

Construction audit of the refurbishment of a military facility

armasuisse Real Estate

Key facts

The Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sport (DDPS) is planning to implement user and operator needs as part of the complete refurbishment of a military facility. This should prepare the facility for future operation and align it with the requirements of the newly installed systems. The project will be carried out in the period 2021–2025. The approved guarantee credit is around CHF 41 million.

As part of the audit reported on here, the Swiss Federal Audit Office (SFAO) assessed the project risks and the achievement of targets. The findings were positive overall: The project is structured in a target-oriented manner, operations have been optimised and the scheduled costs and deadlines have so far been adhered to. The documentation of dependencies with defence and IT systems should be improved, so as to ensure correct implementation of key construction requirements, such as seismic safety.

Costs and deadlines are on track, but a consolidated project status report does not yet exist

Costs and deadlines are verifiable and well managed by the external general planner/project manager, under the oversight of armasuisse Real Estate. At the time of the audit, final costs were projected to be CHF 31 million, which is 17.3% lower than the approved cost estimate of CHF 37.5 million. According to the current schedule, the final deadlines will be met.

At present, the possibility of obtaining an automated overall status report from the existing project management tool is not being used. As a result, there is no consolidated status report, and the heavy dependency on the general planner/project manager remains unchanged.

Cost implications of additional requirements should be recorded in a project-specific and transparent way

Five additional requirements, such as the operational technology (OT) network, were approved during the implementation phase of the refurbishment project; in some cases, they replace requirements that were already incorporated in the project. Despite this, they are being financed via the 2021 framework credit instead of the guarantee credit for the refurbishment project. This places an unnecessary burden on the framework credit, while the guarantee credit has to date not been fully used. It would be possible for all the additional requirements that are being implemented on the periphery of the refurbishment to be integrated into the project without increasing the credit.

Missing and sometimes contradictory documentation on system dependencies

In the refurbishment project, there are differing, and thus contradictory, descriptions of some structural protection requirements in the project documents. The security requirements for the building class are likewise not demonstrated. There is no timely documentation – especially as regards changes to requirements – which shows clearly that implementation is compliant with the applicable requirements. Structural dependencies with defence and IT systems must be monitored, documented and checked by the project owner's project team before and during each phase. According to those involved, the construction project meets all the requirements despite the lack of change documentation. The SFAO is not in a position to assess the technical implementation of these requirements.

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