

Audit of key ICT project GENOVA (Creation and introduction of federal GEVER programme)

Federal Chancellery

Key facts

In the third quarter of 2017, the Swiss Federal Audit Office (SFAO) audited the Federal Chancellery's GENOVA programme (creation and introduction of the federal GEVER programme) for the second time¹. With the introduction of the newly procured product Acta Nova, the central Federal Administration will have uniform electronic records and process management after completion of the programme. The investment costs amount to CHF 142 million. These stand against expected savings of around CHF 184 million over the next ten years.

At the time of the audit, tests on the federal standard and migration tools were in progress. An initial version of the federal standard, including role-based encryption, was delivered towards the end of the audit. Based on initial feedback on the programme, the findings are within normal limits and are being addressed.

The departments decide autonomously on the use of GEVER

The benefits of the new system depend on its degree of implementation in the departments. In this respect, the departments enjoy extensive freedom of choice, which makes it challenging for the programme to work towards deploying the benefits. Given its possibilities, the programme has an influence, but it cannot have a controlling influence in the departments. A more active approach by the Federal Chancellery is required.

Due to the high requirements, a complex system architecture was defined and set up, which is generally expedient in the SFAO's opinion.

The Federal IT Steering Unit (FITSU) and the Federal Chancellery are currently working out the details of how GEVER is to be organised as a future standard service in accordance with the market model adopted by the Federal Council. The chosen path is understandable, but the effectiveness and efficiency of this construct have yet to be confirmed. The SFAO believes it is indispensable for technical management to remain with the Federal Chancellery during operation as well. However, it is important for close coordination with strategies and architectures of other applications in the federal environment to be specified in the context of the adaptation of the GEVER Ordinance.

The tight implementation schedule is challenging

The programme has a tight schedule, which should not be underestimated by the departments above all. The financial development in the Federal Department of the Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications (DETEC) indicates a possible cost overrun, but this can be absorbed from the point of view of the programme.

¹ Audit of the key ICT project federal GEVER programme (audit mandate 15628), available on the SFAO website (www.sfao.admin.ch).

The role of the strategic quality and risk manager is operational, but it should be extended in terms of time and content. Financial controlling is comprehensively defined by the programme, but it is deemed too complex by the departments.

Measures have been defined for all the recommendations from the 2015 audit. The measures with deadlines have already been implemented or are in the process of being implemented. As the result of this audit shows, the realisation of the benefits remains an unsolved task which must be addressed.

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