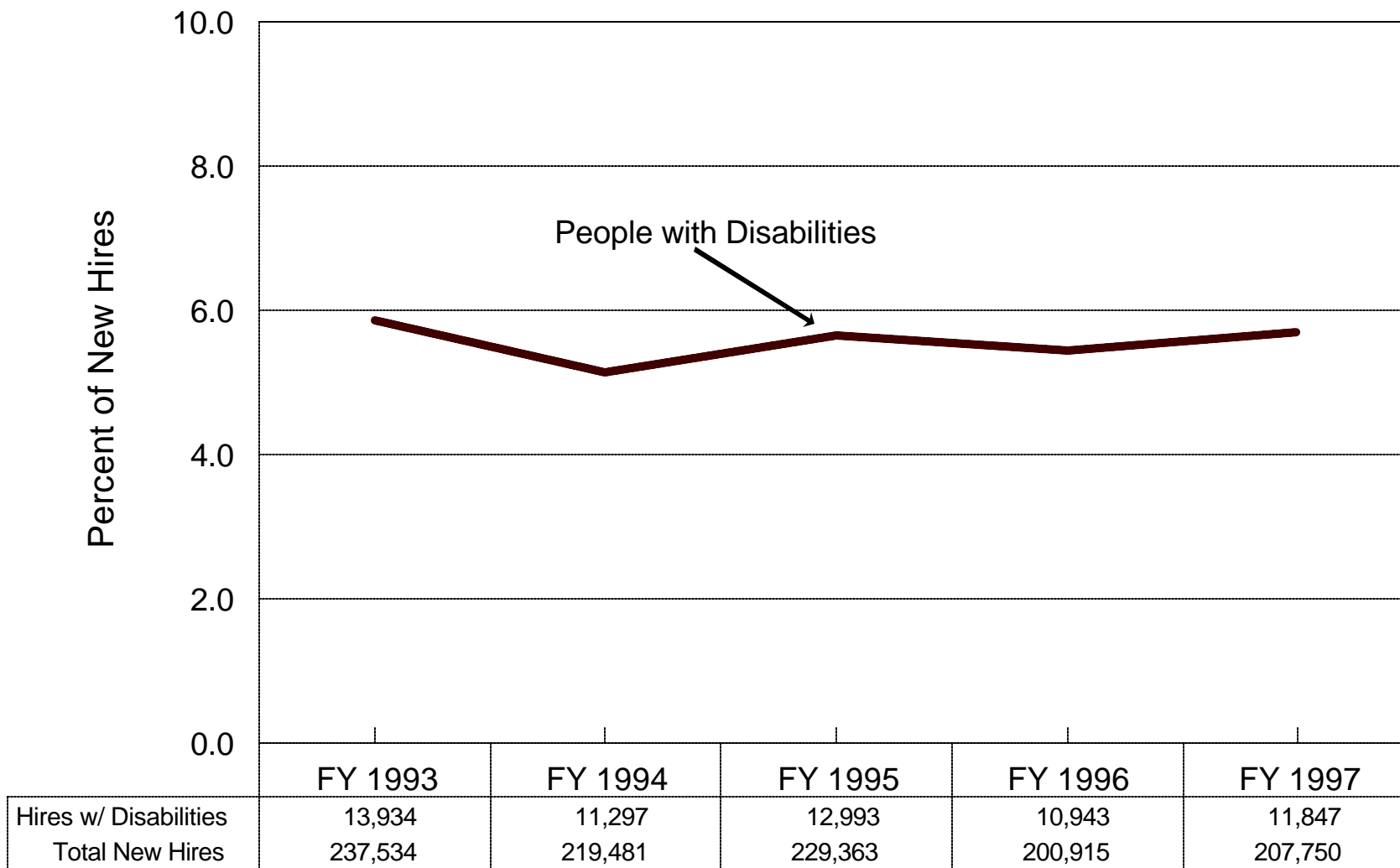


# Employees with Disabilities Accounted for 5.7 Percent of All New Hires During FY 1997

FY 1997

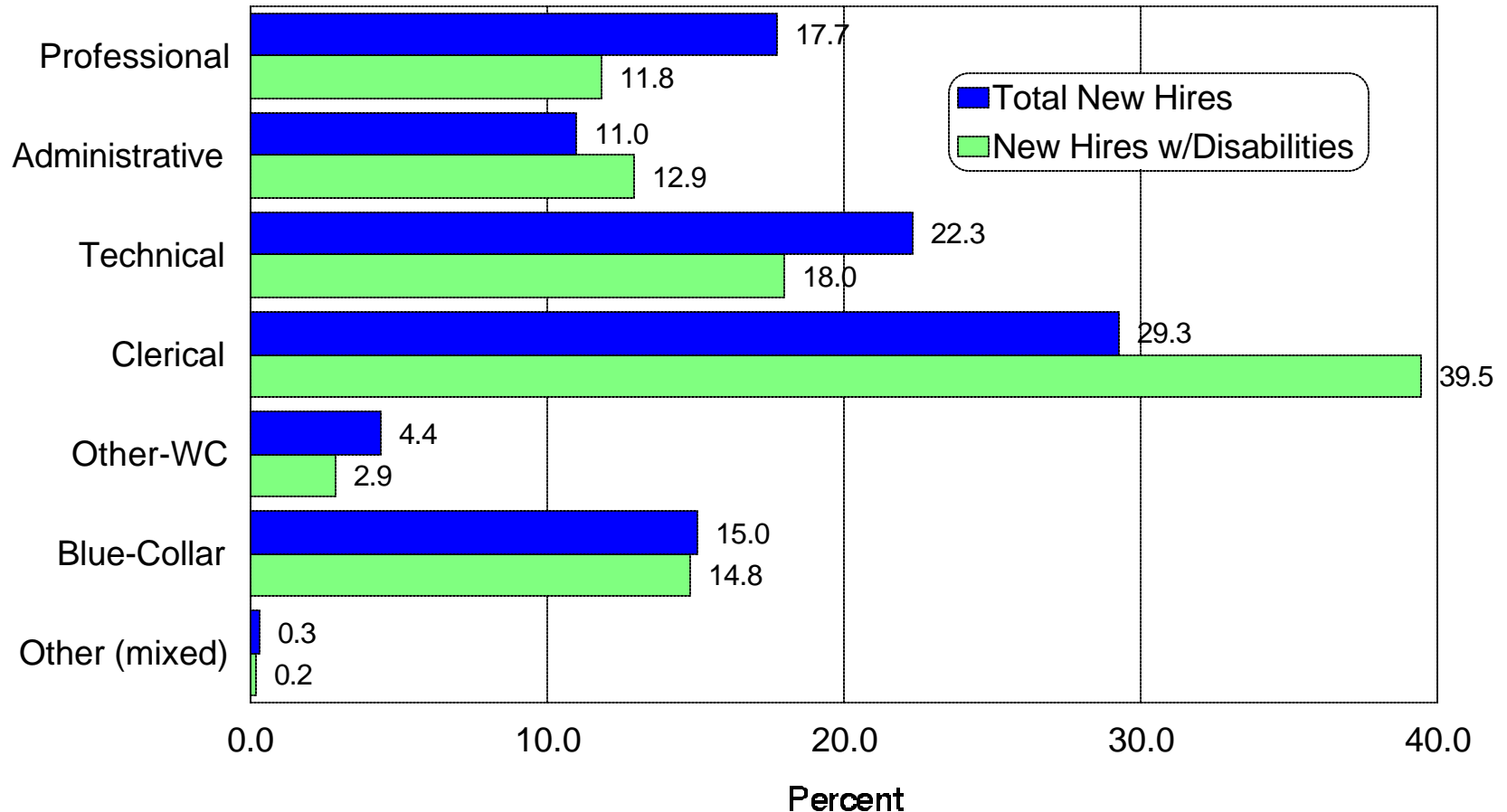


## Hiring of People with Disabilities as a Percent of All Hiring Since FY 1993 Has Remained Stable



# Distribution of New Hires with Disabilities in Occupational Groups (PATCO/B) Compared to All New Hires in the Federal Workforce

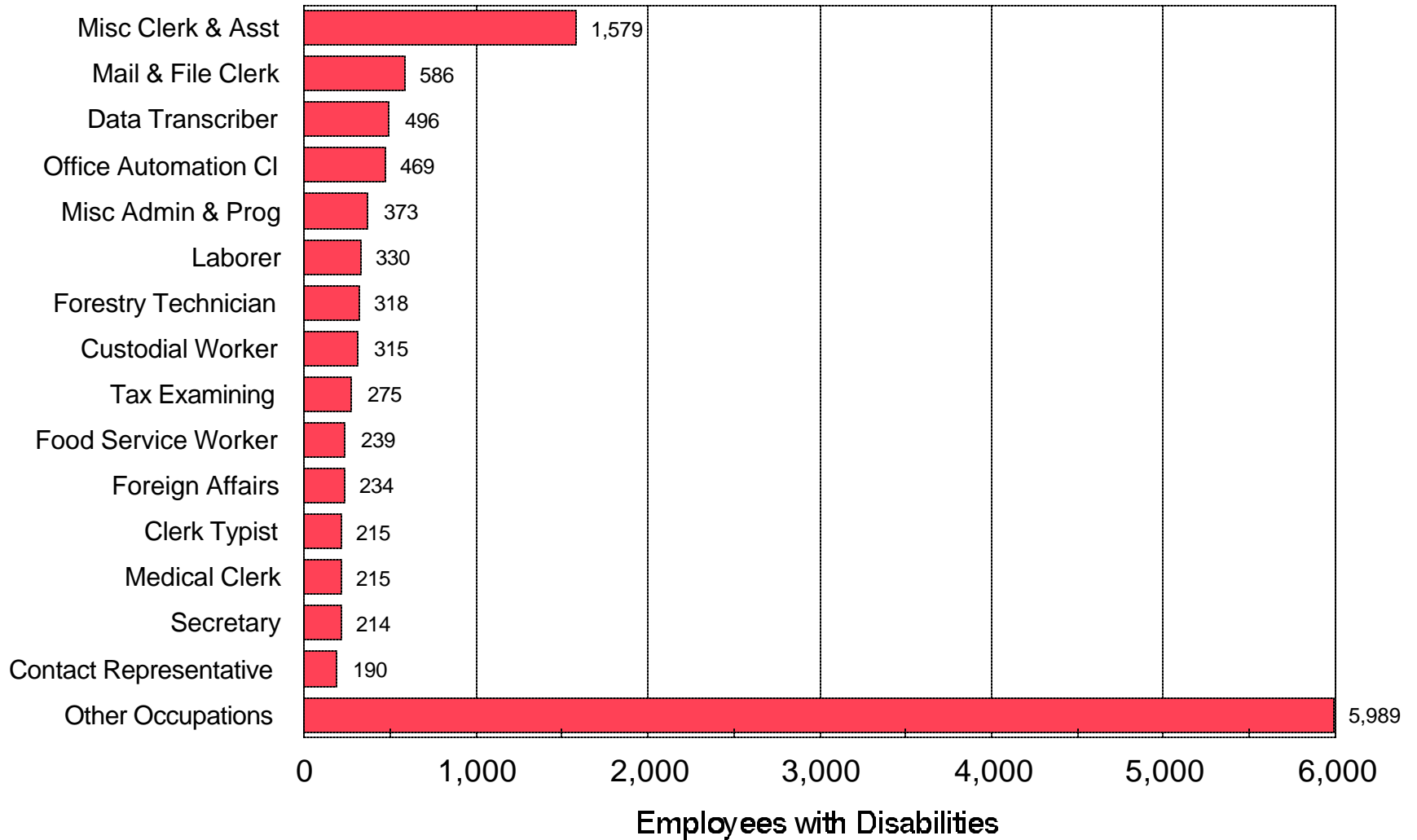
FY 1997



	Professional	Administrative	Technical	Clerical	Other-WC	Blue-Collar	Other (mixed)
Total New Hires	36,844	22,793	46,326	60,843	9,112	31,244	588
New Hires w/Disabilities	1,400	1,531	2,131	4,674	339	1,753	19

# The Top Fifteen Occupations for New Hires of Employees with Disabilities Accounted for Half of All New Hires with Disabilities

FY 1997



**PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

**USE OF**

**SPECIAL APPOINTING AUTHORITIES**

# **SPECIAL APPOINTING AUTHORITIES APPLICABLE TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

◆ **There are five appointing authorities in Title 5 of the Code of Federal Regulations specific to hiring persons with disabilities; four apply to all persons with disabilities and one is specific to Veterans:**

- **ALL POPULATIONS:**

- **5 CFR 213.3102 (II); Readers, Interpreters, and Other Personal Assistants**
- **5 CFR 213.3102 (t); Persons with Mental Retardation**
- **5 CFR 213.3102 (u); Persons with Severe Physical Disabilities**
- **5 CFR 213.3202 (k); Persons recovered from Mental Illness**

- **VETERAN SPECIFIC:**

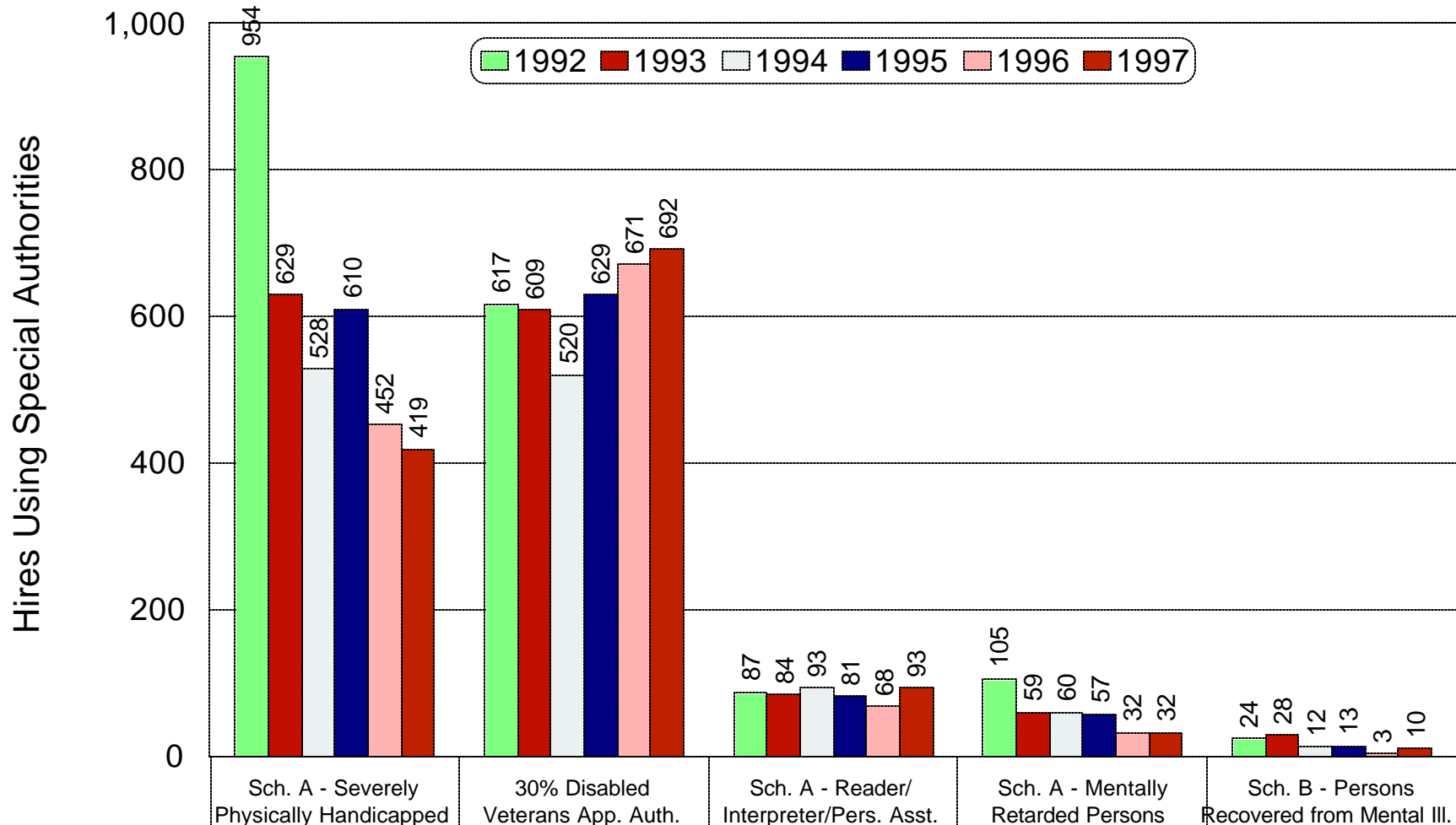
- **5 CFR 316.402 (b)(5); 30 percent or more Disabled Veterans**

## **SPECIAL APPOINTING AUTHORITIES APPLICABLE TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (Cont'd)**

**1997**

- ◆ **Employees with disabilities hired under these 5 special appointing authorities (1,246) accounted for approximately 11 percent of all employees with disabilities hired (11,847) during FY 1997.**
- ◆ **Two of the five special appointing authorities used for hiring people with disabilities accounted for 89 percent of these special appointments between FY 1992 and FY 1997.**
- ◆ **The top three Federal agencies (the Departments of Veterans Affairs, the Army, and the Air Force) using these appointing authorities during the last five years accounted for over half (3,476) of all hires (6,484) made under these special appointment authorities for persons with disabilities.**

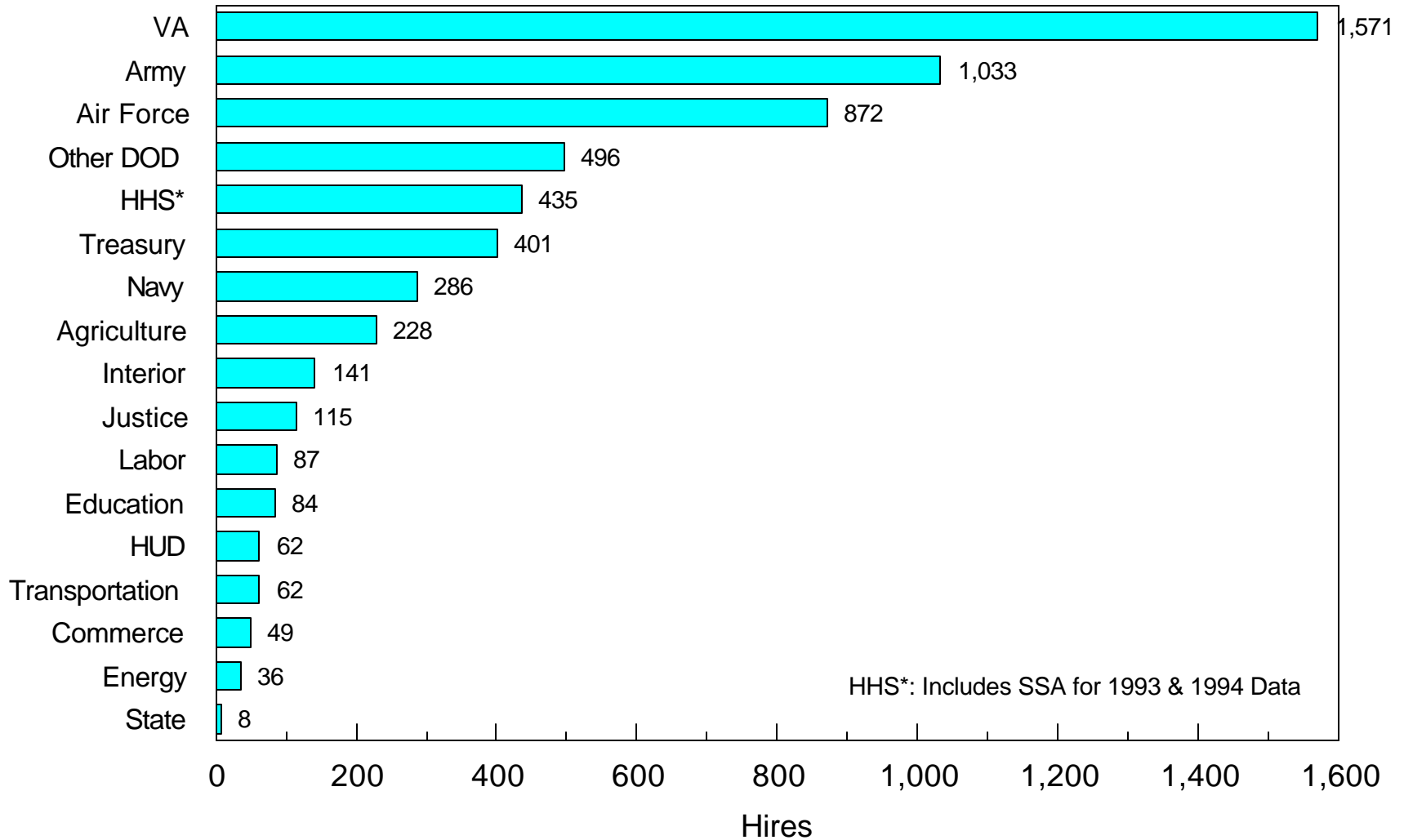
## Two of the Five Special Appointing Authorities Used for Hiring People with Disabilities Accounted for 89 Percent of These Hires Between FY 1992 and FY 1997





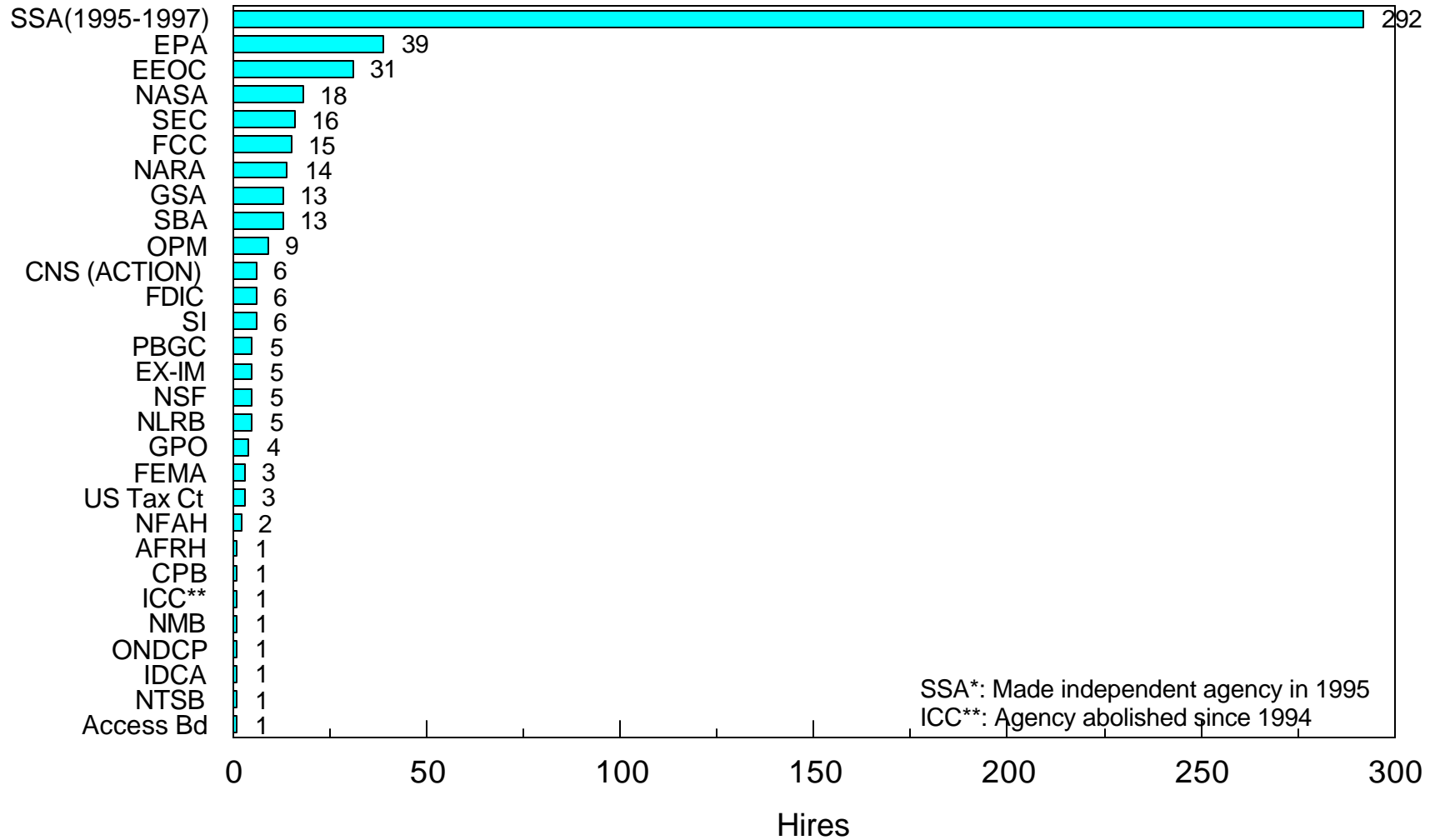
# Use of 5 Special Appointing Authorities for Hiring Persons with Disabilities Among Executive Departments in the Last 5 Years

(Total Use for 1993-1997 Period = 6,484)



# Use of 5 Special Appointing Authorities for Hiring Persons with Disabilities Among Independent Agencies in the Last 5 Years

(Total Use for 1993-1997 Period = 6,484)



## Glossary of Terms<sup>1</sup>

**Asian or Pacific Islander.** A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, or the Pacific Islands. This area includes, for example, China, India, Japan, Korea, the Philippine Islands, and Samoa.

**Black.** A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.

**Competitive Service.** The Competitive Service consists of all civil service positions in the Executive branch except, (a) positions that are specifically excepted by statute; (b) positions to which appointments are made by nomination for confirmation by the Senate, unless the Senate otherwise directs; and, (c) positions in the Senior Executive Service.

**Disabled Veterans (30% or more) Hiring Authority.** A hiring authority used to hire veterans who have a service-connected 30% or more disability. (See definition for Title 5 of the Code of Federal Regulations, 316.402 (b)(5)).

**Executive Branch.** It covers all agencies except the U.S. Postal Service, Postal Rate Commission, Central Intelligence Agency, National Security Agency, Tennessee Valley Authority, White House Office, Office of the Vice President, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve Board, and Defense Intelligence Agency, as well as agencies in the Legislative and Judicial branches.

**Excepted Service.** Any Federal employee not in the competitive service.

**Full-Time.** Employees who are regularly scheduled to work the number of hours and days required by the administrative work week for their employment group or class, usually a 5 day work week with 8 hours per day.

**Full-Time Permanent (FTP).** Full-time employees who are serving under career or career-conditional appointments.

**General Schedule (GS).** The basic compensation schedule for most Federal civilian white-collar employees.

**GS and Related.** The GS and any other pay systems that follow the grade structure of the General Schedule or whose grade structure can be equated to GS grades by level of work responsibility.

**Grade.** An indicator of hierarchical relationships among positions covered by the same pay plan. For example, GS grades range from 1 to 15.

**Hispanic.** A person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American or Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.

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<sup>1</sup> - Glossary of terms is definitions as they apply to the coverage in this profile.

**Intermittent.** Employees who work on an irregular or occasional basis, whose hours or days of work are not on a prearranged schedule, and who receive compensation only for the time actually employed or for services actually rendered.

**Native American.** A person having origins in any of the original people of North America, and who maintains cultural identification through community recognition or tribal affiliation. American Indians or Alaskan Natives are usually identified as Native Americans.

**Part-time.** Employees who are regularly scheduled to work less than the number of hours and/or days required by administrative work week for their employment group or class.

**Permanent.** Employees who have either completed a probationary period or are not required to serve one.

**Senior Executive Service (SES).** A pay system for top Federal managers including career and non-career appointments above grade GS-15 and not exceeding Level IV of the Executive Schedule.

**Senior Level Pay Plan (SL).** A pay system covering employees formerly in grades 16 through 18 of the General Schedule.

**Senior Pay (SP).** A statistical category that covers employees in pay systems for top Federal executives earning salaries above that of GS grade 15 - step 10. It includes SES and SL appointments.

**Temporary.** Employees who are serving under career-conditional or trial appointments, and under career appointments who are serving initial probationary periods.

**Title 5 of the Code of Federal Regulations, 213.2102 (II).** Readers, Interpreters, and Other Personal Assistants -- This hiring authority covers positions, as needed, of readers, interpreters, and personal assistants for other employees with a severe disability(ies) when filled on a full-time, part-time, or intermittent basis.

**Title 5 of the Code of Federal Regulations, 213.3102 (t).** Applies to persons with Mental Retardation -- This hiring authority is for persons with cognitive disabilities (mental retardation) who are eligible for consideration. Upon completion of 2 years of satisfactory performance the employee may qualify for conversion to competitive status under the provisions of Executive Order 12125 and other instructions issued by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

**Title 5 of the Code of Federal Regulations, 213.3102 (u).** Applies to persons with Severe Physical Disabilities -- This hiring authority is for persons with severe physical disabilities who (1) under a temporary appointment have demonstrated their ability to perform duties satisfactorily; or (2) have been certified by counselors of State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies, or Department of Veterans Affairs' vocational rehabilitation offices or Gallaudet University placement office as likely to succeed in performance of duties. Upon completion of two years of satisfactory service under this authority, the employee may qualify for conversion to competitive status under the provisions of Executive Order 12125 and other instructions issued by OPM.

Title 5 of the Code of Federal Regulations, 213.3202 (k). Applies to persons who are Mentally Restored -- This hiring authority covers positions at grades GS-15 and below when filled by individuals who: (1) are placed at a severe disadvantage in obtaining employment because of a psychiatric disability evidenced by hospitalization or outpatient treatment and have had a significant period of substantially disrupted employment because of the disability; (2) are certified to a specific position by a State or Department of Veterans Affairs vocational rehabilitation counseling psychologist (or psychiatrist) who indicates that they meet the severe disadvantage criteria stated above, that they are capable of functioning in the positions to which they will be appointed, and that any residual disability is not job related. Employment under this authority may not exceed 2 years following each significant period of mental illness.

Title 5 of the Code of Federal Regulations, 316.402 (b)(5). This hiring authority allows agencies to make direct appointments without examination, which may lead to conversions to career appointments. This authority is pursuant to responsibilities assigned to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) under section 403 of the Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, as amended (38 U.S. C. 2014), and section 307 of the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 (U.S.C. 3112).

Title 29 of the U.S. Code, Section 501 (Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended). Requires Federal agencies in the Executive Branch to develop affirmative employment action programs for hiring, placement, and advancement of persons with disabilities.

**Veterans Preference.** An employee's entitlement to statutory types of preference in the Federal service based on certain active military service that ended honorably.

**Veterans Readjustment Act (VRA) Hiring Authority -- 5 CFR 307.103.** This authority allows agencies to appoint any veteran who meets the basic veterans readjustment eligibility requirements provided by the Veterans Readjustment Act. This authority is pursuant to responsibilities assigned to the OPM under section 403 of the Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, as amended (38 U.S. C. 2014), and section 307 of the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 (U.S.C. 3112).

**Vietnam Era Veterans.** Veterans who served during the Vietnam era -- August 5, 1964, to May 7, 1975.

**White.** A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East.