



Audit of service, organisation and management quality Federal Office for Spatial Development

Key facts

The Federal Office for Spatial Development (ARE) plays a significant role in spatial development and traffic planning, and thus in sustainable development in Switzerland. As result, there are high expectations regarding the perceived external impact achieved by the quality of service, organisation and management. The Swiss Federal Audit Office (SFAO) has conducted an audit of the relevant ARE processes and structures by means of a self-assessment based on the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) as well as evaluation by external stakeholders.

The majority of issues addressed in the assessment were rated highly. These findings have been evaluated in consultation with the agency's management. Criteria that scored low were referred to the ARE or SFAO for in-depth analysis and further investigation. Any measures required as a result should make the agency more effective as part of a continuing process of improvement.

Focusing on annual plans and set benchmarks and target values

In establishing the agency's priorities, a great importance is attached to the inputs from the sections, with little guidance from the ARE management. This has produced an unmanageable number of objectives, which, in some cases, has led to a fragmentation of effort. Defining planning priorities and introducing specific, measurable targets would facilitate management and ensure greater transparency. This would also generate synergies with the new federal management model.

The tools deployed do not yet meet the standards for effective knowledge and information management either in terms of support or user-friendliness. A list of the measures required to achieve this has already been drawn up. Knowledge is currently being lost through inadequate deputisation and failure to transfer expertise on changes of personnel.

In the self-assessment component of the audit, the ARE has identified the need for more systematic stakeholder management, especially in the area of mobility. The actions required include extending the MRS P knowledge platform, encouraging staff to take personal responsibility and involving them more in improving processes. These are the stated measures that will enable the ARE to have a greater impact.

Operating a quality assurance system for implementation will determine the success of the measures defined. The CAF model would be an effective approach to support this.

Original text in German