

# Follow-up audit on the implementation of main recommendations

## Directorate for Resources/Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

### Key facts

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The Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) has around 5,600 employees. In 2022, personnel expenditure totalled CHF 647 million. The FDFA's employees are divided into the categories "transferable staff" (1,200 employees), "local staff" (3,000 employees) and "non-transferable staff" (1,400 employees).

In 2016, the Swiss Federal Audit Office (SFAO) audited the processes used for the rotation of transferable staff.<sup>1</sup> Rotation generally takes place every four years. The audit resulted in six recommendations. The reorganisation of the FDFA's central services was also audited in 2017.<sup>2</sup> Six recommendations were made here as well. The SFAO followed up on one recommendation from each of the two audits. It assessed all other recommendations as implemented in 2019.

Since then, the FDFA has also implemented the last two recommendations.

#### **The job descriptions of the transferable staff were analysed in detail**

The SFAO recommended that all positions be analysed in terms of necessary specialist knowledge and ideal duration of deployment.

On 1 January 2019, the FDFA replaced the previous range-based salary system with a functional salary system. The prerequisite for this was the correct and consistent determination of salary classes both within the department and with the rest of the Federal Administration. These were defined based on the updated job descriptions. The analysis recommended by the SFAO was therefore carried out as part of the introduction of the functional salary system.

The assessment of whether the job positions should be categorised as "transferable" or "non-transferable" (and therefore permanent) was conducted in a second step. This classification is now more flexible and line managers can request a change if necessary.

#### **The job titles and classifications are harmonised**

The SFAO recommended harmonising the job titles and classifications across the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the rest of the FDFA.

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<sup>1</sup> "Audit of relocatable staff processes in the FDFA" (audit mandate 16410), available on the SFAO website.

<sup>2</sup> "Governance audit after the transfer of central services" (audit mandate 17417), available on the SFAO website.

The SDC had a different organisational structure to the other FDFA directorates. For example, the second hierarchical level was referred to as "directorates", whereas in the rest of the department these were divisions. This inequality was also reflected in the job titles and classifications.

The SDC launched a project to review and adapt its organisational set-up in light of the existing challenges. As part of this project, the organisational structure was modified to bring it into line with that of the rest of the department. Coherence checks were carried out to compare and harmonise the individual SDC positions with equivalent positions in the department and in the rest of the Federal Administration. As a result, the job titles and classifications were harmonised.

**Original text in German**