

Federal contract management

Operational and benefits audit in the Federal Department of the Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications (DETEC) and the Federal Office for Buildings and Logistics (FOBL)

Key facts

In October 2012, the Federal Council adopted the total revision of the Ordinance on the Organisation of Federal Public Procurement (OPPO). This created the basis for establishing a Confederation-wide federal procurement controlling process and introducing the federal contract management IT application. The General Secretariat of the Federal Department of Finance (Federal Administration Contract Management project) is responsible for the establishment and further development of the systems and processes. The FOBL functions as the Confederation-wide operational coordination body in the civil sector.

The DETEC introduced federal contract management back in 2012 and was productive as of 1 January 2013, along with ten administrative units. The aim of the audit is to assess the propriety of the system and operation of the federal contract management solution. Furthermore, the benefits arising from the introduction for the procurement and controlling process should be ascertained, taking the example of the DETEC, and recommendations that are as universally applicable as possible should be derived.

The SFAO generally views the establishment and integration of the federal contract management solution in the existing SAP environment as appropriate. However, the SFAO believes that analyses for controlling and reconciling data collection and extraction are still lacking.

The Confederation wants to make its procurements more transparent and secure. Article 6 of the OPPO, which was introduced at the end of 2012 with this goal in mind, makes provision for contract control to be processed consistently and in a system-based manner. The SFAO found that federal contract management currently supports contract administration and makes consolidatable data available for evaluations across the Confederation, but in terms of the application type it is more a case of data collection. It is thus quite unsuitable for dynamically supporting the procurement and controlling process in accordance with the OPPO. There are still upstream and downstream process areas, e.g. the award process, which are not fully integrated in federal contract management or are operated entirely outside of this. Federal contract management does indeed provide the basis for uniform contract compilation and administration, promotes transparency with regard to procurement and supports subsequent detection of non-compliance with rules. In order for federal contract management to be able to cover the entire procurement process and support all goals of the Confederation, further development steps would be required. Individual departments put forward their needs in this regard within the scope of the rollout and have in part started implementation. The SFAO feels that the Federal Department of Finance (FDF) should ensure that the subsequent course of action occurs in a harmonised manner. Further development of the basic configuration should be addressed as a whole and only on the basis of standardised processes. The requirements of the entire Federal Administration and the cost/benefit ratio must be taken into account.



Article 6 para. 2 of the OPPO governs the data to be compiled. The SFAO's survey showed that federal contract management is sometimes handled differently in the administrative units. The completeness, comparability and meaningfulness of the information are thereby limited under certain circumstances. Particularly with a view to procurement controlling analyses, the FOBL should thus take appropriate measures to ensure that identical business states are entered uniformly in federal contract management by all administrative units. Furthermore, it should be ensured that systematic quality assurance and data reconciliation are carried out (ranging from the state financial statements to statistics on procurement payments).

The SFAO's analyses revealed that procurement controlling at the federal and departmental levels is still not very meaningful overall and is highly descriptive. In particular, conclusive integration of federal contract management evaluations in the overall concept is absent. In the SFAO's view, procurement controlling should be revised. Starting with the requirements of the Federal Council and the departments, the FOBL should fundamentally rethink the form and content at the various levels of the Federal Administration. Procurement controlling should be turned into a universal federal management instrument with objectives and parameters defined by the responsible bodies.

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