

Building the Organization to Improve the Services and the Effect in the Society

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SUMMARY

This paper describes the development and reasoning behind the recent organizational changes of the National Land Survey of Finland (NLS). The Finnish cadastral administration is built on the Nordic cultural heritage and its practical implementation deriving from the centuries-long co-existence as a part of the Kingdom of Sweden until 1809. Since then our two systems have been developed independently but leaning on a common background and good understanding of the developments in the neighboring country.

The changes have taken place in two separate phases. In the beginning of this millennium a well prepared step from a traditional governmental agency with line organization to a modern process-oriented organization with 12 regional and 6 support units was taken. This process was based on several reasons, mostly on the quality level of the NLS's services and products and thus the effect in the society. The services and products, again, are produced in the core processes. The idea was that describing the processes and making the workflows more uniform and introducing a process oriented organizational structure you could offer higher and more coherent quality to the customers, irrespective of where in the country they operated. The organization model also improved the possibilities to enhance the cooperation between the two sectors of the NLS, namely cadastral activities, topographic data collection and later land registry activities.

During 2012 and 2013, a new reform was planned with the aim to introduce a new organization from the beginning of year 2014. In this second phase the goal was to take one step further towards a purer process organization with no regional administrative structure. However, all currently existing 35 local offices and their staff will remain. The new structure is based on nation-wide process orientation and only three administrative units. Most of the steering structure was renewed. With this new structure the NLS expects to reduce the existing regional differences in service levels, simplify the planning and reporting system, and cut cost by at least 3 million Euros annually compared to the situation before the change. The reform project prepared a comprehensive description of the new model and a step-by-step plan for the roll-out of the new structure. The necessary preparatory legislative work was done up front to ensure that the laws were passed in time for the new organization to start in January 1, 2014.

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1. BACKGROUND

The Finnish cadastral administration is built on the Nordic cultural heritage and its practical implementation deriving from the centuries-long co-existence as a part of the Kingdom of Sweden until 1809. Since then our two systems have developed independently but leaning on a common background and good understanding of the developments in the neighboring country. The changes we describe in this paper have taken place in two separate phases.

2. CREATING MOMENTUM

In the beginning of this millennium, as a first phase in this development, the NLS took a well prepared step from a traditional governmental agency with line organization to a modern process-oriented organization with 12 regional and 6 support units. This process was based on several reasons, mostly on the quality and homogeneity of the NLS services and products and thus the effect in the society. The services and products, again, were produced in the core processes. The idea was that describing the processes and making the workflows more uniform and introducing a process-oriented organizational structure you could offer higher and more coherent quality to the customers, irrespective of where in the country they operated. Furthermore, the organizational model improved the possibilities to enhance the cooperation between the two sectors of the NLS, namely cadastral activities, topographic data collection and later land registry activities.

3. NEW ORGANIZATION IN 2014

During 2012 and 2013, a reform was planned with the aim to introduce a new organization from the beginning of year 2014. In this second phase the goal was to take one step further towards a purer nation-wide process organization with no regional administrative structure.

The planned change was quite a revolution: the unit structure, the hierarchical structure including most of the managerial and director positions and the steering system were turned inside out. For example, the number of directors and managers was reduced from 135 to 70. However, to maintain the organization manageable, we decided to keep some elements intact i.e. all the existing 35 local offices and their staff and the core processes remained. At the end of year 2013 the NLS had a staff of 1850. No employee of the NLS was required to change to a different location, nor was anyone made redundant due to the reform. Some tasks were reorganized as the nation-wide structure allows development and wider use of electronic services.

The new structure, see figure 1, is based on nation-wide process orientation and only three departments: Production, Support Services, and General Administration. A small Central Administration unit functions as the Director General’s Staff.

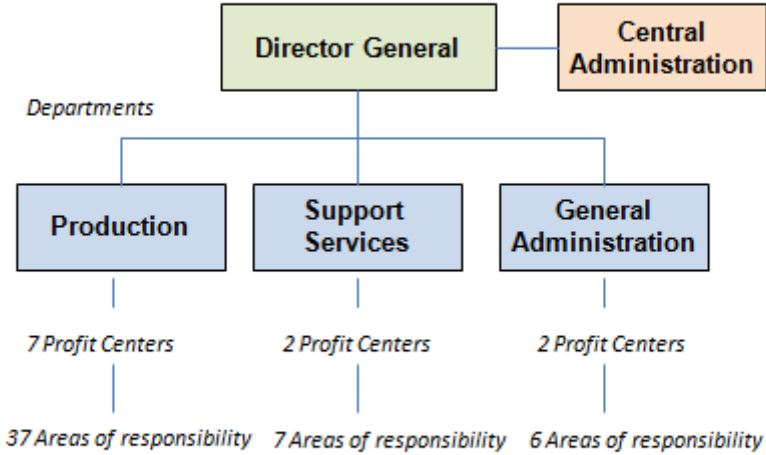


Figure 1. General structure of the NLS in 2014

Most of the steering structure was renewed. With this new structure the NLS expects to reduce the existing regional differences in service levels, simplify the planning and reporting system, and cut costs by at least 3 million Euros annually compared to the situation before the change. In the new situation the NLS makes two annual agreements based on the planning process namely one between the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and the NLS and the other internally as a joint activity plan while earlier there were a18 internal agreements between the Director General and the units and one between the ministry and the NLS.

The reform project prepared a comprehensive description of the new model and a step-by-step plan for the roll-out of the new structure. The necessary preparatory legislative work was done up front to ensure that the laws were passed in time for the new organization to start in January 1, 2014.

REFERENCES

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

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