

Follow-up audit of implementation of recommendations at Centre for Historic Military Equipment

Armed Forces Staff

Key facts

The Centre for Historic Military Equipment (CHME), consisting of five personnel units, is responsible for the collection of historic military equipment. Each year, the collection costs the Confederation at least CHF 7.4 million. Exactly how much the CHME cannot quantify because it does not have its own funding.

The second follow-up audit of important recommendations – originally in 2010 – showed that the CHME had failed to implement these recommendations or implemented them improperly. The recommendations are pending. The need for action remains.

Measures taken do not strengthen CHME

The partially revised basic documentation and the current agreements with the three foundations and the National Equestrian Centre Bern weaken the position of the CHME while giving these service providers more room for manoeuvre. There is a lack of appropriate incentive mechanisms to ensure the effective and efficient completion of the service providers' tasks. As the contracting party in charge, the CHME has not been able to assert itself enough against the service providers.

Inappropriate basic documentation

The basic documentation does not sufficiently comply with the legal requirements. The CHME's partially contradictory regulations do not guarantee that the collection task will be fulfilled in a cost-effective, timely and appropriate manner. Compared to previous documentation, it also reduces transparency and controllability.

The regulations reinforce the tendency to collect too much. According to various concepts, the CHME does not want to exclude existing objects which are not in conformity with the ordinance; about 28 tanks, cadet material and surplus systems and uniforms. The new regulations allow for more repairs than are necessary. According to the basic documentation, interested parties should not only have access to the warehouse but should also be given access to the objects presented. The documented allocation of resources does not sufficiently comply with the legal requirements.

Confederation's collection policy not implemented

The collection lacks the clear profile required by the Museums and Collections Act. Similarly, a collection concept that can be coordinated with other museums and collections in Switzerland is also missing.

Opaque and uneconomical service level agreements

The service level agreements between the CHME and the foundations do not comply with the requirements of public client contracts. The unconditional guarantee of loans or grants without clear reference to benefits is wrong. It is imperative that the CHME in future describes the content and quality of the services in detail so that it only pays the eligible costs which can be charged for proper fulfilment.

Consequences in the event of non-fulfilment or inadequate fulfilment of the task, as well as misuse and sale of objects, are not regulated. The CHME should terminate the agreements immediately and draw them up anew together with the legal service.

Target agreements with no impact

The target agreements between the CHME and the foundations do not reflect the overarching requirements. Most of the objectives lack measurable qualitative and quantitative parameters. There is no incentive system for the economic use of federal material resources. For any unachieved targets, the CHME should demand rectification and replacement measures instead of transferring them to subsequent years.

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