EIDGENÖSSISCHE FINANZKONTROLLE
CONTRÔLE FÉDÉRAL DES FINANCES
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SWISS FEDERAL AUDIT OFFICE

Press release

Procurement of electrical energy: profitable, but needs a framework

Bern, 26.5.2015 – The Confederation does well by procuring electrical energy on the free market. This is what the Swiss Federal Audit Office (SFAO) observed. However, the Federal Office for Buildings and Logistics (FOBL) should formulate its procurement contracts better and make public calls for tenders to buy green certificates.

The Confederation procures electrical energy on the free market. The FOBL has bought power worth more than CHF 17 million since 2013. It will be used until 2016 and accounts for 90% of the required amount of electricity for all FOBL real estate and facilities. The power is generated from hydropower and comes primarily from Switzerland.

The SFAO believes that the purchases were made at the right time taking advantage of the competition, but the process needs to be improved. Savings were made on the price of electricity. Even though some of the savings were absorbed by the sharply rising costs for grid utilisation and levies, the SFAO considers that the procurement is profitable for the public finances.

Furthermore, the SFAO found shortcomings in the formulation of the supply contracts, with the power suppliers dictating the conditions. These contracts do not comply with the federal standards in terms of the prevention of corruption (integrity clause), for example. The FOBL has to take control of the situation and should draw up a model contract for future procurements.

Regarding the remainder of the required electricity (10%), the FOBL bought green certificates worth more than CHF 600,000 (photovoltaic and wind energy). However, these purchases were made without a public call for tenders. There too, the SFAO recommends changing practice.

The FOBL accepted the SFAO's recommendations in its position statement.

Further details
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The audit report is available on the SFAO's website: www.cdf.admin.ch.