

# Audit of the key ICT project Telecommunications Surveillance

## Federal Department of Justice and Police

### Key facts

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In the second quarter of 2018, the Swiss Federal Audit Office (SFAO) audited the Telecommunications Surveillance (TS) programme for the second time<sup>1</sup>. With this key ICT project, the Federal Department of Justice and Police (FDJP) intends to adapt the systems of the Processing Centre of the Post and Telecommunications Surveillance Service (PTSS) and of the police information systems of the Federal Office of Police (fedpol) to technical developments<sup>2</sup>. The programme is currently in the implementation phase.

As at the end of May 2018, the TS programme was on schedule and in terms of content as well as financially below budget. By 30 June 2018, CHF 18.5 million of the budgeted CHF 111.7 million had been used. The programme is to be completed by the end of 2021.

However, it is becoming apparent that a cost overrun or a reduction in performance must be expected for the P4-GovWare project. The decision to opt for the real-time components also represents financial uncertainty which significantly influences the scope of procurement.

### **Refocusing in the TS investigation system and target-oriented alternative in the expansion of the real-time components**

At the end of 2017, the FDJP adapted the structure of the TS programme. It is now simpler and more targeted. At the same time, fedpol's TS investigation system project, which has become overloaded over time, focused on its original objectives. The relevant interest groups (federal and cantonal prosecution authorities) agree with the adapted scope.

In addition, it was decided not to functionally extend ISS 2 as envisaged in the programme but to procure or develop separate components. The planned modular system structure will allow a more flexible reaction to new technologies, such as the increased encryption of content or new technical standards. Implementation continues to be regarded as cost and time neutral. The SFAO is not yet in a position to give an opinion on this, as procurement is still imminent.

### **Critical resource bottlenecks require increased attention**

In the TS programme, experienced IT architects and business analysts are missing throughout the projects. The framework agreements of the FDJP IT Service Centre (ISC-FDJP) for the procurement of these resources expired at the end of 2017. The resulting acute shortage of resources explains the delays in the drafting of the WTO framework agreements and

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<sup>1</sup> The initial audit report from 2016 ("ICT Key Project Telecommunications Surveillance", audit mandate 16315) is available on the website of the SFAO ([www.sfao.admin.ch](http://www.sfao.admin.ch)).

<sup>2</sup> In addition, the subsystems based on Interception System Switzerland 2 (ISS 2) have come to the end of their life cycle. The totally revised Federal Act on the Surveillance of Postal and Telecommunications Traffic and amendments to the Swiss Criminal Procedure Code also lead to a need for adjustments.

the short-term sharp increase in the project volume reported by the service recipients of the ISC-FDJP. The resulting challenges are frequent changes and the resulting loss of knowledge as well as the difficult labour market situation in the IT sector for the federal government.

In view of the current situation, the weighting of the resource risk in the TS programme is too low. The bottlenecks are more extensive than the "normal" risk and there is nothing to suggest that this situation will improve soon.

### **Operating costs cannot yet be comprehensively determined**

The operating costs could only be roughly estimated at the time of the audit. The FDJP expects operating costs for the Post and Telecommunications Surveillance Service (PTSS) to rise from around CHF 10 million to around CHF 30 million. The impact of fedpol's adapted investigation systems on operating costs has not yet been fully quantified. The procurement of government software in particular is likely to be of particular significance. How these additional costs will be financed has not yet been conclusively determined.

The FDJP will be able to provide a reliable overall picture of the level of costs (operating and financing) following procurement.

### **Earned Value Analysis has low informative value**

Reporting on the TS programme to the Federal Council and the Finance Delegation of the Federal Assembly corresponded to the programme reporting. As at 31 December 2017, the TS programme reported the overall status as green with a constant trend. Deadlines, status information and top risks at the time of reporting were congruent except for one "traffic light" deviation in a project which, according to programme management, was based on a transmission error.

The earned value analysis is correct in numerical terms, but not very meaningful due to its rough structure. The ISC-FDJP, in cooperation with the Federal IT Steering Unit, should look for economically viable solutions in order to increase the informative value of the earned value analysis for the TS programme.

**Original text in German**