

Audit of the further development and operation of the MISTRA IT system

Federal Roads Office

Key facts

The Federal Roads Office (FEDRO) has been responsible for the operation and maintenance of over 1,800km of motorways since 2008. Five branches are responsible for maintenance management, i.e. for planning the motorway sections to be renovated. The data needed for this is stored and maintained in the Management Information System for Roads and Road Traffic (MISTRA). The annual costs for maintaining and operating the specialist applications amount to around CHF 10 million.

The Swiss Federal Audit Office (SFAO) audited the MISTRA ICT programme in 2012¹. The result was very critical and led to several recommendations. The SFAO has now reassessed how the MISTRA programme has been pursued, how the systems have been transferred into regular operation and whether the benefits are sustainable.

A radical cut has been made

With the change of directors at FEDRO in early 2015, the still ongoing ICT programme MISTRA was stopped. The specialist divisions had to go back to the drawing board. No other projects or further developments will be approved up to 2022. The costs and benefits had to be justified for the 18 specialist applications already created or purchased. The focus has been placed on motorway maintenance management (EMNS) and the IT tools needed for this. Unlike in the past, third parties such as cantons should receive FEDRO services free of charge only on the basis of legal requirements. However, most of the cantons rejected a cost contribution for more extensive services, which is likely to lead to missing or inconsistent data for these services in the future.

The responsibilities of the specialist divisions, the IT area and the branches have been consistently and uniformly regulated. Several bodies have been dissolved and replaced with a single MISTRA steering board. The MISTRA executive committee makes a final decision on all important transactions. The branches responsible for data maintenance have had to complete missing and incomplete data according to uniform specifications within a two-year period.

The way forward has been paved and can now be followed swiftly

The quality of the basic data required for motorway maintenance management has been improved. It is of great benefit to the branches charged with planning and is also maintained accordingly. Nevertheless, there is room for improvement in order to make the work even easier.

Due to a lack of interfaces or evaluation options, the existing data cannot be efficiently portrayed during planning. Although FEDRO regularly carries out technical updates, smaller

¹ Audit of the key ICT project MISTRA (audit mandate 12445), available on the SFAO website (www.sfao.admin.ch)

necessary changes are also made to individual applications. However, major further developments have to wait for the time being. Only the previous quick fixes (purchased software) will be replaced within the next few months, either with replacement products or integration into existing federal applications (e.g. SAP).

From the SFAO's point of view, MISTRA's future viability is not in question. Due to the use of standard products in the area of data storage, the existing data can continue to be used also with new techniques. New techniques for video analysis and construction design are already available on the market. FEDRO is following these developments with interest, as they could be revolutionary for motorway maintenance management.

The SFAO welcomes FEDRO's activities in this regard. It nevertheless believes that projects to replace the central specialist applications should not be planned only from 2020 onwards. Corresponding projects are to be initiated quickly.

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