

# Audit of the key ICT project Polycom value preservation 2030 Federal Office for Civil Protection

## Key facts

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In the fourth quarter of 2016 and in the first quarter of 2017, the Swiss Federal Audit Office (SFAO) audited for the first time the key ICT project Polycom value preservation 2030 (Polycom 2030) of the Federal Office for Civil Protection (FOCP). Polycom is Switzerland's security radio network of the authorities and organisations for rescue and security.

The existing transmission technology will not be further developed after 2018. To ensure operability up to 2030, the Confederation is planning to upgrade the infrastructure in two stages. Parallel operation will be realised in a transitional period up to 2025, for which a technical transition (gateway) will be developed under the leadership of the FOCP. The plan is that all cantons should have switched to the new technology by 2025 and that operation without a gateway will take place up to 2030. The total costs throughout the Confederation for both steps for the period from 2016 to 2030 are around CHF 500 million, including operation.

Given the urgency, the project's initial phase was turbulent and sometimes lacked structure. It is mainly thanks to the significant commitment of the management and the project team that procurements were made in line with the guidelines, that the stakeholders fully support the solution and that the project was on track in financial and deadline-related terms at the end of 2016.

The SFAO cannot confirm the reliability of the Polycom 2030 project reporting of 30 June 2016 to the Federal Council and the Finance Delegation (FinDel), as some of the information provided is not in line with the project's internal reporting and contains incomplete data.

### **Gains in effectiveness and efficiency by joining forces at federal level**

With the project's current setup, the FOCP is responsible for building and operating the gateway. The Border Guard (BG) of the Federal Customs Administration will carry out the switch at its base stations in the cantonal implementation projects. Accordingly, the implementation projects will be financed by the cantons and the BG, which has its own guarantee credit for this.

The SFAO is of the opinion that the effectiveness, efficiency and cost transparency of the Polycom 2030 project can be increased at federal level. To this end, the projects which up to now have been under the shared responsibility of the FOCP and the BG, including their guarantee credits, must be merged, with the FOCP assuming overall responsibility for the project. Furthermore, the SFAO suggests transferring the operation of the BG section of Polycom to the FOCP, so long as this makes sense from a business perspective.

### **More binding involvement of the cantons**

The annual costs of parallel operation from 2019 to 2025 are CHF 3.64 million, and these will not cease to be incurred until the last canton has migrated to the new technology. The FOCP should thus draw up a detailed implementation plan with the cantons as quickly as possible and take effective measures so that the Confederation will incur no further costs for parallel operation after 2025. In this respect, the FOCP is very much dependent on the goodwill of the cantons.

**Original text in German**