



Project audit of the A9 motorway

Audit at the Valais office for national motorway construction and the Federal Roads Office

Key facts

With the new system of financial equalisation and division of tasks (NFE) between the Confederation and the cantons, ownership of motorways has passed to the Confederation. This change means that it assumes responsibility for the construction, operation and maintenance of motorways. This does not include the completion of the planned motorway network (road network completion), which is still performed by the cantons on behalf of the Confederation.

The Canton of Valais is responsible for the network completion of the A9 motorway. As part of the Valais Department for Construction, Traffic and the Environment, the office for national motorway construction assumes the role of project owner. The Federal Roads Office (FEDRO) is the competent authority with ultimate supervision. According to FEDRO, the completion of the A9 will cost some CHF 4 billion, 96% of which will be funded by federal funds and 4% by the Canton of Valais. The opening of the last section is planned for 2024.

The Swiss Federal Audit Office (SFAO) conducted an audit of the office for national motorway construction in April 2016. In terms of content, the focus was on "organisation and role distribution" and "contract management". The object of the audit was the Visp tunnel project with construction costs of some CHF 200 million. In addition, the SFAO assessed the subsequent claim 076 for the disrupted building process at Eyholz tunnel which covered claims from the contractor of over CHF 20 million.

According to Article 12 of the Federal Audit Office Act (FAOA), the SFAO shall submit its recommendations to the competent administrative unit in the Confederation (FEDRO). However, the office for national motorway construction is responsible for implementing the recommendations, and FEDRO is responsible for monitoring this.

Organisation, role distribution and contract management at the office for national motorway construction to be improved

The audits of both the Valais cantonal audit office and the FEDRO financial inspectorate have revealed shortcomings at the office for national motorway construction in recent years. The project owner has drawn lessons from the audit results and has made improvements and optimisations repeatedly to its structures and processes, which impact current projects positively. However, the SFAO's audit still reveals various weaknesses. The office for motorway construction has not yet reached the expected level of quality in the audited areas. The SFAO recommends as an emergency measure that the project owner duly examine the development of tenders and the resultant tender documentation of projects, ensure sufficient documentation of construction projects and complete the process for dealing with supplements.

The SFAO takes the view that the economical and efficient use of taxpayer money is currently supported and guaranteed by FEDRO's outstandingly close supervision. The SFAO recommends that the office for national motorway construction be provided with temporary external management support (improvement of processes and documents). In this way, the project owner should achieve



an appropriate level of quality in project management, and FEDRO should be able to reduce the close project supervision back to a normal level after the deadlines set. If the office for national motorway construction fails to meet the required level within a reasonable deadline, FEDRO should implement further measures.

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