

ICT Project Audit

Land Forces Command Info System

Defence Sub-Department

Key facts

The Swiss Federal Audit Office (SFAO) performed an audit of the project «Land Forces Command Information System» (Land Forces CIS) at the Defence Sub-Department as instructed by the Confederation's finance delegation. The aim of the audit was to assess the status and management of the project as well as the implementation of the lessons learned from the previous analyses carried out in relation to the Land Forces CIS project.

Land Forces CIS was procured under the 2006 and 2007 armaments programmes. The 2006 and 2007 armament programmes covered basic procurement for CHF 702 million. An additional CHF 34 million was invested for real estate extensions. Land Forces CIS was to be established as the Armed Force's command and information tool. After it was discovered during tests in 2006 and 2007 that [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] specific solutions were defined for ensuring realistic training of the troops. Today, the Land Forces staff, all staff of the large units and most of the battalions have been trained in Land Forces CIS, and the system is being consistently used in refresher courses, exercises and missions. While training to date has been carried out by the C4ISTAR Competence Centre, various schools and courses are now also offering Land Forces CIS training. Land Forces CIS is running smoothly both in stationary and semi-mobile missions.

Due to [REDACTED] the Defence Sub-Department decided in 2012 to no longer guarantee a level of deployment for Land Forces CIS right down to individual section vehicles, but to reduce it to company level on a temporary basis. As a result, scenarios for reduced deployment using the existing radio equipment are currently being established. Based on this, concrete fit-for-mission and fit-for-training criteria for Land Forces CIS (for handing over the system for training purposes) will be defined by the end of 2014. The aim is to ensure that the Land Forces CIS system meets these criteria by the end of 2015.

Overall, the SFAO has noted that some of the mistakes made in the past are still affecting the project. During this audit, however, the project status was assessed based on the decision to temporarily reduce the deployment level, which was approved in the summer of 2012. Assessed against this mandate, the Land Forces CIS system is on course, the participants are motivated and are showing a high level of commitment to ensuring the project is completed within the budget. However, there are risks involved in achieving the objectives.

The project will take on a new dimension vis-à-vis management complexity in its upcoming final stage. The interaction of different service providers must be well timed and very carefully coordinated. The complexity arising from the principle of militia armed forces should also be taken into consideration. If the planning is insufficiently detailed and the checks for monitoring progress are not adapted accordingly, the SFAO believes that the deadline will be in jeopardy.

Risk and quality management must be enhanced and cover all areas of the project, and the respective role owners should report directly to the project principal.



While its history is a burden to the Land Forces CIS project, it can be noted at present that the system is better than its reputation. The analyses performed in previous years on Land Forces CIS revealed weaknesses in the areas of staff, procurement and suitability for militia service. The SFAO has found that there are still weaknesses relating to the use of staff resources and that the risks associated with key persons have not yet been resolved.

The Armed Forces Staff has put a procedure in place for the procurement of complex armament projects, according to which various stages are divided up into time periods. Thus, the required extension of a capacity is achieved in stages. This should allow for the objectives to be adjusted and specifications to be given where necessary in the individual stages, which should considerably lower the risk of making bad purchases.

The weaknesses highlighted in relation to the carrying out of tests by the militia troops must be resolved in the compliance checks regarding the fit-for-mission and fit-for-training criteria at the end of 2015. As part of these tests, the SFAO also recommends providing confirmation of suitability for militia service and of safety as well as neutral and evidential proof of the added value of Land Forces CIS. This must serve as the basis for policy-related decisions on subsequent projects.

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