

Audit of the DTI key project DDPS Programme to split basic ICT services

DDPS General Secretariat

Key facts

The programme of the Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sport (DDPS) to split basic ICT services implements part of the federal ICT strategy and is a prerequisite for achieving the Armed Forces' recently issued ICT vision for 2026 (Group V). According to the strategy and vision, the future ICT service provider Kdo Cyber in Group V should only ensure the high-availability or mission-critical services for Group V, the Swiss Security Network and other service recipients in the Federal Administration. All other ICT services are to be outsourced to third parties as part of the split. This will avoid duplications between the federal ICT service providers. The DDPS programme to split basic ICT services includes the outsourcing of office automation (BURAUT/UCC) and some of the specialist applications.

The programme was launched in March 2019 and is planned to run until the end of 2026. In the programme mandate, the costs for the first phase were estimated at around CHF 60 million, of which CHF 9.7 million had a financial impact. The cost estimate for phase 2 is still pending. Around 18,000 standard workstations and approximately 50 specialist applications are affected. The Swiss Federal Audit Office audited the programme for the first time.

The programme is generally well positioned. The results planned up to the time of the audit were achieved, albeit late. This is mainly due to the fact that technical requirements and strategic frameworks were not available on time. As a result, the programme expects further delays and significant additional costs.

The programme has delivered services under difficult circumstances, albeit late

In the civilian offices of the DDPS, BURAUT/UCC had already been successfully outsourced to the Federal Office of Information Technology, Systems and Telecommunication. Due to the lack of ICT sourcing and splitting strategies, as well as ICT target architectures in the DDPS and Group V, the programme environment is very volatile. Since the programme was released in March 2019, several decisions have thus been taken outside the programme that have had a major impact on it. The programme still lacks concrete architectural specifications for the integration and compartmentalisation of the future high-availability ICT systems. As a result, the unrestricted availability of business processes during and after the Group V split cannot be guaranteed. The lack of architectural specifications also hinders the intended reduction of cost-intensive, high-availability and mission-relevant ICT applications.

The team reacts quickly and in a solution-oriented manner to changing framework conditions outside the responsibility of the programme, the lack of advance services by third parties and new risks. If obstacles or dependencies arise outside the scope, the programme management escalates them to the higher-level offices with well-founded information and constructive proposals for solutions. Despite this, the programme is currently around two years behind schedule compared to the original plan.

Major challenges in splitting Group V

With the imminent split of the office automation in Group V, the remaining 16,000 workstations, i.e. 85% of the DDPS, will be outsourced. The complexity and internal concerns are much greater than in the civilian offices of the DDPS. Furthermore, additional clarifications were made regarding possible cost savings and planning optimisations. This led to the project mandate being released by the Armed Forces management with a delay of several months. The threat of losing the external migration teams if the project start was delayed too long was countered by close coordination between the Armed Forces management, the FOITT and the GS-DDPS.

Modified programme scope and increased costs

Due to decisions in the GS-DDPS, the programme had to launch two additional projects that were not included in the original mandate: the RUAG Schweiz AG split and the splitting of the additional functions in the ID system.

Since Group V and the Armed Forces Command Support Organisation (AFCSO) were unable to provide the necessary prerequisites for the Group V split on time, the programme had to create a new project for this purpose (securing legacy to FMO¹), which resulted in additional costs. Group V and the AFCSO attribute the problems to a lack of resources or insufficient prioritisation.

In the latest updated cost estimate of December 2021, the programme management assumes a considerable cost increase of around CHF 40 million. These consist of additional costs for the original programme scope and additional costs for the newly added projects.

Original text in German

¹ Future Mode of Operations