

Design of the Italian Targeted Study:

Reorganisation of Carabinieri Command for the Protection of Labour: Structuring Hierarchical Levels.

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OBJECT OF RESEARCH	The Italian targeted study focuses on the structural reorganisation process of Carabinieri Command for the Protection of Labour, following Ministerial Decree of the 12 th November 2009. The law established an intermediate command level between the central command and the peripheral units. The study takes into consideration that the structural change has an impact on the work procedures, internal and external communication flows and command relationships.
BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY	<p>The Carabinieri Command for the Protection of Labour (hereafter the Command) is a specialised unit of the Arma dei Carabinieri, performing activities and holding responsibilities related to surveillance and inspection of the application of rules and regulations in the employment field.</p> <p>The suppression of abuses, the control of working conditions and protection of security and health of workers, especially of those in vulnerable conditions, such as foreigners, minors, are some examples of the activities performed by the Command. The Command, as it is now, was established in 1997¹ and undertook a structural reorganisation process which formally entered into force in 2010 with the establishment of a new command level between the central Command and the peripheral units in accordance to Ministerial Decree approved on the 12th November 2009. The reorganisation was guided by internal inputs: both central and peripheral levels of the Command perceived the need to enhance cross-level coordination and communication.</p>
GOAL OF THE RESEARCH	<p>The aim of this study is to identify the triggers of the change which inspired the change process and to understand how the process was perceived by the personnel involved, in particular considering communication and information flows, work procedures and the impact of renewed command relations. Furthermore, the impact on personnel motivation and professional identification were considered. The study is grounded on the hypothesis that the establishment of an additional command level, within a strong hierarchic organisation, can possibly enhance coordination between central and peripheral levels and reinforce the perception of cross-level closeness.</p> <p>The distinctive element of the study comes to surface when one considers the double dependency of the Command: on one side it is hierarchically dependent on the Central Arma dei Carabinieri police force organisation while on the other side, due to its specific field of activity, it is functionally dependent on the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. In this view, the reorganisation of the Commands' structure also involved the relationships with Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs</p>

¹ The Carabinieri have been involved in labour protection tasks and supported civil institutes for such purposes since 1937. However, until 1997 the members employed for labour-related functions were not framed under a unique command at central level.

departments at peripheral level. As a matter of fact, the Commanders of the new command level had to establish themselves in the pre-established working chain: on one side, between the central and territorial levels of the Command; on the other side, at peripheral level, in the core relationship between the territorial departments of the Ministry and the Command Units.

Despite the increased structural complexity introduced by the change process, due to the creation of an additional level of command, relationships, communication processes and procedures are streamlined and enhance efficiency among the entire hierarchic line, as well as in relation to the workflow at territorial level.

DESIGN

The study of the reorganisation process of the Command started from an overview of the legislation picture related to its establishment, functions and relationships with other public entities, in particular with the Ministry of Labour and Social Politics.

A qualitative approach was adopted for this targeted study. The research team had meetings with key representatives of the Command to analyse the context of the study. Following the definition of key elements to be further investigated and the study hypothesis, a qualitative interview protocol was designed and information, opinions and perceptions were collected through interviews of members working at various levels of the Command.

The context of the study was detailed and analysed during several meetings held by FORMIT staff and representatives of the Command.

A PESTL analysis provided information in order to define the context in which the change process took place. This phase of the study was based on the selection of relevant documents and legislation, allowing a comparison between *pre* and *post* change.

Direct colloquia with representatives took place to validate the study hypothesis. The collection of qualitative information was addressed to the members who had a direct experience regarding the change process.

The interview protocol was divided into three sections related to a pre-change period and change management, impact of the change and the role of professional identity in the Command before and after the reorganisation process.

Interviewees were asked how the change emerged and what the main pressures for change were, how the “transition” period was managed, which the impact of the new organisational structure on the units’ work processes, communication and command relations was and how the personnel perceived the change and its results. To provide added value to the study, the interviews aimed at including those directly affected by the structural change.