

Audit of the procedure for managing and recalibrating the real estate portfolio

Federal Office for Buildings and Logistics

Key facts

The Real Estate Management Unit of the Federal Office for Buildings and Logistics (FOBL) is responsible for providing premises for the civil Federal Administration. The varied portfolio covers some 2,500 buildings and parcels of land, with a replacement value of around CHF 6.5 billion. Approximately 95% of the properties are outside the Bern city limits and are not subject to the FOBL's 2024 accommodation strategy (UK 2024). Rather than administrative buildings, these are largely buildings tailored to the specific needs of the organisation using the premises (incl. asylum centres, representative buildings, research and sports facilities).

The aim of the audit by the Swiss Federal Audit Office (SFAO) was to assess whether the reviewed real estate portfolio (property not subject to UK 2024) is efficiently managed and regularly recalibrated by the FOBL. The results show that the FOBL is managing the portfolio in accordance with economic principles. Nonetheless, the sub-portfolio could be managed more actively and efficiently by using available tools more consistently (e.g. master plan, real estate cockpit). The FOBL uses the buildings appropriately before they are sold off. Moreover, the sales process is designed to optimise financial returns.

The FOBL has tools to manage the portfolio more actively

Major changes at the user organisations and the impact on their infrastructure can only partly be anticipated by the FOBL. The SFAO therefore recommends that the specially developed master plan be applied to all large user organisations, and that the legal basis be adjusted to ensure implementation at the user organisations. In this way, the FOBL will improve the financial management of real estate on the basis of life cycle costs.

In addition, the Portfolio Management Unit does not make enough use of the large amounts of real estate data. A proprietary tool announced as part of the real estate strategy has not yet managed to close this gap.

The divestment of properties that are no longer required is efficient

Items are classified as core property, renovation property or liquidation property, and a strategic objective is formulated for each one. This forms the basis for portfolio recalibration. Appropriate divestment strategies are used for properties that are no longer required. The use of buildings prior to sell-off is judged to be efficient. The operational sales process is designed to ensure that, firstly, the interests of the Confederation are taken into account and, secondly, returns can be optimised.

Original text in German