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Utrecht University

The aftermath of organisational change:

How employee wellbeing and performance are affected and how employability plays a coping role in the negative effects of reorganisation in a Dutch public sector organisation.

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Master thesis

Strategic Human Resource Management

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## Voorwoord

Het is af. Na ruim anderhalf jaar worstelen met een woelig en gevoelig onderwerp, na 27 afkeuringen bij bedrijven die het onderwerp interessant maar te spannend vonden, na een gestolen laptop en na een bestuursjaar van vijftien maanden heb ik dan eindelijk met trots een punt gezet achter mijn Masterthesis Strategisch Human Resource Management.

'Downsizing' fascineerde me al tijdens een van de eerste colleges, toen ik in het boek van Boxall en Purcell (2011) las dat dit een 'dark HR practice' werd genoemd. In plaats van het zoeken naar een stage of een kant-en-klaar afstudeer-probleem besloot ik met een gezonde dosis ambitie (en koppigheid) om dit onderwerp van voor tot achter uit te pluizen.

Krimp en ontslag zijn erg, maar hoe zit het met de mensen die *niet* zijn ontslagen? Moeten die maar blij zijn dat ze hun baan houden? Hoe voelen die mensen zich? Met die vragen in mijn hoofd heb ik mij gestort op een stapel literatuur en vol goede moed heb ik het belang van dit onderzoek bij tig bedrijven *ge-pitched*. Telkens dezelfde reactie: "interessant, maar er komt nu al zo veel op de werknemers af dat we het even links laten liggen". Dit motiveerde mij juist om door te gaan: ik had iets gevoeligs te pakken. Toen een groot erkend bedrijf eindelijk met het onderzoek in zee ging was ik dolenthousiast. Echter mocht het niet baten: na drie maanden voorbereiding werd ik twee dagen voor het uitzetten van mijn enquêtes gebeld: "we vinden het echt heel erg interessant, maar er komt nu al zo veel op de werknemers af dat we het toch even links laten liggen". Ik was volledig terug bij af.

Toen een maand later mijn computer werd gestolen begon het enthousiasme toch wel significant te downsizen. Het afzeg-riedeltje bleef zich herhalen, maar uiteindelijk kwam ik bij Rijkswaterstaat terecht. Mijn contactpersoon daar, Jan Boogaard, was enthousiast en had oor voor mijn ideeën. Hoewel de situatie daar geen klassiek downsizing verhaal was, werd mijn interesse gewekt juist omdat het een unieke situatie was. Ik kon mijn kennis van de maanden daarvoor toespitsen op een bijzondere situatie waarin er, zonder ontslag, sprake was van krimp. Een grootschalig en omvangrijk project werd geboren, waar het voor mij soms erg lastig was om keuzes te maken en dingen *niet* te doen. Het was mijn doel om een zo breed mogelijk, allesomvattend beeld te schetsen van hun praktische situatie vanuit een theoretisch oogpunt. Met trots kan ik zeggen dat het product daarvan hier voor u ligt.

Vanaf het allereerste moment was ik zeer blij met Jasmijn van Harten als mijn begeleidster. Haar scherpe, secure en bovenal directe manier van reflecteren heeft mij vanaf maart 2015 tot nu telkens zeer gemotiveerd en geïnspireerd. Ik heb ontzag voor haar opbouwende manier van werken, haar fijne functioneren als klankbord en haar geduld met mijn soms uitermate warrige manier van zijn. Jasmijn, ontzettend bedankt voor je begeleiding en steun.

Daarnaast wil ik zeker ook mijn tweede lezer, Paul Boselie, bedanken voor zijn frisse en zeer scherpe visies. Ons gesprek na mijn verdediging heeft niet alleen geleid tot een veel verfijnder eindproduct; het had ook betrekking op mijn persoonlijkheid. Het getuigt van openhartigheid en veel mensenkennis om in een korte tijd zo een verschil te kunnen maken. Dankjewel hiervoor.

Jan Boogaard, bedankt voor je vertrouwen in het onderwerp en het open staan voor mijn vragenvuur. Je hebt proactief meegedacht, ook als ik om details zeurde waar je aanvankelijk geen zicht op had. Je hebt je ingezet om de informatie die ik nodig had voor mij te verzamelen en stond altijd klaar om mee te denken. Het was fijn om te merken dat er niet alleen vertrouwen in het onderwerp, maar ook vertrouwen in mij was gedurende dit project. Er zijn mooie resultaten uitgekomen en ik hoop ten zeerste dat dit werk kan bijdragen aan jullie werk.

Wie absoluut niet kan ontbreken in dit voorwoord is Maarten Debets. Nadat wij elkaar leerde kennen in de eerste week van onze studie SHRM, september 2014, zijn wij bijzonder goede vrienden geworden. Onze urenlange gesprekken over maatschappelijke verandering, de rol van de overheid, duurzame inzetbaarheid en een kruistocht tegen de zesjes-cultuur waren en zijn altijd een bron van inspiratie geweest. Ook jij hebt meerdere malen de tijd genomen om mij flink aan de tand te voeren en nam geen genoegen met halve antwoorden. Bedankt voor je bewuste en onbewuste steun.

Als laatste zullen mijn ouders, zusje en vriendin ongelofelijk blij zijn met het feit dat ik hiermee dan toch eindelijk een punt zet achter dit lange traject. Bedankt voor al het begrip, geduld, steun en de container met harten die jullie onder mijn riem hebben gestoken; ik zal het nooit vergeten.

Veel leesplezier!

Of, in lijn met de pagina's die volgen,

Loads of reading-fun!

*(Which is absolutely not an adequate translation of the above, but will hopefully suffice)*

## Abstract

Downsizing practices continuously prove to have both negative short- and long-term effects on employees who survived such them (Cascio, 2004; Mossholder et al., 2000; Boxall & Purcell, 2011). When organizations decide to change their internal structure, it is important to acknowledge this in order for the renewed organization to be prosperous (Cascio, 2012). This thesis researches the mediating role of workload and the moderating roles of procedural justice and employability in the effects of organizational change on employee performance and wellbeing. The research was conducted among a group of internal advisors (N=148) of the Dutch executive Ministry 'Rijkswaterstaat'.

Due to Rijkswaterstaat's recent organizational change that led to the founding of a new department, Verkeer- and Watermanagement, a practical problem emerged concerning the relevance of this group of workers for the organization. The advisors have a versatile set of tasks at work, in which flexibility is required but where employees feel limited in their capabilities due to the newness of their department. Their perceptions considering the organizational change were measured based on the following main question:

*“To what extents are VWM's internal advisors' performance and wellbeing affected by the way they experienced organisational change, and to what extent are these relationships mediated by workload and moderated by their employability and perceived procedural justice?”*

With regression analyses, this study has shown that wellbeing is affected by organizational change, and that workload plays a mediating role in this process. Instead of arguing that it is important for employees to be more employable and perceive more procedural justice in order to cope with organizational change, this study has found that being less employable and perceiving less procedural justice increases the negative impact of organizational change considerably. There was no evidence found for a negative impact on performance. This leads to the conclusion that despite the organizational change and its accompanying negative impact, workers tend to still enjoy work and see themselves as productive and good employees. By investing in the employability of this group of advisors, Rijkswaterstaat can enhance the capabilities of their employees and decrease their negative perceptions of organizational change. This will enable them to feel better at work and be more valuable for the organization on the long-term.

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Introduction

From time to time, organisations tend to change their internal structure. Many reasons can be summed up for them to do so: negative influences and pressure or ambitious and proactive plans for the future – to name a few – are common motives for organisations to reorganize (Cascio, 2004). Not surprisingly, this may sometimes lead to unwanted or undesirable outcomes that can have negative impacts for the organisation on the long-term. When organisations reform, it is of great importance for them to watch over their employees and their according perceptions to make sure they cope with the differences and alterations in a productive manner. In the end, it is the employees who need to execute new management policy, after all. Redesigning the internal structure of an organisation often involves evaluating the importance of certain jobs within the renewed organisation. If these jobs, functions or processes prove to be replaceable, or even redundant, chances are high that they will be eliminated for the benefit of efficiency (Harvey, 2001). Eliminating redundancies in an organisation is part of creating leaner management, which has grown to be more and more embedded in our way of working (Fisher & White, 2000). As a result, it is of importance for employees to prove their importance to the organisation in times of organizational change by being flexible and employable in order to keep their jobs (Fugate, Kinicki & Ashforth, 2004). Coping with a new professional situation and being able to properly adapt to change proves to be an intriguing subject of research, not only because of the importance of keeping one's job, but also to prove one's job has additional value for the organisation on the long-term.

This coping with organisational changes is of great importance for any organisation, since processes of organisational change can have quite a negative impact on the employees of an organisation, such as an increased perception of workload (Jalajas & Bommer, 1999; Boxall & Purcell, 2011), a decrease in wellbeing (Cascio, 1993; Bell, Rajendran & Theiler, 2012) and a decrease in performance (Spreitzer & Mishra, 2002). In order to capture the added value of employees in a changing context, this research explores how employees can cope with the negative effects of organisational change on wellbeing and performance by suggesting two factors of influence: Firstly, perceiving these procedures of change as fairly and just helps understand why they had to take place (Folger & Cropanzano, 1998): Procedural justice is argued to be an important moderating factor in the relationship between organisational change and employee wellbeing and performance. A second moderating factor that serves as a coping mechanism with negative outcomes from organisational change is the level of workers' employability. In this research, the concept is seen as a combination of one's willingness to change and one's up-to-date expertise (Van Harten, Knies & Leisink, 2016). By being employable, employees can deal with changing circumstances more easily and therefore reduce its negative impact on wellbeing and performance.

These variables capture a large set of possible outcomes and factors of influence in a changing professional situation: wellbeing addresses employees' personal feelings and emotions at work (Van de Voorde et al., 2012), performance addresses the way they see themselves as productive at work (Goffin & Gellatly, 2001). Workload as a mediating factor covers the changes generated by organisational change (Wefald et al., 2008). The

two factors of influence embody two levels of coping with reorganization: procedural justice captures the fairness of the reorganization as a whole (Folger & Cropanzano, 1998), and employability considers employees' personal capabilities and views to deal with organisational change (Kinicki, Prussia & McKee-Ryan, 2000).

From a practical point, this thesis focuses on the added value of a group of internal advisors at a large, new department of the Dutch executive Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment, Rijkswaterstaat (RWS), named *Verkeer- and Watermanagement* (VWM), which translates freely to 'traffic and water-traffic management'. The problem with this group is twofold: The internal advisors of VWM play a large role in communication between the organization's headquarters and executive parties in the field, especially after their recent reorganisation. However, due to austerity measures and organisational redesign, their importance and added value for the organisation is questioned; exactly how important are they for the organization? Besides this question, they do are expected to perform on a high level and cope with the organisational changes in a positive and pro-active manner.

The above leads to the following main question:

*"To what extents are VWM's internal advisors' performance and wellbeing affected by the way they experienced organisational change, and to what extent are these relationships mediated by workload and moderated by their employability and perceived procedural justice?"*

The order of content in this thesis is as follows: Firstly, the situation of VWM at Rijkswaterstaat will be discussed, setting the stage for this research and resulting in the practical and theoretical relevance of this research. After that, a body of literature is provided to support the relation between the previously introduced variables in relation with organisational change. Throughout the theoretical framework, references to the situation at Verkeer- and Watermanagement will be made, elaborating on their organisational redesign as a form of downsizing, as defined by Cameron (1994), based on their official documents and reports. Then, methods for research will be provided, further explaining the scientific and the practical choices made in this research. This will, naturally, be followed by the results, conclusions and discussion.

## **1.2 Context and practical relevance**

The Dutch executive Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment, Rijkswaterstaat, underwent a large organisational restructuring, starting in 2013 and ending is planned to end in 2018. Due to institutional pressures and new legislation from the Dutch government (Rijksbegroting, 2012), a decreased overall budget and a need for more efficient and less bureaucratic workflow and processes, Rijkswaterstaat changed their internal structure on a variety of internal departments. This organisational redesign, which was first discussed and planned before 2012, resulted in the merging of multiple internal departments. One of these mergers led to the founding and creation of 'Verkeeren Watermanagement', ('VWM') which can be freely translated to 'traffic- and water-management' in English (Houtskoolschets VWM, 2013).

'VWM' is one of seven major departments of Rijkswaterstaat, apart from their provincial sub-departments. VWM as an overarching department is responsible for the



administrative connection between 'wet' and 'dry', which include all general working processes considering the main water systems and the main road networks. Synchronized control and working processes in these two sectors make communication easier, more efficient and less bureaucratic. Large public sector organisations tend to be cumbersome and inert due to strong and embedded vertical organisational structuring. If processes of top-down as well as down-up communication can be synchronized and similar for multiple organisational departments, working processes can speed up and be more efficient. It is logical for a large organisation like Rijkswaterstaat to reconcile internal processes for beneficial reasons.

The internal structure of VWM is divided in three subdivisions. First there is central management, which is responsible for communication between Rijkswaterstaat's headquarters and the two sub-departments, responsible for crisis coordination, monitoring, HR and other general management issues. Central management controls the other two departments: traffic- and road-management on the one side, ship- and water-management on the other. These two departments are mostly operational departments: their central management, planning and HR departments are accommodated to central management. The connecting factor between central management and both the 'wet' and 'dry' side is accounted to VWM's internal advisors. They communicate management policy to the executive departments and report wishes from the 'field' in return. The internal advisors are specialists on the department in which they operate and try to create leverage and leeway wherever possible in order to smoothen working processes. They are expected to be versatile and flexible in order to do their job correctly.

The organisational redesign of Rijkswaterstaat, and the founding of VWM simultaneously, led to internal job replacement, job insecurity and noticeable higher levels of dissatisfaction among employees (*Tevredenheidsonderzoek, 2015*). In comparison with other departments, VWM specifically scored low on a longitudinal employee satisfaction test (*Tevredenheidsonderzoek, 2015*). In percentages, VWM had the lowest response to this test, though their total response in absolute numbers was significantly higher than any other department. According to the organisation, this is due to the fact that this department has just been founded and due to the fact that worker dissatisfaction is noticeably high on the work floor.

Besides the organisational restructuring and merging, VWM has to be downsized by 17% in 2018 (Houtskoolschets VWM, 2013). The new department has not only to be more efficient and less bureaucratic: it must also be leaner and smaller. The total workforce of Rijkswaterstaat has to be downsized with 1250fte in 2018 (Organisatie- en Formatierapport Rijkswaterstaat, 2014; Ondernemingsplan RWS 2015). However, there seems to be some uncertainties about the actual downsizing numbers, which may be accounted to the fact that multiple strategy-plans tend to change frequently due to institutional pressure from the government. *Ondernemingsplan 2015* notes a downsizing of 1500 fte, for example. Due to Dutch law and CAO agreements, government officials and public-sector workers, and thus Rijkswaterstaat's employees, are protected against firing. To achieve this shrinkage, RWS has to put a stop to their worker inflow and 'wait' until the aimed percentage of employees retires. There seems to be some discrepancies between different official RWS documents considering the actual downsizing numbers. Actual outflow numbers are hard to predict, since multiple external factors may play a part in possible early retirement or intentional employee turnover. These discrepancies

show the uncertainty within the organisation, which is, although marginally present, an assumed reason for employee dissatisfaction (*Tevredenheidsonderzoek, 2015*). An inevitable problem in most public sector organisations is the curricular altering management (Boxall & Purcell, 2011). Policy is largely determined by political decisions, and even long-term agreements can change when the economy disappoints. It is therefore hard for large public sector organisations to make thorough and airtight policy that is guaranteed to prevail no matter what.

According to Rijkswaterstaat's strategy plan for the years 2016-2020, no definite plans have yet been made about the hiring of new employees: only very few specialists are to be hired in the coming years. This will be something Rijkswaterstaat will look at after the last phase of the reorganisation in 2018 (Houtskoolschets VWM, 2013). Although their rapports do not state it specifically as such, this is a form of downsizing: commonly, downsizing involves the laying off of workers, but alternative strategies are early or stimulated retirement programmes and hiring freezes (Carbery & Garavan, 2005). This situation may put the organisation in a difficult position: individual internal departments can downsize by shifting employees to other departments. This can even elaborate into shifts to other public sector organisations via the 'work to work' program (Houtskoolschets VWM, 2013). The organisation as an entity can mostly only shrink via natural outflow and retirement. This results into a higher average age and an increased workload, which is a problem RWS refers to as a 'HRM challenge' (Strategy Plan RWS, 2015).

In order for the reorganisation to be a success, all jobs are evaluated and judged in order to decide their importance. Rijkswaterstaat acknowledges the fact that this form of downsizing requires strategic management in order to get the right employee on the right place. It has proven to be a challenging task to get all employees on a suitable position in the new organisational structure. At the time of writing, nearly all employees have been replaced. Still, employees continuously need to prove their value in order to maintain their position, for Rijkswaterstaat is still evaluating the new organisational structure and looking for improvements. From a human resource management perspective it can be said that employees must prove to be a valuable human resource for their employers as well as organisational share- and stakeholders in order to maintain their jobs (Kaplan & Norton, 2004).

The internal advisors at VWM are specifically evaluated, since they have the task to build bridges between management policy and executional departments. In times of austerity and forthcoming organisational change, the role of advisors/consultants is looked at with seemingly more scepticism since they can be seen as redundant (Baaij, 2013). Redundancy opposes necessity; if one's job is considered to be redundant, it will most likely cease to exist (Wilkinson, 2005). At VWM, the internal advisors must currently work under the double pressure of proving that they are not excessive on the one hand, and help carrying the organisation on the other hand. If this pressure is appropriately executed by management, and accepted by the employees, the job redesign can enhance the intrinsic quality of employees' work and enhance an active and positive response (Mishra & Spreizer, 1998). Employers can and must be encouraged to provide alternatives to redundancies of employees on the work floor and to see forced redundancy due to restructuring as a last and unwanted option (Wilkinson, 2005). Redundancy can be solved on various ways, according to Wilkinson (2005): "*redeployment, freezing recruitment, disengaging contractors and other flexible*

*workers, reducing overtime, career breaks, and introducing more flexible working patterns such as job-sharing and part-time work”* are examples of such solutions. The advisors of VWM are in a difficult position now: they are either considered redundant due to the organizational restructuring, or gain an empowering boost due to downsizing practices. Rijkswaterstaat incorporates some of the proposed solutions as stated by Wilkinson, such as redeployment, the freezing of recruitment and the reduction of overtime wherever possible (Houtskoolschets VWM, 2013).

One of the problems, as found in Rijkswaterstaat’s strategy plan and absentee documentation, is that the organizational change has possibly caused a decrease in employee wellbeing. Numbers show that at the time when the final stage of internal job transfers was completed, absenteeism was noticeably higher. The HR department of VWM notes that the presumed amount of increased stress and pressure, possibly caused by the organizational redesign, can have negative impacts on the organization in multiple ways. It would be practically relevant to research whether this assumption by HR is an actual threat that needs to be tamed, or whether it is merely coincidence and possibly innocent. Various official Rijkswaterstaat documents repeatedly note the fact that employee-wellbeing is of great importance for the organization. Because of this, employee wellbeing is one of the dependent variables in this research.

A second problem concerning the added value of the advisors is about their performance. As noted, they are expected to carry the new organization and be versatile on the one hand, and prove their added value on the other hand. One of the factors that make up this added value is their performance: This research provides an insight in the perceptions of the internal advisors of VWM, which can help management to map the professional position of this group of workers and judge their importance. The research will point out how the organizational change at VWM influenced their added value for the organization. If the results of this research show that the added value of the internal advisors is insufficient or below expected rates, management will have a better insight in how to improve this. In any organization it is important that employees perform sufficiently; to try and map the valuable position of the advisors, it is of importance to see how they perceive their own performance.

### **1.3 Theoretical Relevance**

Effects of downsizing have been widely researched. A large range of possible effects has been laid out in the past 30 years, and research considering downsizing practises keeps emerging. The reason for this is quite straightforward: as long as organisations keep downsizing – which is an inevitable fact – research and insights in its effects are important. On the one hand, this may sound strange: what is the purpose of all this research when apparently their outcomes lead to no rigorous change and improvement? This is a frequently asked question in literature (Cascio, 1993). In fact, when investigating downsizing effects, mostly negative effects were found on multiple levels, such as increased demotivation, insecurity and less organisational commitment (Carbery & Garavan, 2005; Mishra, Spreitzer & Mishra, 1998;) and much more: Effects even went as far as physical strains and illness (Kivimäki et al., 2000; Kalimo et al., 2003; Vahtera et al., 1997; Vahtera et al., 2004).

We can conclude from this that downsizing can be a traitorous practise for organisations to use. Although it often is inevitable (Cascio, 2012; Boxall & Purcell,

2011), organisation try to prevent it, based on the frequently addressed negativity it creates. Secondly, as times change, ways of working and dealing with a professional context change: this implies that effects of downsizing as found a decade or so ago, may have different impacts today. To illustrate this: organisational tenure tends to be increasingly shorter, since employees hop from job to job more frequently. These transfers, either deliberate or forced, have thus become more and more embedded in our ways of working and the way we look at our careers. In this manner, researching downsizing on a regular basis is always of theoretical importance for it must keep up with the pace in which our ways of working change, albeit a rather general statement. The more we know, the less we know; which means that as our professional lives evolve, more variance in types of work and thus professional environments occur. This makes mapping specific and sometimes even unique cases theoretically important: as we try and capture and summarize a totality of effects of organisational change and downsizing, it is important to acknowledge different situations and learn from them.

Most literature considering downsizing effects and reorganisation do not take in account that this can occur without firing employees, lay-offs and processes of such order. A thorough reorganisation in which people are moved around like pawns on a chessboard without even the risk of being fired is an interesting situation. If, during the reorganisation, employees turned out to be redundant, they were replaced in either a different part of the organisation, a different internal department or even placed in a similar function elsewhere within the Dutch public sector.

The role of employability in this situation is theoretically seen very interesting. As a suggested moderating factor, this thesis will theoretically argue that being employable helps coping with the effects of downsizing. In this specific case, the importance of employability lies in the fact that employees have not choice but to cope with the effects of reorganization: they can't be fired, and leaving their jobs to work elsewhere – outside of the public sector – is not necessarily a realistic option.

Employability can be a resolving factor in this situation in two ways: firstly, employability embodies a number of valuable assets employees can have in order to deal with a changing context: Secondly, when employability is self-rated by the employees in this situation, it can address how capable they feel themselves in the process of coping with reorganisation. In this way, employability can prove both to be of importance and can say something about the added value of the advisors of VWM: if they consider themselves to be employable and if this helps them coping with the reorganisation, this says something about their flexibility. In line with the expectations of VWM considering the advisors – carrying the new organisation and proving their added value – this can show them that it is a valuable group of employees that is able to work in a changing context.

In all, this thesis adds to literature by bringing together some bodies of literature on downsizing and its effects, researched in a situation that is internationally seen rather unique. Research has been done on downsizing in the public sector, but very little research has been conducted among employees who experienced downsizing but not firing. Besides this, a new scale for the measurement of organisational change is composed with this research. Since much has been written about effects of organisational change, an overarching measurement can be very valuable whereas such a scale does not yet exist to my knowledge. In the pursuit of capturing downsizing effects an creating useful insights in order to both cope and prevent, every research

providing new perceptions add to this battle (Cascio, 2015). Organisational restructuring or change and downsizing do not necessarily mean the same thing, whereas downsizing always implies a decrease in headcount (Cascio, 2015). In the situation at VWM, they overlap: this is both of practical and theoretical relevance, since a combination of scientific approach is used to match a unique practical situation.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, a theoretical framework will be presented to explain the proposed relationships between the variables. The framework will discuss these relationships and variables in order of mentioning in the main question. Throughout the framework, references to the situation at Rijkswaterstaat will be made to link theory with practice. The chapter starts with a broader perspective on the concept of downsizing in order to explain the specific situation at Rijkswaterstaat in more depth. In order of mentioning in the main question, 14 hypotheses will be made throughout this chapter. At the end, a conceptual model (figure 2) will be presented to visualize the proposed relationships.

### 2.1. Downsizing: organisational change

The reorganisation at Rijkswaterstaat can be seen as a specific form of downsizing, which is an organisational practise with the general purpose of shrinking an organisation or workforce (Cascio, 1993; Spreitzer & Mishra, 2002). Over the past three decades, downsizing has become an undisputable understanding in business and government organisations (Baron & Kreps, 1999; Boxall & Purcell, 2010, Cascio, 2004). In the 1980's, the concept of downsizing emerged in business and according literature as a trend, as assumptions and visions on business processes changed drastically in the span of one decade: whereas in the beginning of the '80's the general opinion on business was that 'bigger companies' equals 'better companies', that growth should be endless and that consistency and congruence are benchmarks of success; the exact opposite ideas marked the late '80's (Cameron, Freeman & Mishra, 1993). Many organisations were over-employed, inefficient and slow, and managers and business leaders felt the urge to change this drastically.

Downsizing practically meant the cutting off of employees in order to make working and business processes leaner and more efficient. In those years, downsizing was often rigorous and not necessarily thought-over, meaning that there were huge discrepancies between ideas in boardrooms and the actual execution in the field, leaving many people unemployed and many employed people dissatisfied and unhappy (Cameron, Freeman & Mishra, 1993). Nowadays, due to experienced negativity with downsizing since then, organisations overall seem to take more measures to thoughtfully and tactfully shrink: organisations seemed to acknowledge more and more that the so called survivors of downsizing practises were not by definition happy or content employees due to the fact that they maintained their jobs (Malik et al., 2010).

The fundamentals for downsizing research have mostly been created around the start of the 1990's. After scholars defined what downsizing exactly includes and laid out the 'best' and 'worst' ways to downsize (Cascio, 1993; Cameron, 1994; De Vries & Balazs, 1997), they started to realise that both short- and long-term effects of downsizing were underestimated and sometimes even overlooked. A large and ever growing body of research examines the variety of downsizing effects, including impacts on job satisfaction (Luthans & Sommer, 1999; Lee & Teo, 2005), workplace behaviour (McElroy, Morrow & Rude, 2001), performance (Spreitzer & Mishra, 2002), or even health issues and physical wellbeing (e.g. Cascio, 1993; Mishra, Spreitzer & Mishra, 1998; Kivimäki et al., 2000; Kalimo et al., 2003; Vahtera et al., 1997; Vahtera et al., 2004). These studies almost unanimously conclude that downsizing has a negative impact on both its victims (i.e. employees that are laid off) and its survivors (i.e.

employees that remain their jobs). Research on these negative effects often refer to the 'survivor syndrome' (Mossholder et al., 2000), which suggests that even though survivors of downsizing practises maintain their current job, position and salary, there still are noticeable and far-reaching negative effects that can cause great problems for organisations on the long term (Applebaum et al., 1999).

One may ask why, acknowledging all of its negative impacts, organisations keep downsizing and changing (Budros, 1999; Cascio, 2004). It seems in some cases that altering ways of working becomes a goal in itself and that policy makers lose grip on eventual outcomes (Budros, 1999). Besides being an HR practise and a management-tool, downsizing is often an inevitable step for any organisation in a certain position (Boxall & Purcell, 2011). In most cases, downsizing practices are inevitable due to financial setbacks, management policy or institutional pressures and are considered to be a necessity for organisations in order to survive (Bacon, Blyton & Dastmalchian, 2010). The irony is that the decision to change almost always aims to improve the organisation, while on the long-term this does not necessarily has to be the outcome (Cascio, 1993; Boxall & Purcell, 2011). Although the possible negative effects are acknowledged, organisations often have no choice but to downsize in order to survive (Cameron, 1994). While 'surviving' may sound exaggerated at first, downsizing practices create both 'victims' and 'survivors' according to many authors (Mossholder et al., 2000; Applebaum et al., 1999; Cascio, 1993): Those who have to leave the organisation due to downsizing are seen as victims, while those who may stay are considered to be the survivors (Cascio, 1993). Naturally, organisations nowadays try to avoid rigorous downsizing practises and intense changes (Boxall & Purcell, 2011). However, sometimes it is a sheer necessity to change which leads management to take possible negative outcomes for granted. The fact that downsizing is often inevitable makes it an interesting subject for research, since organisations do not seem to have a choice but to downsize at a given point in time.

Now that the concept of downsizing has been globally explained, it is important to dive further in it's meaning and define which of the possible types of downsizing apply to the situation at Rijkswaterstaat. Although there are arguably countless ways to downsize, three different basic types of downsizing practices can be defined, when studying the concept in its fundamental form: employee reduction, organisational redesign and systemic strategies (Cameron, Freeman & Mishra, 1991; Cameron 1994). In order to funnel this concept and make it more understandable, these three will be shortly discussed and one of them will emerge as the practise used at Rijkswaterstaat. Below is a table as composed by Cameron (1994) that shows these three fundamental different types of downsizing:

**Three Types of Downsizing Strategies**

	Workforce reduction	Work redesign	Systemic
Focus	Headcount	Jobs, levels, units	Culture
Eliminate	People	Work	Status quo
Implementation time	Quick	Moderate	Extended
Payoff target	Short-term payoff	Moderate-term payoff	Long-term payoff
Inhibits	Long-term adaptability	Quick payback	Short term cost savings
Examples	Attrition Layoffs Early retirement Buy-out packages	Combine functions Merge units Redesign jobs Eliminate layers	Involve everyone Simplify everything Bottom-up change Target hidden costs

Source: Cameron 1994.

Figure 1: *types of downsizing*

According to Cameron and colleagues (1991; 1994), the main difference between the three types of downsizing lies in the length of their implementation: short-, moderate- and long-term, respectively. Workforce reduction aims at headcount reduction and is the basis of a transition; through attrition, transfer or outplacement, the amount of employees is reduced (Cameron, Freeman & Mishra, 1991). Organisational redesign aims at organisational change; functions are eliminated or merged, layers are depleted and the start of a redesign of the organisation is created (Cameron, Freeman & Mishra, 1991). Systemic change implies a culture change and fosters transformation: responsibilities within an organisation change, and continuous innovation and improvement is encouraged, which mostly implies simplification of the entire organisation (Cameron, Freeman & Mishra, 1991).

The three types of downsizing as explained by Cameron and colleagues (1991) cover a great deal of what downsizing exactly is and help understand the concept a bit better. However, the situation at Rijkswaterstaat is a remarkable one in this context. Dutch public sector organisations are restricted from easily laying off employees, in contrast with private sector organisation. Obviously, since RWS is an executive ministry, the influence of the government in the social legislation of RWS is very large. Much of the downsizing literature does not necessarily apply to the situation at Rijkswaterstaat, for no employees were fired during and after their reorganisation, as a result of this way of working. However, the organisation did shrink: mostly via natural outflow and a freeze on hiring new employees, but also by shifting employees to different departments both within Rijkswaterstaat as to other ministries within the Dutch government. Rijkswaterstaat wants to be the best possible employer for its employees (*Rijkswaterstaat: KR8*, 2013): Much time and money is invested to replace employees to a new, more suitable place, instead of laying them off.

When looking at the situation at Rijkswaterstaat, their defined 'organisational redesign' is the downsizing practise used and specifically the replacement of employees in a new, merged department is the relevant case in this research: no employees are laid off or paid to leave, the focus is not on short-term shrinkage and the process of the change covers nearly a decade in total, for which employee reduction is not the case. On the other side, no rigorous cultural change has been started: although management aims to motivate their employees with new ways of working and fresh policy (*Rijkswaterstaat: KR8*, 2013), the systemic change as defined by Cameron and colleagues (1991) implies a much larger and thorough change. Systemic change generally considers the entire organisation, while the founding of VWM considers just one department. Said must be that the entire organisation gradually changes and alters over time, but this is not a noteworthy process, for it is only natural for an organisation to grow and – slightly – alter over time. However, systemic change implies a complete organisational 'make-over', something that does not necessarily apply to Rijkswaterstaat. What does is a form of reorganisation and according internal job transfer, which generally means the replacing of employees within their current organisation.

## **2.2 Organisational change and internal job transfer**

This specific part of work redesign in which employees are internally replaced can be called internal job transfer. Various researchers studied this phenomenon, although studies differ in the label they use for it. That is, job rotation, internal replacement and internal transfer are often used as synonyms. All terms consider the



replacement of employees after a reorganisation, mostly considering the merging of multiple departments and/or moving employees to different functions or to different physical working environments.

As with nearly every downsizing practice, authors warn for the use of international job transfer in organizations. As stated earlier, organisations tend to make a mistake by designing new policy on the 'drawing board', without thoroughly considering its actual implications in the 'field'. Boxall and Purcell (2011) note that especially professional public sector organisations where professionals collectively discuss work, problems and goals, tend to avoid the replacing of employees: you simply cannot replace professionals unless they have relevant and up to date experience (Boxall & Purcell, 2011). I will elaborate on this particular note later on in this theoretical framework, when discussing the role of employability in the process of coping with downsizing practises. Transferring employees may seem simple on paper, but has far-reaching implications in real life, for people are not pawns on a chessboard.

Logically, job transfer is often no deliberate choice but a necessary step after or during practices of downsizing and organisational change since it is a part of new policy. Because of a change in organisational structure, new departments may rise or form, causing jobs to disappear, move along or rotate. Depending on how the organisation restructures, jobs do not necessarily have to change a lot. It is difficult to write about altering job content in a general matter, since effects of redesign and job transfer are only relevant when they lead to changing working conditions. In other words, if nothing changes, there is little reason to presume that there are any effects worth noticing at all. At Rijkswaterstaat, multiple separate departments merged into an overarching organisation in order to improve efficiency. The advisors at Rijkswaterstaat's VWM work under different conditions since the founding of VWM, but are used to changing working conditions since that is part of their job. However, transferring these employees can have quite an impact, which may show that even for employees with flexible job content, effects of changing their working conditions may still have unwanted effects. These unwanted effects consider a change in perceived workload, performance and wellbeing, which will be discussed later on in this theoretical framework.

When studying downsizing, organisational change and practises like job transfer, one quickly acknowledges the fact that these are very complex matters. While the term 'reorganization' may sound simple, its actual implications and meanings are elaborate and very difficult to grasp in one concept. Even after studying official RWS documents and trying to analyse what exactly changed in order to summarize the content of the concept of reorganisation, both RWS officials and myself could not point out one concept that embodies the entire reorganisation. For that reason, it is important to set out a few factors that capture the concept in a broad sense in order to give a solid meaning to 'reorganisation'. Although internal job transfer is one of those factors in this situation, more general questions had to be asked to first of all get a sense of the amount of change that happened at Rijkswaterstaat. In order to attempt and create a scale that captures the concept of reorganisation in a broad sense, I created a scale based on existing factors. In the next chapter, discussing methods and measures, I will elaborate on this scale. It, in short, includes six items that could possibly change due to reorganization, such as: 'my physical working space' (Gibson, 2003), 'my direct colleagues' (Egan et al., 2007), 'the content of my work' (Åborg, Fernström & Ericson,

1998), 'my motivation to work' (Bambra et al., 200&), 'my joy in working' (Østhus, 2007) and 'the contact with my supervisor' (Shore & Tetrick, 1994). The first three are physical factors that could change: the place where one is situated, the colleagues the employee has to work with and the type of work the employee has to do. The other three consider the mental and social aspects of the work of an employee, namely one's drive to work, one's pleasure in working and the – social and professional – contact with one's supervisor or manager.

In this research, this gathering of these six different facets, within a specific concept of downsizing, will be seen as 'organizational change'. Organizational change downsizing are sometimes used as synonyms, although in reality they are not: organizational change does not necessarily imply a decrease in employees, whereas downsizing does so by definition (Cascio, 2015). However, in this case, both play an equal part: the changes at Rijkswaterstaat that created VWM are both forms of organizational restructuring as they are forms of downsizing. This is what makes the situation complex: both in the restructuring and in the near future, people will be transferred to other positions, which is obviously a deliberate form of downsizing. However, they do not particularly lose their jobs, which makes the processes part of different processes. To capture both concepts in an adequate way, the term 'organizational change' will be used.

Since the practical problem as defined by RWS calls for both investigating effects of their reorganization and testing whether a specific group of people within their organization is capable enough to cope with this reorganization in an appropriate manner, it is important to quickly elaborate on the role of this group of employees. By doing so, the meaning of organizational change becomes easier to understand, since it can be positioned in a specific context.

The group of respondents in this research, the ones that had to deal with organisational change and according practices, consists mainly out of advisors. However, at Rijkswaterstaat, the internal advisors of VWM have a more ambiguous role instead of being limited to just 'advising'. This, naturally, needs some explanation: Advisors, consultants and other high-end service employees often operate under multi-interpretatable titles (Baaij, 2013). For Rijkswaterstaat and VWM, the term 'advisor' is a more hybrid term, meaning that whereas advisors are usually limited to analyzing and advising, the role at VWM has a large practical side as well. There is no specific job description for VWM's advisors and no determined and finite list of tasks: Besides their core-business and specific advising topics – depending on their different departments, expertise, projects, etc. – the advisors are expected to be professionally flexible and help wherever needed. This adds to the complexity of what organizational change actually means for this group of people: their tasks at work vary, and the way in which reorganization alters their perceptions at work varies.

Because of their ambiguous image, the advisors of VWM are used to fix small, short-term problems rather than focus on long-term prevention plans. This paradoxical demand is creating stress and dissatisfaction (Tevredenheidsonderzoek, 2016): the advisors are expected to be proactive, helpful on the long-term and on the frontline of policy making, but are limited by their superiors to solve short-term problems and help wherever needed. For the final responsible executives, this is problematic: they demand that the advisors prove their added value to the organization, while they do not have the chance to do so accordingly. Transferring employees to a new working situation might

make precarious about their job content, which will not help them in this paradoxical demand.

This underpins a certain danger: As mentioned earlier, discrepancies between management intentions and the actual execution of those intentions can be destructive and counterproductive. New management policy, resulting in employees having to transfer to other positions, can originate from ambitious new plans but end up existing on a great distance from the people that actually execute the labour (Boxall & Purcell, 2011). Individually seen, workers may have compatible competences to adapt to new departments and do altered work. However, the social aspect of work, the actual workplace or office and the colleagues of employees matter a lot (Boxall & Purcell, 2011), which is why this thesis proposes the six-item scale of reorganisation that embodies both these factors.

The transferring of employees at RWS can also mean that the employee has to leave his or her current office in order to work in a different building, different city or even a different country. At Rijkswaterstaat, international transfers do not occur since the organisation is a Dutch executive ministry, but transfers to and from different Dutch offices do occur. For VWM, rotations between headquarters and 'the field' happen as well. The advisors at VWM are positioned, strategically, between these two worlds (see Appendix for VWM's organisational structure). As stated earlier, they play an important role in communication between the main office and the executive departments 'outside'. This can be a challenging task, since new policy due to the fact that VWM is a new department can be unclear. Rijkswaterstaat acknowledges that it is difficult to make all of VWM's employees move in the same direction. In order to make the reorganisation work and make all stakeholders feel content at their new positions, organisation goals and employee voice must be in line, meaning that discrepancy between management intentions and employee perceptions must be as little as possible (Marchington & Gurgulis, 2000).

As written above, it can be concluded that two factors in particular are of importance for the advisors of VWM when looking at effects of their organisational change: physical effects (their working environment, colleagues and job content) and mental effects (mental wellbeing). It is also clear that trying to capture *all* effects of reorganization is a near impossible task. For those reasons, I will combine the practical and theoretical relevance of this thesis and focus on effects of organizational change on employee wellbeing and performance. In the first place, wellbeing captures the theoretical relevance of this thesis, which is about the often-underestimated effect of reorganisation on employees on the long-term. This is, from a strategic HRM perspective, an interesting effect to research, for investments in employees to keep them employable has much to do with their sense of wellbeing. I will elaborate on this in the next part. Second, from a practical point of view, effects on employee performance are important to investigate. Reorganisation can imply a difference in tasks; job content and professional expectations that might change the way employees perform. If we can learn one thing from past research by Cascio and colleagues, Spreitzer and Mishra and others, it is that downsizing effects can have far-reaching effects on how someone performs as well. Given the fact that the advisors of VWM have an ambiguous role and have to deal with quite some expectations, especially in this new context, it is relevant to take a closer look at the relation between reorganisation and employee performance. After these two concepts and their relations with reorganisation are explained, I will

further elaborate on other important factors of influence: procedural justice (in short: how employees feel treated) and employability (in short: how employees are capable to cope with change). This will all be brought together in the end.

### **2.3 Organizational change and its effect on employee wellbeing**

When explaining the concept of wellbeing, it is of great importance to acknowledge the fact that this concept has a very far-reaching meaning. Tons of research has been done considering work-life balance, elaborating on the correlation between feeling good at home and feeling good at work. Wellbeing can, naturally, also consider physical health and condition. This is however not to be discussed in this thesis. In the discussion I will briefly elaborate on the fact that wellbeing has so many factors that influence it. A logical question to ask might be whether the concept is thus relevant: it is in this context, since this research is about employee perceptions considering reorganisation and its according practises. Due to changes at work on both a physical and a psychological way, it would be strange not to incorporate effects on employee wellbeing. After all, from an HRM perspective, it is important to investigate how people feel after a reorganisation. Although a considerable amount of research discusses work-life balance and the importance of the even and healthy distribution between those two worlds, overarching and in a professional and organisational context employee wellbeing can be described as the *'overall quality of an employee's experience and functioning at work'* (Van de Voorde et al., 2012). I will funnel this definition by laying out how the authors build it up, to eventually specify on one aspect of wellbeing that is eventually relevant for this research.

Van de Voorde and colleagues (2012) note that wellbeing is an extensive concept, with many facets and ways to interpret it. It is important to set parameters for this concept and its broad meaning before I specify. To start off, commitment and job satisfaction, which are both independently and collectively excessively studied, are noted as an important part of one's happiness at work (Van de Voorde et al., 2012). Both concepts have been studied in relation with downsizing and reorganizational effects. Downsizing and reorganisation effects can lower commitment significantly (Baruch & Hind (2010). If a change occurs in the identity of the organisation due to reorganisation, this can have an effect on employee commitment (Locke, 2004; Trevor & Nyberg, 2008; Boxall & Purcell, 2011). Specifically, if the organisation depletes jobs or discards established components of an organisation, suspicion and damage in trust can be created among employees. These employees experience certain feelings of uncertainty and fear for job-loss and more change, since they might be the next in line to leave their current position (Hartley, Jacobson, Klandermans & Van Vuuren, 1991). Comparable results have been found for job satisfaction: reorganisation can make employees less satisfied due to changing working conditions (Malik, Ahmad & Hussain, 2010; McFarlin & Sweeney, 1992).

Acknowledging this far-reaching effect of wellbeing, it is important to specify. Since this research focuses on perceptions, mental wellbeing is the most relevant aspect of wellbeing in this situation. The group of respondents does not have to do a lot of physical work (like builders, welders, etc.) so elaborating on physical complaints such as pain is not necessarily relevant here. Health however, is. For health, the same applies as for wellbeing in general: there is a distinction between physical and mental health. A common mental health factor that is researched elaborately considers the concept of

stress. When looking at workplace behavioural research, stress has become an important and often researched subject and is seen as a responsive action to changing circumstances at work (Wefald et al., 2008). Both on long- and short-term, stress has a considerable negative impact on employees (Lundberg & Frankenhaeuser, 1999), and stress can be an explanatory factor for a decrease in wellbeing (Bell, Rajendran & Theiler, 2012).

If certain departments within an organisation shrink due to processes of organisational change, more tasks have to be carried out by fewer employees, which can considerably raise perceived stress-levels (Wiley, 1997; Bacon, Blyton & Dastmalchian, 2010; Boxall & Purcell, 2011). This is often overseen when policy is made. An increase in workload can change the psychological contract between employer and employee. As expectancy theory (Wanous et al., 1983) explains, the agreements on executed work changes, and thus a change in reciprocal expectancy and trust, which shakes the relationship between management and employees. Employees can feel neglected or used, and experience increased stress due to a larger sense of responsibility (Bacon, Blyton & Dastmalchian, 2010).

The social exchange between an employee and his or her colleagues, supervisors and other individuals at their organisation is of great importance. Social exchange theory elaborates on this matter, generally stating that relations within an organisation must be reciprocal (Emerson, 1976). One of the most important concepts in reciprocity at work is trust; Generating certain levels of trust and expectancy requires mutual reciprocity: If, according to these theories, the 'exchange' in relationship behaviour shifts due to different input from the employer in terms of reorganisation, it can be expected that employee behaviour changes as well. Van de Voorde and colleagues (2012) note that this social aspect of wellbeing has not been generally taken in account until recently, but is considered to be an important and not to be underestimated aspect of wellbeing. For Rijkswaterstaat, the social aspect of wellbeing is relevant since many employees of VWM are moved away from the colleagues they had before the reorganisation.

All of the factors above can be specified in a series of feelings employees can experience that capture their mental wellbeing, which is, as described earlier, eventually the most important part of wellbeing in this research where employees' perceptions are researched. Warr (1990) composed a set of twelve emotions that make up one's mental wellbeing. They all embody a specific feeling: feeling tense, uneasy, worried, calm, contented, relaxed, depressed, gloomy, miserable, cheerful, enthusiastic and optimistic (Warr, 1990). For this research, only the first six will be used: based on conversations and analysing the employee satisfaction test (or: *Tevredenheidsonderzoek*, 2016), the first six items apply more than the last six: RWS does not expect their employees to feel 'miserable' or 'depressed': it would overreact the actual situation. The first six embody the outcomes of the satisfaction test and will therefore hypothetically be more relevant. This does not mean that probable negative emotions must be underestimated.

If employees express negative feelings, they can easily be disrupted and hindered from doing their work properly and effectively (Boxall & Purcell, 2011). It is of importance to at least monitor the wellbeing of employees in some way in order to predict or anticipate on possible negative signs. Not only organisational performance will benefit from this, personal wellbeing and feelings of trust and commitment can also be stimulated via this way, which could be explained via social exchange theory

(Emerson, 1976). As many effects of reorganisation and downsizing need proper coping from employees, it is often HR departments that are being held responsible for guidance (Boxall & Purcell, 2011). Employee wellbeing is, both individually and in a social context, an HRM related concept (Van de Voorde, 2012). This can be a challenging task, due to the fact that wellbeing has such diverse and excessive different features. Therefore it must continuously be researched: especially the – subtle – feelings of employees, since they prove to be harder to notice (Warr, 1990).

Reorganisation can have one predictable effect considering effects on wellbeing, however. Trevor and Nyberg (2008) found that restructuring practises and internal changes as part of a larger downsizing process can cause a ‘shock’ among employees, meaning an abrupt change in both working circumstances and in their personal perceptions. This shock causes employees to thoroughly think about their current professional environment, and increase their feelings of insecurity at work (Trevor & Nyberg, 2008). This creates indistinctness, which causes employees to experience negative emotions. Allen et al. (2001) write similar warnings for the shock created by downsizing and its effects on the position and performance of the employee. They also emphasize that right after processes of downsizing, perceptions are altered the most and surviving employees show the highest intention to leave the organisation, thus performing less. After longer periods of time, employee perceptions become similar to their perceptions from before the reorganisation (Allen et al., 2001). An explanation for this, according to the authors, is that firstly the initial shock of downsizing causes employees to be dissatisfied, resulting in a significant difference in job satisfaction and turnover intention right after the processes of downsizing (Allen et al., 2001). According to the definition by Van de Voorde et al., (2012), this can be considered as a disturbance in wellbeing. The dissatisfaction can however remain for longer periods of time causing employees to have permanent damage resulting from the downsizing practises (Cascio, 1993). Although Allen and colleagues (2001) found that after a 1-year period, perceptions slowly turned back to normal. They note that dissatisfaction was still higher than before the shock caused by processes of downsizing. Thus, there is arguably an effect of reorganisation on employee wellbeing: Because of this, the first hypothesis of this thesis is the following:

H1 Organizational change is negatively related to the wellbeing of employees.

Now that the concept of reorganisation and wellbeing have been laid out, and a possible effect is argued, it is of importance to focus on another effect of reorganisation on employees. Employee wellbeing will be addressed to later on again, but first, the concept of performance must be explained in order to understand effects of reorganisation in a broader perspective. As named numerous times, reorganisation and wellbeing prove to be very difficult concepts to capture. In line with this, performance is a very broad concept as well. However, just as with wellbeing, performance will be seen as self-rated and considers the perceptions of employees. Performance in a broad sense is almost impossible to measure without being limited to, for instance, financial or factual outcomes. It is, from an HRM perspective, arguably more valuable for management to have an insight in the self-rated feelings and experiences of employees considering performance, since it gives a deeper dimension to the concept of performance than when just looking at plain organisational outcomes (Vandenabeele, 2009). Goffin and

Gellatly (2001) found that when investigation performance as a general concept, self-reported performance causes employees to give a more honest response about how they actually see themselves within an organization, which adds to the understanding of performance as a general concept. By looking at performance from a self-rated perspective, it is possible to get an idea of how the employee sees him or herself in the context of their organisation, instead of generalizing their capabilities into, for example, solely financial outcomes. Thus, performance in this research must be seen as self-rated performance. To gain some understanding of the concept in a general sense, HRM related and related to the situation at Rijkswaterstaat, I will explain some of its relevant content below.

Performance is, in multiple ways, of vital importance for the existence of the organisation (Paauwe, 2004). Logically, organisations cease to exist if they perform insufficiently on both financial and operational levels (Jiang et al., 2012). These two levels of performance can be seen as organisational (or individual, depending on the interpretation) outcomes and can be linked to HRM on various ways (Jiang et al., 2012). HR practices often aim to improve performance in the end (Paauwe, 2004). Input from positive and enhancing HR practices should increase performance: when employees perform labor and work in such a manner that is synchronized with organizational goals, eventual performance should increase (Jiang et al., 2012). However, negative or hindering HR practices can cause opposite reactions; any form of downsizing is considered to be a 'dark' HR practice (Boxall & Purcell, 2011) and various research has shown that employees' performance and professional behaviour is affected negatively when they have encountered such practises (Travaglione & Cross, 2006; Jalajas & Bommer, 1999; Spreitzer & Mishra, 2002).

At Rijkswaterstaat's VWM, the role of the advisor is, as stated earlier, ambiguous: This means that performance is harder to capture; due to the difficulty with prioritizing work and the varying tasks VWM's advisors have, generalizing their financial, operational and HR outcomes is challenging. Rijkswaterstaat wants to see the added value of the advisors, meaning that they expect the advisors to be proactive and involved with primary working processes. These include the tackling of large logistic problems, new building projects and crisis management, just to name a few (Houtskoolschets VWM, 2013). On paper, this is the basis for their definition of performance: when considering the meta-analysis by Jiang and colleagues (2012), the financial, operational and HR outcomes of such large projects and the tackling of complex problems capture performance in a broad and sufficient way. However, the advisors at VWM are yet unable to fully work on such primary working processes, for they are continuously occupied with fixing smaller, less significant and short-term problems. Due to their multi-employable status in the new, somewhat extraneous organisation, they do not yet have the chance to do the work they are intended to do. Thus, the definition of performance is also slightly different: for Rijkswaterstaat, measuring and evaluating the performance of VWM's advisors as part of their added value for the organisation becomes more challenging as these advisors have a larger variety of tasks. Therefore, looking at performance from a self-rated perspective seems to be the only evident way to get a glimpse at how the employees consider themselves on a professional way.

Since VWM is a new department and the product of reorganisation, its foundation implies new tasks, new strategies, new goals and new policy. The reason for

its existence lies in the improvement of efficiency and effectiveness of processes. This means that employees have to execute these new set policies in order to make the reorganisation work. By elaborating on the extensiveness of performance above, it becomes clear that this can be quite a challenging task. A change in working processes suggests a change in how people work and perform accordingly: management must be careful not to overestimate the capabilities of their employees, especially if their tenure is high and they are not specifically used to large changes (Beck & Wilson, 2000). On the other hand, management must also not *underestimate* the capabilities of their workers: this can have a contrasting effect: when coping with reorganisation causes employees to work under their standards, they will be bored and less productive (Boxall & Purcell, 2011). I will elaborate on this matter later on, when discussing the concept of workload.

In general, the performance of employees is in some way affected by change: employees either experience new, more challenging tasks with which they have to deal or they perform less due to less challenging tasks (Glaser et al., 1999). The foundation of a new department implies differences and thus differences to cope with. As Rijkswaterstaat noted in their VWM-blueprint (or: Houtskoolschets), it is acknowledged that the employees of VWM must find their way around in the first years. Since everything is new, a lot of indistinctness is to be expected, which will possibly affect and hinder the way they perform, as research has shown (Travaglione & Cross, 2006; Jalajas & Bommer, 1999; Spreitzer & Mishra, 2002). It is therefore expected that reorganization will have an effect on employee performance: taking the negative impacts of downsizing in the form organizational redesign in account when looking at research by Cascio (1993) and Cameron (1994) as a fundament for the above, it is to be expected that reorganization will negatively influence performance due to a change in the professional situation of the employee. Especially in the first years after this downsizing practice, the previously mentioned authors (alongside research by Trevor & Nyberg, 2008; Spreitzer & Mishra, 2002; Mossholder et al., 2000; and Applebaum et al., 1999, to name a few), the expected effects of organisational change in the form of reorganisation on performance will be negative. This leads to the second hypothesis of this thesis:

H2 Organisational change is negatively related to employees' self-rated performance.

As stated before, it is difficult not to disperse into generality when discussing effects of reorganisation on wellbeing at work and performance. In an attempt to do so in the paragraphs above, some key explanatory concepts have not been discussed yet in order to make the story acceptably more solid and understandable. The conceptual model, as presented alongside with the main question of this thesis suggests the influence of three factors in the understanding of effects of reorganisation on employee wellbeing and performance. In the following part of this theoretical framework, the concept of workload will be discussed as an explanatory factor in the relation between organisational change as reorganization on wellbeing and performance. It is argued that a change in the situation at work can have both an effect on how employees feel and on how employees perform. A key concept in this relation would be the amount of work someone has to execute as a result of a changing professional context. This can be captured with the concept of workload.



## **2.4 Workload: a mediating role**

One of the most important concepts in a professional context is the concept of workload. This concept proves to be challenging to make statements about, since both too much and too little workload can have negative effects on employee productivity (Boxall & Purcell, 2011). In the following part, the concept will be explained and linked to reorganisation. It will be argued how reorganisation affects workload, and how workload affects performance and employee wellbeing. Throughout the following part of the theoretical framework, these proposed relations and the concept of workload itself will be linked to the situation at Rijkswaterstaat's VWM.

As found in multiple studies, effects of reorganisation and changing working conditions can be negative on both the short and long-term (Cameron, Freeman & Mishra, 1991; McFarlin & Sweeney, 1992; Jalajas & Bommer, 1999; Spreitzer & Mishra, 2002; Travaglione & Cross, 2006). Long-term effects generally include dissatisfaction and unhappiness, possibly ending in a burnout and a disability to perform accordingly and sufficiently (Cameron, Freeman & Mishra, 1991); short-term effects include increased stress and feelings of insecurity, and a series of negative emotions that can be obstructive for how an employee acts and performs within an organisation (Jalajas & Bommer, 1999; Warr, 1990). But what exactly is workload? And how does it play such an important part in the understanding of reorganization effects on performance and employee wellbeing? What makes this concept difficult to understand?

Workload can be defined as the amount of work that is assigned to an employee to do (Wefald et al., 2008). It is a complex task to try and generalize the content of workload, for many external factors can play an influential role in its increase or decrease, as with the previously mentioned variables in this study. What makes the concept of workload unique, is that it is a concept that has two sides: on the one hand, too much workload can cause negative effects ranging anywhere from stress to burnouts (Boxall & Purcell, 2011; Cameron, Freeman & Mishra, 1991). On the other hand, too little workload can result into boredom and a strong decrease in motivation and organisational commitment (Boxall & Purcell, 2011; De Cuyper & De Witte, 2006; Currivan, 2000). In this research, work pressure is seen as how employees experience the workload of tasks they have to carry out in a certain amount of time (Kim et al; 1996). As with the concept of performance as described in the chapter above, this definition of workload rests fully on the perception of the employee itself and says nothing about a value-free, absolute amount of work, meaning that it is generally impossible to describe an overarching definition for what workload is from a solely practical content point of view.

Changes at work, like downsizing and reorganization, can cause workload to increase; mainly and simply because employees have to do more work with less people, or new types of work that need adaptation time (Jalajas & Bommer, 1999; Boxall & Purcell, 2011). These effects can be directly noticeable; the amount of work has been shown to directly affect employee wellbeing on various ways; feelings of tiredness, stress, dissatisfaction (Boxall & Purcell, 2011). Organisational redesign and internal job transfer can lead to indistinctness: employees may not know what to do in a new situation or experience difficulty in coping with new circumstances. Workload has, in that sense, a double definition, meaning that too much workload can be counterproductive, but too little workload can be so as well. If employees experience a reduction in tasks and responsibilities, their workload will decrease. This can lead to

significantly lower productivity, mostly due to a lack of challenge and simple boredom (Kantowitz, 2000).

Usually, studies focus on one of the two outcomes of workload. Either workload is too high, leading to much stress and counter-productiveness, or workload is too low, leading to inadvertence, sloppiness and boredom (Weinger, 1999; Warm, Dember & Hancock, 1998). Ironically, the problem with VWM's advisors concerns both possibilities. As mentioned earlier, they are put in somewhat of a paradoxical position where they are requested to do a large amount of varied tasks in order to make the new organisation work. On the other hand, their supervisors monitor them, since Rijkswaterstaat is considering the importance of their function within the organisation. If their workload is too little, and no or insufficient tasks remain, they could be considered redundant for the organisation. The problem lies in the fact that VWM's advisors have very little time to work on substantially important tasks; they lose time and precious energy solving seemingly insignificant short-term problems. Their workload changes accordingly: on the one hand, they have many tasks to do, which restrains them from prioritizing among their various tasks. This, of course, goes hand in hand with insufficient and unclear guidance from their supervisors due to the indistinctness created by the new organisation (Marchington & Gurgulis, 2000). At Rijkswaterstaat, and VWM specifically, the amount of work due to a changing context organizational through reorganization, and the resulting disability to prioritize, leads to stress, fatigue, an increased absenteeism, and eventually decreased performance (*Tevredenheidsonderzoek, 2016*). This is based on official RWS documents and concluded based on their provided answers and facts; from a scientific point of view, nuances must be made, naturally: however, it is noticeable that such negative experiences emerge from such employee satisfaction tests.

On the other hand, long-term problems and internal professional 'chores' are put on hold due to this: because employees silt in the effects of reorganisation and experience these negative outcomes, problems seem to accumulate. This means that the advisors are not working on their preferred level, causing them to feel less challenged and seemingly insignificant in the organisation (*Tevredenheidsonderzoek, 2016*). This may result in a dip in performance and wellbeing as well: if employees feel neglected or work under their level, they will lose the drive to work as hard as they can (Boxall & Purcell, 2011).

When studying VWM's official documents, it seems that in the end, workload for all employees of VWM has actually increased due to the reorganisation: they have to produce the same, and sometimes even more, labour with significantly less people and in the context of a new organisational department. As noted before, the exact expectations for this new department are somewhat unclear, causing indistinctness among employees, which makes it even harder for employees to feel comfortable with a new situation. By defining workload as the amount of work that is assigned to an employee to do (Wefald et al., 2008), this definition implies that when the organisational context suddenly changes, the amount of work one is expected to complete also changes, but not necessarily how much. The fact that there *is* a change is however exactly the point: since workload, when looking at it from a negative perspective, can either be too high or too low, it is important to acknowledge the fact that it can influence the way people work.

To elaborate on this from the perspective of Rijkswaterstaat: The total amount of FTE's will continue to decrease over the next two years, as is planned in their organisational blueprints (Houtskoolschets, 2013). The job description of the internal advisors has only become more ambiguous than it was before, resulting in an increase in different types of tasks and a decrease in the impact of those tasks, by definition: since the advisors are ought to cope with the new situation in both a problem-solving and a constructive and building matter, they by definition have less time to focus on their core business due to an increase (or change) in workload. From a further practical perspective, the advisors are put under increased surveillance in order to determine their importance or their redundancy, as described elaborately above. An increase in workload can, according to these thoughts, be created by organisational change: if tasks of employees change, not even in a specific way (albeit more and thus more challenging, or less and thus less challenging), this causes workload to increase solely due to the fact that there *is* a change (Boxall & Purcell, 2011; Ballet & Kelchtermans, 2008; Kantowitz, 2000; Weinger, 1999). This leads to the third hypothesis of this thesis:

H3 Organizational change is positively related to perceived workload.

This, partially, explains how workload is increased and what kind of effects this may have. Now, it is of importance to link the concept of workload to employee performance and employee wellbeing at work: workload is, as argued, the explanatory factor in the relation between reorganization and wellbeing and performance. Firstly, I will elaborate on the relation between workload and performance. After that, I will elaborate on the relation between workload and wellbeing, after which I will explain why workload is plays a mediating role.

Whereas employee wellbeing is affected by reorganisation due to that fact that changes create a shock among employees (Allen et al., 2001) and that feelings of insecurity due to a changing context may be created (Warr, 1990), wellbeing at work is also arguably affected by the amount of work one has to carry out. When sticking to the definition of wellbeing and the dispersion of its meaning by accounting certain concepts of feeling that define the perceptions of employee wellbeing at work, it can be argued that an increase in the amount of tasks one has to carry out can increase the levels of insecurity and uneasiness of an employee (Warr, 1990).

Although I will argue that workload plays a mediating role in the reorganisation to wellbeing relation, it must be stated that this considers a partial mediating relationship. This means that workload will arguably be an explanatory factor for why wellbeing and performance affected by reorganisation, but not that this relation is solely explained by this phenomenon. As with all earlier described variables, workload is a broad concept and so is wellbeing: stating that workload is the only explaining factor in the relation between reorganization and wellbeing would be unrealistic. Many authors acknowledge this fact, and many times effects of workload on wellbeing are accompanied by the concept of stress.

As stated earlier in this framework, stress and wellbeing often accompany each other in literature (Bell, Rajendran & Theiler, 2012; Skakon et al, 2010; Wefald et al., 2008; Glaser et al., 1999). For this research and the case of VWM stress is however too narrow to investigate. From a practical point of view, VWM is interested in the wellbeing of its employees, given the fact that absence due to illness increased over time and given

the fact that officious complaints caused management to notice certain amounts of dissatisfaction on the work floor. Stress, as argued, accompanies wellbeing but is in a way just one of the factors that is a part of one's wellbeing. A too rapidly increased workload can cause stress and negative feelings due to the fact that an employee can't deal with the increasingly larger amounts of work (Bambra et al., 2007). Not only the amount of work itself can cause this: employees can also feel neglected or used and experience increased stress and negative emotions due to a larger sense of responsibility, since they have to do more work in less time and are expected to work harder (Bacon, Blyton & Dastmalchian, 2010).

More work can make employees feel uneasy, and doubting one's own capabilities can create tension (Warr, 1990). These negative concepts and feelings bundle together to create an understanding of what wellbeing is in a professional context. When taking a closer look, the combination between a certain amount of work and a combination of certain emotions make up the definition of wellbeing, which can be found back in the earlier named definition of wellbeing by Van de Voorde and colleagues (2012), who state that wellbeing is the overall quality of an employee's experience and functioning at work. This defines that how someone works or deals with a certain amount of work, and perceived feelings, such as uneasiness, tension and anxiety, lie closely together: if employees have to work harder, due to an increased workload, this will affect their experience at work which can cause tension. This leads to the following hypothesis:

H4 Workload is negatively related to the wellbeing of employees.

As argued earlier on in this thesis, the amount of work one has to complete in a certain amount of time is influenced by reorganisation since the tasks employees have to carry out change. Demands from management alter in a new situation, creating a sense of indistinctness and making employees uncertain about what they have to do exactly. This causes the pressure on the work they do to increase, which can be seen at the group of respondents at VWM who are put under a double pressure: carry the new organisation and cope with new tasks on the one hand, and prove their added value to the organisation on the other hand. These changes at work, due to the reorganisation, that create more and more complex tasks can have an effect on how people feel at work. Stress-levels may increase and employees may experience tension due to these double demands and pressures. The reorganisation itself is a concept that is hard to grasp, or transform into physical, measurable factors, whereas workload can in a way directly be translated to the amount of work one has to do in a certain amount of time (Kim et al., 1996). In line with the other variables, workload is also seen as self-rated, for it is both difficult and irrelevant to distinct exact and precise differences between amount of actual work and tasks. Generally speaking, the amount of work one has to complete in a given amount of time captures what workload is, and by arguing that workload is seen as self-rated we can lay out how employees experiences doing their set tasks in a certain amount of time. For this reason, workload is an explanatory factor in the effect of the difficult to grasp reorganization on the feelings and experiences of employees, captured in the concept of wellbeing. Combining both relations creates a fifth hypothesis for this research:

H5 Workload partially and negatively mediates the effect of organisational change on the wellbeing of employees.

As explained from a practical point of view, both the feelings of employees and the way they position themselves professionally in terms of their performance matter for VWM. The reorganisation and changes at work hypothetically cause a stir, and a part of the practical relevance of this research is to investigate the magnitude of the impact of reorganisation on their employees. Workload has been named as an explanatory factor for the relation between reorganisation and wellbeing, with the notion that it is probably not the only factor of influence and thus of partial mediating influence. In the case of VWM, an increase in workload may just be one of the more important explanatory factor however, since the reorganisation caused employees to work in different, more demanding, circumstances: the start of a new department. This is why workload has been chosen as a more solid effect of reorganisation and thus easier to grasp and eventually measure. As described earlier, this research suggests an increase in workload due to the fact that VWM has to operate with fewer employees, causing them to do more work with fewer people. Either in quality or quantity, this may eventually lead to decreased performance and less productivity (Glaser et al., 1999; Boxall & Purcell, 2011).

Workload embodies both an amount of work and a certain time in which this amount of work has to be fulfilled (Kim et al., 1996). When one of the two proves to be a hindering factor, problems emerge: a certain amount of work can be easy to deal with, provided that there is a sufficient amount of time in which this amount of work can be executed and completed (Kim et al., 1996). On the other hand, if there is a seemingly large amount of time to complete a certain task, which proves to be more challenging due to indistinctiveness and unclear policy from management, workload increases as well (Glaser et al., 1999). In simple terms: when there is too much work, or too little time to complete work, this negatively affects employee performance since employees might be unable to keep up with the pace of work (Boxall & Purcell, 2011). This leads to the sixth hypothesis of this research:

H6 Workload is negatively related to employees' self-rated performance.

This sixth hypothesis finds most of its relevance in the practical question from VWM and the double demands on their internal advisors. Having too much work to do hinders the way people do their jobs: as mentioned earlier, the advisors of VWM are now limited to the solving of short-term problems, stranded in seemingly insignificant 'chores' rather than having the time to work on long-term and sustainable solutions to posed problems. In this sense, the way the advisors of VWM are ought to perform is hindered by their amount of workload: more time and a more clearly formulated and delegated set of tasks would make their work easier and reduce pressure on their performance. All of this is however put into motion by the reorganisation and the founding of VWM in the first place. This would underpin the fact that an increase in workload is an explanatory factor in the effects of the reorganisation and founding of VWM on the performance of its employees. Because of the reorganisation, tasks and demands at work changed, causing employees to have to deal with changing and more challenging circumstances

that on both the short- and the long-term hinder them in performing the way they would like to.

As with its mediating role in the relation between reorganisation and wellbeing, workload is not the only factor that helps understanding the influence of reorganisation: there are arguably many more, of which some might be relevant but would make this study too complex, or even incoherent. Workload is a logical step between changing circumstances due to reorganisation, and changing emotions as perceived by employees. To address the definition of Van de Voorde and colleagues (2012) once more: workload also embodies the quality of one's functioning at work, which would mean that if tasks change due to reorganisation, performance is bound to be affected as well since one's functioning is assumedly not optimised anymore. Combining both arguments, the seventh hypothesis of this thesis can be formulated:

H7 Workload partially and negatively mediates the effect of organisational change on employees' self-rated performance.

Now that the primary relations between the independent variable, organizational change, and the two dependent variables, wellbeing and performance have been explained, and now that workload is introduced as a mediating factor in these relations, we can move on. Not only the amount of work, but also the way in which they are told work factually changes matters. In the process of dealing with reorganization, understanding why it has been done and what logical consequences may be for someone; communication between management and employees is of key importance (Boxall & Purcell, 2011). How do employees feel treated in the process? Are they heard? Do they feel heard and understood? These questions can be answered and explained via the concept of 'procedural justice', which will be explained in the following part of this framework. In short, procedural justice accounts the fairness of processes as perceived by an employee (Folger & Cropanzano, 1998; Alexander & Ruderman, 1987). The term is, not surprisingly, mostly used in legal and official settings, but can also be applied to a more generalized situation and capture the fairness of processes on a non-legal matter (Folger & Cropanzano, 1998).

## **2.5 Procedural justice as a moderator**

The advisors of VWM, together with all of its other employees, did not have a choice in the founding of the new department: this was a decision by management, which employees had no choice but to accept and deal with. Exactly this is a frequently studied problem, which is addressed earlier in this research: the dissimilarity between management policy and the execution of work by employees can cause friction and indistinctness within an organisation (Boxall & Purcell, 2011). The internally transferring of employees from one place to another due to reorganisation can cause a stir in employee perceptions, as explained above. Since this research focuses on employee – and not management – perceptions, it is of importance to scope on these perceptions and find out how employees feel treated in the process. In this sense, the most important factor is the way in which employees feel treated fairly and righteously in the process of the reorganisation and thus internal job transfer, since these concepts embody a substantial part in employee perceptions.

Blodgett, Hill and Tax (1997) define three forms of justice: distributive justice concerns the outcomes of procedures and processes, interactional justice focuses on how decisions are communicated and to what extent employees feel treated with respect and procedural justice concerns the fairness of those procedures. Although the three forms of justice lie closely together, this research will focus on procedural justice only. The reason for this lies in the fact that there is a subtle difference between interactional and procedural justice that matters in the case of VWM. While both, when measured as self-rated, focus on how employees feel treated, interactional justice is limited to communication, while procedural justice helps to capture the magnitude of change that occurred in the founding of VWM. Because of the fact that VWM is new, it is the procedures in the founding of VWM that matter more than feelings of respect, for several reasons: firstly, the actual feelings of neglect, respect and other relevant emotions is represented by the concept of wellbeing in this research. Secondly, authors Kernan, Hanges (2002) and Colquitt (2001) argue that respect is an overlapping factor in both interactional and procedural justice. Thirdly, organizational change is an elaborate concept that embodies change on multiple levels: these changes are however all procedures, in which the old transfers into the new. Looking at the justice in the execution of these procedures is more relevant than looking at how they are communicated. Fourthly, perceptions in communication and adapting to changing circumstances will later on be argued with the concept of employability.

In simple terms, procedural justice can be defined as the fairness with which employees are treated (Folger & Cropanzano, 1998). The terms 'justice' and 'fairness' will both be used from now on, meaning the same thing. After reorganisation, fairness of procedures is an important factor: how are the employees treated? Are they treated fairly and just? These questions are relevant for any reorganized organisation, since the way employees are heard and feel treated can have great effects on organisational performance and employee effectiveness (Alexander & Ruderman, 1987). According to some research (e.g. McFarlin & Sweeney, 1992; Brockner & Greenberg, 1990; Alexander & Ruderman, 1987), procedural justice is always linked with distributive justice, defined as the means and outcomes of fairness respectively. They argue that, in order to capture perceived fairness, both concepts must be taken in account. For this research however, only procedural fairness will be taken in account, for procedural justice is about the process of fairness within an organisation and distributive justice does not necessarily apply: VWM is interested in how those procedures were experienced *during* their execution. The outcome of the reorganisation, in terms of employee perceptions, is what this research aims to formulate. Furthermore, the fairness of procedures during a reorganisation is what is relevant in the relation between organisational change and wellbeing and performance (Brockner & Greenberg, 1990). Justice of procedures considers how the organisation deals with the employees, and how the employees experience these procedures (Niehoff & Moorman, 1993). When this study addresses 'procedures' it can be read as 'reorganisation' and its according processes.

A distinction must be made between different sets of outcomes due to justice procedures. While this research aims to investigate employee perceptions, the practical relevance of doing so lies in the fact that in the end, conclusions can be made for the entire group. This is to aim for progress for the entire organisation. McFarlin and Sweeney (1992) found that processes of distributive justice are better predictors for personal performance and individual commitment, whereas procedural justice is a

better predictor for organisational outcomes. They argue that, according to referent cognition theory (Folger, 1986; Cropanzano & Folger, 1989), the difference between distributive and procedural justice lies in how employees see management and the organisation as an entity. If employees theoretically institutionalize the organisation and evaluate processes like downsizing, it is more evident that they blame possible negative impacts – such as processes of downsizing – on the entire organisation, which will arguably affect organisational outcomes (McFarlin & Sweeney, 1992). If processes of justice are distributive and focus on negative outcomes, they can be seen as more personal, which will make the employees feel personally affected and thus show less personal commitment and performance (McFarlin & Sweeney, 1992). For this reason, procedural justice is a more fitting variable to research in this thesis, even though some scholars note that distributive justice must preferably accompany it.

The role of procedural justice in the situation at VWM will be described as a moderating one. This means that it will arguably influence the relation between reorganization and wellbeing, performance and workload. In other words: the effect of reorganization on any of those three variable is arguably interfered or altered by how employees perceived justice in the process of reorganization. A large part of the hypothesized effects in this research are based on feelings of insecurity among employees. When work changes, both in content as in expectations, employees need time to adapt to the new situation in order to be productive again. Pil and MacDuffie (1996) note that after management introduces change, productivity decreases at first to only after a substantial period of time reach higher and anticipated levels. They call this the 'J-curve of productivity loss', and it suggests that the disturbance created by organizational change is necessary in order to perform better in the future. An important factor in this idea is whether there is understanding for these processes: only if employees acknowledge the fact that disturbance is a necessity in order to grow, it can work. In the end, the model bases on anticipation.

A problem here can be captured with the 'dual expectations theory' (Hubbard, 1999; Hubbard & Purcell, 2001), which focuses on two insecurities created by reorganization and in a way, two insecurities that are – according to the J-curve of productivity – 'necessary' in order for employees to improve over time. The dual expectations theory covers the employee's perception of his or her direct future and their perception of a broader effect concerning their direct colleagues and the organization. Firstly, they question their own position and the duration of their own job; if the organization changes and downsizing occurs, how about their own position? Secondly, they question the organization; if reorganization causes everything to change, how solid is the new department?

These feelings are set into motion by processes of change and are very understandable. It seems to be an explanatory factor in understanding why reorganization affects wellbeing and performance in that sense, but is somewhat more complex: a reorganization basically consists out of a series of procedures, such as a transition from old to new policy, operation procedures, the creation of new jobs and tasks and often the introduction of new management. This often results in intensification of work, as described earlier when addressing workload, which can cause the employees who remain in the new organization to show signs of the 'survivor syndrome' (Baruch & Hind, 2000). This 'syndrome' defines a difficulty to deal with these new procedures, leading to various effects, such as a dip in production, a sense of loss



and a dent in commitment, to name a few (Baruch & Hind, 2000). To deal with these procedures in a productive and positive way, it is essential for employees to understand why these procedures were started in the first place. Besides that, it is of great importance that employees have the feeling that the procedures that were executed during the reorganization happened fairly. If not, they will feel neglected and unheard, which might increase negative feelings that were created by the reorganization. In this sense, the perception of procedural justice makes a difference in the coping with reorganization.

The way reorganization affects the two dependent variables of this research, wellbeing and performance, can in both cases be intensified by the perception of procedural justice. Where reorganization can have an effect on an individual's personal perception on wellbeing and performance, the perception of procedural justice enhances an understanding for the larger organization. These two factors, which make up Hubbard's 'dual expectations theory' (1999), are of importance in the bigger picture of dealing with reorganization. Stating that the effects of reorganization on wellbeing and performance as described earlier are self-rated and thus personal, the perceived procedural justice plays a connecting role between individual perceptions and organizational procedures. If employees consider the procedures they encountered as fair and just, it will be easier for them to understand why the procedures were executed. This can reduce the effects of the survivor syndrome, making it easier to deal with the new situation and feel less worried (Boxall & Purcell, 2011). When procedures are fair, this creates a sense of security, since legitimacy issues are inescapable for management (Boxall & Purcell, 2011). This leads to the following hypothesis:

H8 Procedural justice plays a negatively moderating role in the relationship between organizational change and the wellbeing of employees.

The loss of performance after tumultuous events of reorganization, which may lead to a shock among employees, is easier to overcome when there is a higher level of acceptance and understanding among employees (Trevor & Nyberg, 2008). The dip in performance after reorganisation, that as acknowledged needs time to heal, can be overcome quicker if the decisions by management are clear: the way that choices for the reorganisation are communicated and presented will influence the way employees trust their management, which will eventually lead to them wanting to work just as hard or even harder than before (Boxall & Purcell, 2011).

There is a level of reciprocity in this relation between the organisation presenting the reorganisation and change on the one hand, and the employees dealing with those changes on the other, which could easily be illustrated with expectancy theory (Wanous et al., 1983): if the organisation presents new management and policy changes on a transparent and fair way, it is to be expected that the employees will respond accordingly and accept those changes. In other words, if the organization works hard for its employees, the employees will work hard for the organisation. As argued earlier on, having to do more work and more intensified work can cause an increase in the perception of workload. Understanding why work intensifies and respecting the choices by management that led to this intensification helps dealing with it on a better way. Still, the stir caused by reorganisation may cause indistinctness at first, but when employees account the procedures they encounters as fair, reasonable or just, they will

be easier to deal with. In other words, employees will be willing to deal with the new procedures and ways of performing when they believe that they were incorporated on a fair way. Vice versa: when they have no trust in the motives behind reorganisation, they will inevitably get stuck in their old ways of working, which will decrease their performance. This makes procedural justice a moderating variable in the relation between reorganisation and performance, but also in the relation between reorganisation and perceived workload. These lie closely together, as mentioned earlier, leading to the following two hypotheses:

H9 Procedural Justices plays a negatively moderating role in the relationship between organizational change and employees' self-rated performance.

H10 Procedural Justices plays a negatively moderating role in the relationship between organizational change and perceived workload.

Now that procedural justice is introduced and argued as a factor of influence in the process of coping with reorganization, yet another moderating variable will be introduced. Whereas procedural justice accounts the fairness of procedures on an organizational level and the capability to understand why those procedures were set in motion, the concept of employability accounts the personal capabilities of an employee to do so. The coping with downsizing practises and the limiting of the discrepancy between policy and execution of work both prove to be challenging tasks, as the examples and relations above have shown. In the arguments considering workload and the relations with employee performance and wellbeing, the employee itself is, logically, the centre of focus. The discrepancy between management intentions and execution of work lies, for a substantial part, in how the employee perceives these intentions and feels responsible or capable for doing so (Boxall & Purcell, 2011). In other words: no matter how policy is formulated, it in the end comes down to the perception of the employee having to execute it (Ho, Sambasivan & Liew, 2013). As this theoretical framework addressed earlier on, it is therefore of great importance for an organisation to focus on employee perceptions and capabilities (Boxall & Purcell, 2011).

## **2.6 Employability as a moderator**

When organisations rigorously changed their shapes, reduced their departments and headcount and flipped over working processes in the late 80's and the beginning of the '90's, employees had no choice but to respond in a flexible and proactive way (Fugate, Kinicki & Ashforth, 2004). These times were, from a business perspective, very turbulent: due to the wave of downsizing and restructuring, employers needed to ask themselves what quality meant. Malfunctioning and seemingly redundant employees and departments were cut off in order to keep the best operating ones (Harvey, 2001). Although this has changed slightly due to the fact that organisations did learn from downsizing practices and tend to have a more balanced approach to it, reorganisation and downsizing still happen frequently and still leave their marks (Fugate, Kinicki & Ashforth, 2004). The coping with new situations proves to be hard, since reorganisation can have a substantial psychological impact on employees (Kinicki, Prussia & McKee-Ryan, 2000). The loss of colleagues, the missing of a sense of having influence on

reorganisation practices and even a resulting damage in trust causes employees to question their own position (Fugate, Kinicki & Ashforth, 2004; Hubbard, 1999). When employees are placed on other positions due to these processes, they are required to have some sort of coping skill in order to do so (Kinicki, Prussia & McKee-Ryan, 2000). Getting adapted to new ways of working and bringing organisational goals and employee voice in line via these coping skills logically needs time (Marchington & Gurgulis, 2000; Pil & MacDuffie, 1995). However, being able to adapt to changes after a reorganisation is important for employees since their working context is different; they have no other choice but to deal with the new situation or find work elsewhere (Malik, Ahmad & Hussain, 2010). This requires employees to be flexible (Van Dam, 2004) and in order to 'survive' in a demanding context of change and a tumultuous professional environment requires employees to continually deal with that change. For those reasons, one's willingness and capabilities to adapt to these changes is of essential importance for an employee's success within an organisation (Fugate, Kinicki & Ashforth, 2004; Hall, 2002). Exactly this can be captured and explained by a workers' employability (Fugate, Kinicki & Ashforth, 2004).

Employability can be defined as the extent to which an employee feels able and willing to produce productive labour (Van der Harten, Knies & Leisink, 2016). Being productive generally means adequately fulfilling the job one has, which is in line with how employability has to do with the capabilities of an employee for both work within an organisation as well as being attractive on the labour market (Forrier & Sels, 2003; Carbery & Garavan, 2005; De Cuyper & De Witte, 2011). Rothwell and Arnold (2007) define employability as the employee's ability to keep his or her current job or attain the job they desire elsewhere. De Cuyper and de Witte (2011) dissect this definition by stating that there is a difference between internal and external employability, where internal employability refers to the job opportunities one has within an organisation, and external employability to the job opportunities on the labour market. This last part will not be incorporated in this research, for the situation of VWM's advisors considers only internal employability. The definition by Van der Harten, Knies and Leisink (2016) will be leading in this research, but will only include work in the internal labour market.

The definition consists of two parts: being able to produce productive labour, and being willing to do so. The first part concerns the capacities and competence of an employee. Van der Harten and colleagues (2016) explain that this has to do with having up-to-date expertise, which they conceptualize based on Thijssen and Walter (2006) as the extent to which workers are both physically and mentally able to keep up with the job. Besides that, the extent to which their knowledge and know-how is up-to-date is also relevant. Finally, up-to-date expertise considers the extent to which employees move along with developments in their job and professional sector, as well as developments in society (Van der Harten, Knies and Leisink, 2016). For VWM's advisors, this conceptualization of up-to-date expertise fits their needs, whereas they expect them to cope with the new circumstances both physically (different working locations, travel to work, jobs on different locations 'outside') and mentally (having the intelligence to adequately fulfil their jobs, different thinking processes, different job demands) (Houtskoolschets VWM, 2013). Their know-how must be up-to-date: if an advisor has no relevant and recent know-how, their work will be undermined (Baaij, 2013). For VWM, such up-to-date knowledge includes technological knowledge about building processes, machinery, software and other high-end equipment. Being able to move along with a

way of thinking and following developments is the last relevant part in having up-to-date expertise: VWM is a new department, with a new way of working, aiming for more efficiency and faster working processes. To make this a success, the advisors are required to move along with this approach.

The second part of the employability definition considers the willingness to adapt to changes (Van der Harten, Knies and Leisink, 2016). This requires a certain attitude of openness from the employee, that allows new input to be accepted (Van Dam, 2004). As stated earlier, changing working conditions require flexibility and a willingness to adapt to new job contents, conditions and work locations (Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006). Importantly, just as the in the situation of VWM's advisors, employees must be able to adapt to changes they did not choose themselves (Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006). This makes a difference, for employees have to be flexible. Mergers and other forms of reorganisation that cause jobs to shift within an organisation call for flexible employees that are willing to adapt to the new situation (Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006).

Although employability can be seen from both an individual and an organisational point of view, this research focuses on the employee itself and thus only the individual point of view. This is due to the fact that Rijkswaterstaat is interested in seeing the added value of their VWM advisors for the organisation, meaning that they want to see how workers respond to the reorganisation and how they, in that sense, prove to be valuable for the organisation. From Rijkswaterstaat's perspective, VWM advisors are expected to be flexible and competent, meaning that they are expected to be versatile in their work and being able to shift between various tasks in a quick and adequate manner. This is relevant since VWM is new and needs this versatility in order to overcome start-up issues (Houtskoolschets VWM, 2013).

As stated earlier, the advisors have a more ambiguous function and their job exceeds the task of only advising. Although Rijkswaterstaat expects this ambiguity to slowly decrease as VWM becomes more and more established within the entire organisation, the current situation and their current versatility is of vital importance for the success of their function and the proving of their added value. Rijkswaterstaat formulates this required flexibility as individual mobility (Houtskoolschets VWM, 2013). Employability boosts and supports that flexibility and performance of employees (Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006). Being employable can be beneficial for both individual and organisational outcomes, for the process of adaptation and learning, can improve personality and attitudes and can create a combination between generic and specific competences (Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006). The adapting to changes means that new ways of working will be adopted and executed more easily when an employee is more employable. Effects of reorganisation will thus be easier to deal with, proving to be less of a hindering factor, even when circumstances might be very demanding. In this sense, employability will play not an explanatory but an influential factor in the relation between organisational change and the way employees perform at work. As with the perception of procedural justice, this means employability moderates this relationship. The ambiguous position of the advisors at VWM will be enhanced if they are more employable, making it easier for them to cope with the changing circumstances and letting those changes be less of a hinder in their performance. This leads to the following hypotheses:

H11 Employability plays a negatively moderating role in the relationship between organisational change and employees' self-rated performance.

H12 Employability plays a moderating role in the relationship between organisational change and perceived workload.

It is important for employers to invest in the employability of their employees and it is beneficial for organisations to keep their employees employable (Ghosal et al., 1999; De Cuyper & De Witte, 2011). Whereas being employable implies a certain set of capabilities, making employees more employable implies investment: Organisations can invest in their employees to make them more employable, by means of on-the-job learning, training and coaching and enhancing further internal job opportunities (De Cuyper & De Witte, 2011; Boxall & Purcell, 2011). Boxall and Purcell (2011) write that the more an organisation invests in an employee, the more difficult it becomes to replace that employee. However, employees must give back to the organisation in order to make these investments work properly. These two must be balanced: the investment of an organisation in an employee must be reciprocal, meaning that efforts from the organisation must be counterbalanced with proactivity and efforts from the employee (Pauwe; 1997; Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006). This can create a win-win situation, where the employee may show increased job security and learning opportunities, whereas the organisation sees increased commitment and performance (De Cuyper & De Witte, 2011). This arguably boosts the feelings of wellbeing (at work) of an employee, since a sense of security reduces stress (Bell, Rajendran & Theiler, 2012) and feeling motivated reduces the reason for feeling worried (Boxall & Purcell, 2011).

However, since employability is seen as a moderating factor in the situation at Rijkswaterstaat, it is more of an assumption that these investments would work, rather than an observation: possibly, employability could even prove to be a solution for Rijkswaterstaat, rather than being one just a theoretical assumption or an inactive observation. With this I mean that the importance of employability can be proven by the fact that it is a moderating and influential factor. The way employees deal with a new situation underlines the importance of the way they do so, because when looking at the arguments in this thesis for the relation between reorganisation and a decrease in wellbeing and performance, being able and willing to deal with changes is the missing link: the 'shock' created by reorganisation by Allen and colleagues (2001) that proposes reorganisation creates a moment of inactiveness due to changes; the dual-expectancy theory by Hubbard (1999) which focuses on insecurities for both the employee itself as his or her insecurities towards the organisation; Pil and MacDuffie's curve of productivity loss (1996) that describes a dip in performance after reorganisation which is necessary for organisations to prosper on the long term: all of these arguments can be enhanced by the concept of employability. When an employee is willing to adapt to the changing and new environment and when the employee has the capabilities to do so, the negative effects of reorganisation will be less. This will eventually decrease the possible negative effects on how the employee feels: there is less need for an employee to feel worried when he or she can adapt to changes properly, just as there is less need to feel tense and insecure about the future of their jobs when they know they can and are able to do for the organisation. It makes employees feel more at ease when they can adapt

quickly (McQuaid & Lindsay, 2005). This suggests that being employable influences the relation between reorganisation and wellbeing, by easing that relation due to a better capability of dealing with new circumstances. This leads to the following hypothesis:

H13 Employability plays a negatively moderating role in the relationship between organisational change and the wellbeing of employees.

Finally, now that employability has been introduced, described and argued as a moderating factor, denying the fact that employability would have no further impact would be incomplete. The direct relation between employability and performance may have been suggested in the text above, but is not yet named properly. The argumentation is very much in line with the previous, stating that employability enhances employees into being more adaptable to new situations and thus being able to deal with changes in a productive way. The direct relation between employability and performance can be argued in somewhat of a similar matter: when employees are more employable, and thus willing and able to work, they will arguably do so (Camps & Rodriguez, 2011).

Camps and Rodriguez found that increased employability of employees would eventually lead to an increase in performance, but note that this is probably enhanced via the employee's organisational commitment. Although they note that this is an interesting finding since an increased set of skills makes an employee more appropriate for a job elsewhere, the findings could have different implications for Rijkswaterstaat. De Cuyper and De Witte (2011) also found that employability and performance are linked, but only via organisational commitment. This is an argument that they used to state that the so-called management paradox – briefly: the more a company invests in an employee, the more likely it is that the employee will find better work elsewhere – is not true. Their findings and those of Camps and Rodrigues (2011) lie closely together but are both interesting for the situation with Rijkswaterstaat. As said earlier, average tenure at VWM is noticeably high, meaning that employees leaving to find work elsewhere is not a particular and realistic threat for Rijkswaterstaat. In their case it could be confirmed that investing in their employees, making them more employable, also makes them more productive, as findings by Camps and Rodriguez (2011) state. I acknowledge that this relation is too complex to briefly name in this theoretical framework: the reason for naming it though is because it cannot be ignored. This argument will be sufficient to compose the last hypothesis, but will beforehand create room for thought. The chapter 'discussion' will further address suggestions for this relation.

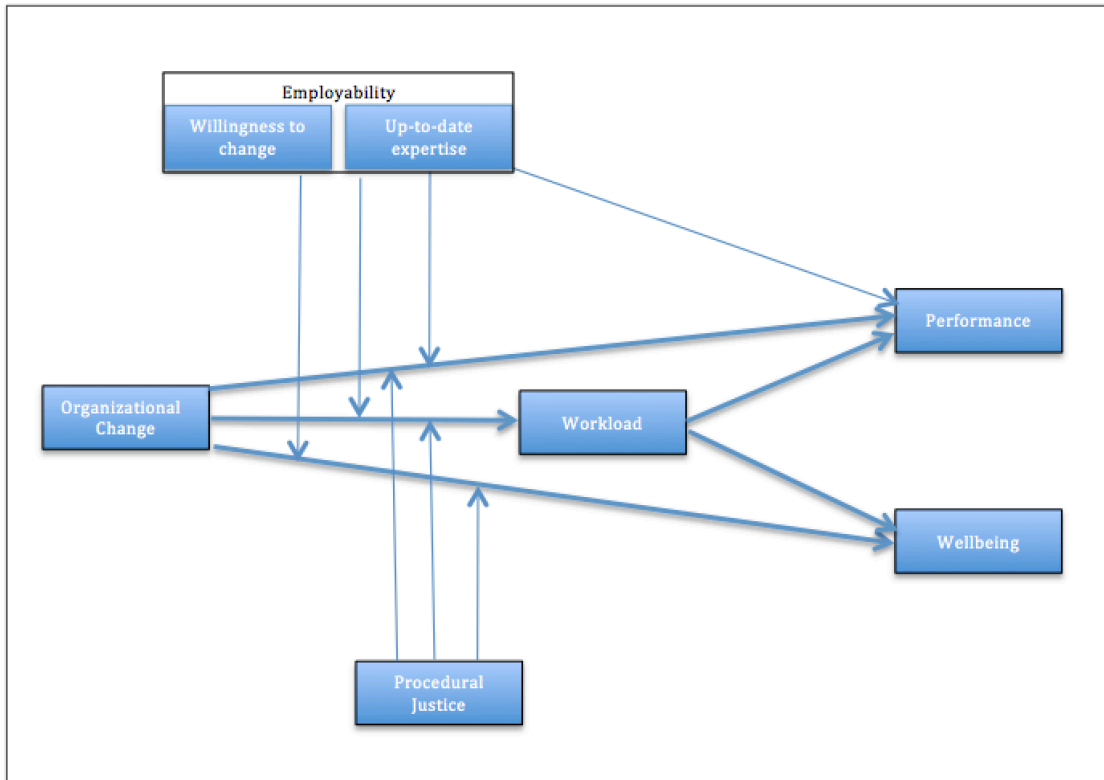
The last hypothesis of this research is:

H14 Employability is positively related to employees' self-rated performance.

## 2.7 Conceptual Model

All of the above can be summarized in a conceptual model. This model can be seen below. Note that willingness to change and up-to-date expertise are both part of 'employability'. Arrows that indicate an influence are for both of these factors.

Figure 2: Conceptual model



### 3. Methods

In this chapter, the methods of research will be presented. First, a description of the respondents of this research will be given. Then, scales and according items to the proposed variables will be presented. Finally, the analyses used will be described.

#### 3.1 Respondents: samples and procedures

The research has been executed for Rijkswaterstaat, the executive ministry of the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure, via a questionnaire with 46 questions. Although the research is set up primarily as a quantitative research in order to test the relationships as proposed in the research question, a small explorative research was conducted in the form of 5 interviews with a senior advisor.

The research had a noticeable high response: 148 out of 198 contacted persons responded to the questionnaire. Due to a variety of reasons, 12 respondents of the 198 addressed were not able to fill in the questionnaire in the first place: by email and auto-reply I found that some of those reasons included holidays, pregnancy and working abroad. In a way, it could thus be stated that the total group of respondents that actually received the survey and was able to fill it in was 186, instead of 198. In some particular regression- and correlation-analyses, the statistics-software SPSS by IBM filtered out the participants who, for example, did not fill in some of the questions. The number of useful respondents therefore varies between hypotheses. Rijkswaterstaat expected a high response beforehand ( $\pm 50\%$ ), but in all, a response-rate of  $\pm 74\%$  (73,73%) is above expectations.

The respondents were 148 advisors of VWM, working on different locations throughout the Netherlands, though all primarily based in the RWS Headquarters in Utrecht. Besides their role at work being diverse, the group itself was divided on various different fronts: Out of the respondents, 63.7% were male (N=93) and 30.8% female (N=45). 8 respondents selected the 'I don't want to tell' box. The average age of the respondents turned out to be relatively high ( $\pm 51$ ,  $SD=10.27$ ), however slightly lower than the 52-year RWS average (Tevredenheidsonderzoek 2016). As expected, tenure was found to be relatively high as well (almost 20 years on average). Only three respondents worked 5 or fewer years at RWS, and over 20% of all respondents worked at RWS longer than 30 years, with a maximum of >45 years. Since the response-rate was so high, it can be stated that the group of respondents is very representative for the entire group.

Confidentiality and anonymity was guaranteed in order to make sure employees answered the questions of the survey in all honesty. After some consultation it was decided that all respondents would be addressed by email instead of providing them with physical questionnaires. For pragmatic reasons, since physical questionnaires prove to generally generate more honest answers (Van der Velde, Jansen & Dijkers, 2013). Due to large physical distances between employees this was however discarded and a digital questionnaire was preferred by the organization. The advantage of a digital questionnaire is that there is hardly any delay in the delivering of the survey and that it is an easy way to address many respondents at once (Umbach, 2004). I therefore used 'SurveyMonkey' to create my questionnaire.



The items used in the questionnaire were grouped together and somewhat randomly ordered, but the dependent variables were deliberately put as first questions. This was done to prevent a certain bias where respondents tend to figure out the goal of the questionnaire and thus may not provide honest answers (Bryman, 2015). I deliberately kept the invitation for the questionnaire universal, in order to reduce any form of influence on their answers beforehand, since not doing so is a frequently made mistake that causes bias to happen (Van der Velde, Jansen & Dijkers, 2013). Some questions were deliberately reversed and negatively framed for similar reasons. This was done to make sure respondents would not simply answer one value for all questions, and thus helps spotting invalid questionnaires or potential outliers. All of this is of importance to cherish the viability of a research (Bryman, 2015).

### **3.2 Measurements: scales and items**

All scales and according questions used to measure the proposed variables were taken from standardized and tested instruments that were proven to be reliable in previous studies, except for one: As described in the theoretical framework, measuring 'organizational change' is an excessive job. In the conversations with RWS it soon became clear that no one could factually tell what exactly had been changed in the last years. There was no specific documentation denoting the differences between VWM now and RWS before the start of VWM. Employees were transferred internally and offered (or forced) different tasks and job contents, but the actual change was not documented (or not available for me, at least). In order to get a broad understanding of the matter of change perceived by this group of respondents, I created my own scale with help from my mentor at the University of Utrecht. The scale '*Organisational Change*' contained 6 items and was measured on a 4-point Likert scale, with answers ranging from 1: did not change at all, to 4: completely changed. The option: *This does not apply to me* was added. Respondents were posed a statement: '*Since the start of VWM, the following has changed*', followed by 6 items. The items in this scale included: '*my physical working space*' (Gibson, 2003), '*my direct colleagues*' (Egan et al., 2007), '*the content of my work*' (Åborg, Fernström & Ericson, 1998), '*my motivation to work*' (Bambra et al., 2007), '*my joy in working*' (Østhus, 2007) and '*the contact with my supervisor*' (Shore & Tetrick, 1994). Reliability for this scale (Cronbach's Alpha) was 0.889. This means that this scale proved to be a decent scale to measure organizational change, since reliability in social science must at least be 0.70 (Bryman, 2015). The articles used to propose these items for the scale elaborate individually on the importance of their accounted factors in a reorganization-context. They embody both personal feelings, physical aspects of work and social factors. Since reliability is relatively high, it would be interesting for future research to further investigate this scale and that items that belong to it.

Wellbeing was measured after this. A six-item scale based on Warr (1990) was used. This scale originally contains twelve items, but these do not necessarily have to be used, for some simply do not apply to certain situations. I picked three positive and three negative aspects of wellbeing, all accounting a certain feeling and all avoiding any health or physically related wellbeing items. The statement: '*the past five weeks at work, I felt:*' and the answers provided were: '*tense*', '*calm*', '*relaxed*', '*worried*', '*uneasy*' and '*contended*'. In SPSS, the three 'negative' aspects of wellbeing were inverted. Respondents could answer with a 5-point Likert scale with answers ranging from

1:completely disagree, to 5: completely agree. No items had to be removed, and reliability (Cronbach's Alpha) was 0.83.

The scale of self-rated performance, based on Vandenberg (2009) contains 3 items and was measured with a 5-point Likert scale, with answers ranging from 1: completely disagree, to 5: completely agree. The items were: *'I contribute to the success of VWM'*, *'I believe that I perform above average'* and *'I believe I am a good employee'*. Reliability (Cronbach's Alpha) was 0.913. No item had to be deleted.

Workload was measured with a 4-item scale by Kim and colleagues (1996). Respondents could reply on a 5-point Likert scale with answers ranging from 1: completely disagree, to 5: completely agree. An additional fifth item was created just to get a better grip at the extent of the reorganization; just as the scale *'Organizational Change'* was created. This fifth item was: *'I experience more workload since the start of VWM.'* The mean of this item was 3.19. The item was however not included in the scale for workload, for it has no scientific validity. Other items were: *'I have enough time to get everything done in my job'*, *'my workload is not heavy on my job'*, *'I have to work very hard in my job'* and *'I have to work very fast in my job'*. Reliability was 0.715.

After this, questions were asked considering *Procedural Justice*. This was measured with a 6-item scale as used in Colquitt (2001), but consists of items from three different authors. Statements which could be answered on a 5-point Likert scale, with answers ranging from 1: completely disagree, to 5: completely agree, included: *'I have been able to express your views and feelings during the reorganization'* (Colquitt, 2001), *'I had influence over the outcome arrived at by the reorganization'* (Colquitt, 2001), *'The procedures during the reorganization have been free of bias'* (Colquitt, 2001), *'Consistent standards and procedures were used in reallocating jobs among employees during the reorganization.'* (Kernan & Hanges, 2002), *'During the reorganization, I was treated with dignity and respect'* (Kernan & Hanges, 2002) and *'The procedures during the reorganization were based on accurate information.'* (Leventhal, 1980). The second item was removed. Reliability (Cronbach's Alpha) was 0.713.

The concept of employability was measured with a scale by Van Harten et al. (2016) and contained a total of 16 items, divided in two variables: *willingness to change* (11 items) and *up-to-date expertise* (5 items). Respondents could reply on a 5-point Likert scale with answers ranging from 1:completely disagree, to 5: completely agree. The first, willingness to change, contained items such as: *'I see the new developments at work as an improvement'*, *'if RWS provides me new with working experiences, I am happy to accept those'* and *'when there is an organizational change, I would like to stay at my current department'*. The scale consists of 11 items in two dimensions: 7 out of these items were negatively framed, 4 were positively framed. One of the items had to be removed in order to get a >0.7 reliability (Cronbach's Alpha), resulting in a 0.719 score.

The second part of the employability variable considers *'up-to-date expertise'*, and is also adapted from Van Harten et al. (2016). The scale contains five items, including: *'technological developments at work make my knowledge and capacities redundant'*, *'the changes caused by VWM are contradictory with the essence of my work'*, and *'it is easy for me to keep up with technological developments'*. Again, respondents could reply on a 5-point Likert scale with answers ranging from 1: completely disagree, to 5: completely agree. In order to achieve higher reliability, two items (the third and fifth) were removed, creating a reliability (Cronbach's Alpha) of 0.700. Control-variables for this research were age, gender, tenure and education.

### **3.3 Measurements: SPSS and PROCESS**

Questions were asked in Dutch, since no international employees were questioned. This turned out to be a small challenge, since all questions from existing scales had to be translated. Only two were already formulated in Dutch. I will translate them in English further on this chapter. The questionnaire was easily accessible for those who received the internet-link. Only I could see the results of the survey: the final, anonymous, data is however shared with RWS and my project guide from the Utrecht University.

For the testing of the hypotheses, the programme IBM SPSS was used. An extra plug-in, created by social scientist and Ph.D., Andrew Hayes, called 'PROCESS' was used for the moderation variables and as an extra control for mediation variables (Hayes, 2013; Hayes, 2012). The steps that were taken to calculate these relations will be explained at their corresponding hypotheses. SPSS is widely used statistics software, and therefore an obvious choice to use. The plug-in 'PROCESS' is, however, less known: I have deliberately used this plug-in since its output enhances me and the reader of this thesis to have a deeper, better and further insight in the values for which a relation is significant (Hayes, 2013; Hayes, 2012). Especially in research considering employee perceptions it comes in useful to have an overview of this significance and it helps to better understand the proposed relations between variables.

When using Johnson-Neyman technique, which is one of the features of PROCESS as well, area(s) of significance can be detected for moderator and/or mediator variables (Hayes, 2012). This technique shows a range between 20 and 25 values between the highest and the lowest value of the proposed moderator or mediator variable and shows for which of the values in this range the mediating or moderating effect is significant. Naturally, according effect-size is also provided. In this way, data is easier to interpret, for a larger variety of data is shown instead of just one value. Interpretations of moderation and mediation are often limited due to assumptions based on one value or one set of output. Especially when researching opinions and perceptions, these outcomes may not necessarily be sufficient in order to translate to a real-life situation. s

### **3.4 Reliability: Outliers**

Before actual calculations can be done, outliers need to be removed. The reason for this is that some people may have a remarkable and noticeable 'random' way of filling in the survey, which violates the viability and reliability of the data (Bryman, 2015). It is hard to make respondents fill in the survey in complete honesty. To clean up the dataset, outliers that are remarkable (in a negative way) have to be removed for that reason: an incoherent pattern of answers can disturb means, standard deviations, reliability, correlations and regression analyses eventually. The removal of outliers has been done by calculating Mahalanobis's Distance (1936), Cook's Distance (1977) and the Centered Leverage value of all data by all respondents. These values calculate trends in answers by respondents: If participants score higher than allowed on two of these values, they need to be removed. This resulted in the deleting of 10 participants who had both a higher than allowed value for Mahalanobis's and Cook's Distance. Theory states that before any moderation or mediation, these distances need to be calculated; of course this only has to be done once in this research, for otherwise the dataset would shrink considerably and lose all connection with the 'real' world. It will be mentioned more often in the following chapter that these distances were calculated: this will be done to make sure all steps of the process are described.

It can be argued that calculating these values and eventually removing 'outlying' answers may influence the dataset too much, since removing odd answers can manipulate the outcomes and create a more unified and preferred set of answers. However, when measuring the perceptions of people, it is important to do so, since a remarkable dishonest response can give unrepresentative outcomes. Simply put, if a respondent answers remarkably and consequently different from the mean, it can be argued that that respondent does not represent a truthful opinion. To have some leeway in answering possibilities, it is therefore important to calculate these three values instead of just one. They function as control-values in order to delete respondents only if they score higher than allowed on two of the three values. By arranging the respondents in order of these three values (by for instance creating three new values, in which 0 represents an allowed value and 1 represents a value that is too high) it is easy to see which respondents need to be removed. By browsing through their answers, it is often easy to spot *why* and where the remarkable answers were made. In the case of this research, the respondents that were removed had either filled in only 1's, only 3's or only 5's on a 5-point Likert-scale. Worth notifying is that 6 out of 10 participants that were removed completed their online survey in less than two minutes, while average response time was some over seven minutes, as I could see in reports by SurveyMonkey, the program used to distribute the questionnaire.

## 4. Results

In this chapter, the results of the research will be presented. The chapter will start with the presentation of descriptive statistics, followed by found correlations and will then present the regression analyses that tested the hypotheses.

### 4.1 Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

A correlation matrix can be presented, following by regression analyses to test the direction of the relations and the proposed mediation and moderation. Means and Standard Deviations were calculated, resulting in the following outcomes: on average, the perceived level of change was considerable ( $M=2.32$ ,  $SD=1.02$ ) taking into consideration that values 2, 3 and 4 all imply noticeable change (4-point Likert scale). Workload ( $M=2.81$ ,  $SD=0.48$ ) was framed as: higher scores mean more workload. Wellbeing ( $M=3.54$ ,  $SD=0.77$ ) was framed positively and interpreted as: higher scores mean better wellbeing, which in this case resulted to an overall positive perception of wellbeing. Procedural Justice ( $M=3.45$ ,  $SD=0.57$ ) can also be seen as: higher scores mean more perceived fairness. The mean score on performance ( $M=4.29$ ,  $SD=0.8$ ) was considerably higher than the mean scores on the other variables. I elaborate on the mean scores in the discussion. An overview of means, standard deviations and all correlations are shown in the correlation matrix below:

Figure 3: Correlation matrix

Correlation Matrix											
	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Organisational Change	2.32	1.02	1								
2. Workload	2.81	0.48	.233**	1							
3. Performance	4.29	0.80	.047	-.010	1						
4. Wellbeing	3.54	0.77	-.344**	-.411**	.070	1					
5. Procedural Justice	3.41	0.66	-.212*	.167	.077	.177*	1				
6. Willingness to change	3.61	0.50	-.115	-.091	.222*	.175	.221*	1			
7. Up-to-date expertise	3.91	0.77	-.292**	-.068	.177*	.242**	.346**	.567**	1		
8. Gender	1.42	0.59	.066	.194*	.011	-.131	-.003	-.065	-.196*	1	
9. Tenure (years)	19.67	11.27	.065	-.136	-.013	.067	-.072	-.287**	-.294**	-.092	1
10. Age	50.34	10.27	.100	-.114	.049	.116	-.096	-.360**	-.302**	-.168	.703**

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). \* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Although willingness to change and up-to-date expertise are both factors of 'employability', they are seen and used as two different variables. They have the highest correlation (.567\*\*), but do measure different things. Both concepts were used in the regression analyses, but as separate parts of employability.

Regression analyses were made in order to test the hypotheses of this research. Out of the 14 posed hypotheses, 5 (number 2, 6, 7, 9, and 11, respectively) had to be discarded due to insignificant correlations based on this matrix (Bryman, 2015). H10 is also rejected, due to the fact that a significant relation was found for only one value of procedural justice. An elaboration on this hypothesis will follow in the next chapter.

As the correlation table shows, no significant relations exist between certain variables: performance, for example, is only correlated with the two factors of

employability, which means that a substantial number of hypotheses must be rejected beforehand: If no correlation exists, due to insignificant relations, it is irrelevant to do further regression analyses or argue for any mediation or moderation relations (Bryman, 2015).

#### 4.2 Hypotheses

Please note that due to the amount of hypotheses, tables showing the multiple-regression analyses will be presented at the end of this paragraph (Figure 7, Figure 8).

The first hypothesis, organisational change is negatively related to the wellbeing of employees, was found to be significant, and support for the hypothesis was found (F(1, 124)= 16.49, p<0.01, R<sup>2</sup>=.118, β =-.31). H3, Organisational change is positively related to perceived workload, can be accepted as well: (F(1, 127)=2.99, p<0,01, with an R<sup>2</sup> of .137, β=.17). Support was also found for H4, Workload is negatively related to the wellbeing of employees, (F(1, 124)=24.95, p<0,001), with an R<sup>2</sup> of .169, β=-.36).

H5, proposing that workload partially and negatively mediates the effect of organisational change on the wellbeing of employees was found to be significant as well. The results of the regression analysis are presented in figure 4. Sobel test (normal theory test) also shows that mediation is happening: Z= -2.36, p<0.05, κ<sup>2</sup>=.099.

Figure 4  
mediation of workload on the relationship between organizational change and wellbeing

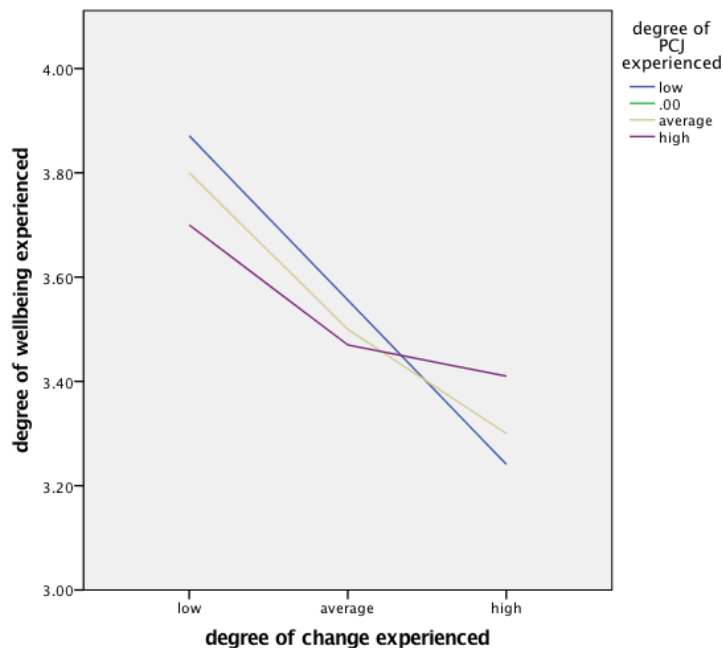
	1			2			3		
	B	SE	β	B	SE	β	B	SE	β
Age	.011	.010	.153	.008	.010	.113	.011	.009	.145
Tenure	-.002	.009	-.029	-.005	.009	-.068	-.005	.008	-.067
Gender	-.113	.125	-.087	-.050	.124	-.039	-.041	.119	-.032
Education	-.014	.090	-.015	.010	.088	.011	-.009	.085	-.010
Org. change	-.26***	.07**	-.35**				-.21**	.068***	-.272**
Workload				-.635***	.148***	-.399***	-.53***	.147**	-.333***
F	3.49			4.323**			5.43***		
R <sup>2</sup>	.148**			.178**			.248***		
Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	.106**			.137**			.202***		

\*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001

The non-significant regression coefficients are in line with the correlation matrix.

H8, stating that Procedural justice plays a negatively moderating role in the relationship between organizational change and the wellbeing of employees, was found to be significant by using the PROCESS tool for SPSS by Hayes (Hayes, 2012). The overall model is significant (p<0.01), with an explained R<sup>2</sup> of .13. Within that variance, the effects of PCJ on the relation can be tested. Using Johnson-Neyman technique, it is possible to have a more in-depth view on the relation between change, wellbeing and the moderating role of procedural justice. For any value of 1.827 (the lowest score in the dataset) below and .447 above the mean, there is a significant negative effect ranging from -.474 to -.173 respectively. The findings are presented in the graph below:

Figure 5  
Moderating effect of PCJ on the relation between change and wellbeing.



Due to a relatively small effect-size, the y-axis is scaled down to a range between 3 and 4. Low, average and high stand for  $\pm 1$  (-.997), 0 and  $\pm 1$  (.997) standard deviations from the mean.

H10, stating: Procedural Justices plays a negatively moderating role in the relationship between organizational change and perceived workload, has a noticeable outcome: The overall model is  $F(3, 136) = 2.716, p > .001, R^2 = .051$ . Predictors: PCJ  $b = .170, t(136) = 1.434, p = .154$ , which is not significant. Only for *one* value of procedural justice, a moderation effect on the relation between organizational change and workload was found. Theoretically, this could be considered as in favor of this hypothesis. Although I acknowledge that is it mathematically seen, when seen from a practical point, one can only conclude that the moderating effect is of no importance and relevance for this relation in real life, finding too little support for the hypothesis.

### 4.3 Hypotheses considering employability

The following results are about the moderating role of employability. The hypotheses mention the concept of 'employability', but the research was done for both 'willingness to change' and 'up-to-date expertise'. No support for a moderating effects of both factors on the relationship between organizational change and workload related to performance has been found, due to insignificant correlations and regression. Other hypotheses considering employability have gained support for both willingness to change and up-to-date expertise. The results are presented below.

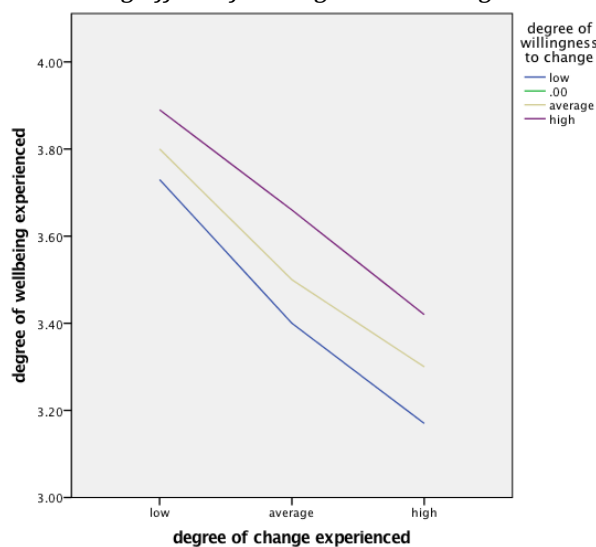
Employability plays a moderating role in the relationship between organisational change and perceived workload. which can be accepted with some notes: Although H3 ( $\beta = .233, P < 0.05$ ) is significant, the model for H12 ( $p = 0.1, F(1, 122) = 2.133, R^2 = .062$ ), is not significant ( $p > 0.05$ ). Using standard SPSS output alone may be misleading in some cases: when using Johnson-Neyman technique, an area of significant values of 'willingness to change' can be found between values .368 below and .243 above the mean ( $M = 3.61$ ). The according effect size ranges between .135 and .095

respectively. This means that for a lower (more negative) value of willingness to change, the impact of change on workload will be bigger. However, the effect will still significantly increase the effect for positive values of willingness to change. Although effect size decreases as willingness to change increases, the overall effect size of willingness to change on the relation between organizational change and workload remains positive. This means that even for high levels of WTC, there will still be an increasing effect of change on perceived workload. This is remarkable, and gives room for discussion.

Employees' up-to-date expertise moderates the relation between organisational change and workload is based on the significant H3 but is not significant in the first place, with a model of  $F(3,124)=2.178, R^2=.059, p>0.05$ . As with H13, Johnson-Neyman technique does show that there is an area of significance for certain values of employees' up-to-date expertise. Anywhere from .458 standard deviations below and .802 standard deviations above the mean ( $M=3.91, SD=0.77$ ) there is a significant effect of up-to-date expertise on the change to workload relationship, with an increasing effect between .086 and .137, respectively. Different from H13, the effect of UTD is increasing, meaning that having higher values of UTD increases the effect of change on workload.

A significant effect of willingness to change as a moderator on the relation between organizational change and wellbeing has been found, thus being in favor of H15. Overall model:  $F(3, 118)= 7.957, p< .001, R^2=.015$ . 14 cases were deleted due to missing data. The additional effect of willingness to change as a moderator is significant for all values between .9596 standard deviations below and .6730 standard deviations above the mean value of WTC ( $M= 3.61, SD=0.5$ ), as found with Johnson-Neyman technique. The effect found in H1 ( $\beta= -.344$ ) will be less (more positive) for higher scores of willingness to change. When employees' willingness to change is put in the equation between organizational change and wellbeing as a moderator, the effect of organizational change will decrease with .307 to .205 for any value of willingness to change between 2.65 and 4.28 respectively. The results are presented in the graph below:

Figure 5:  
*Moderating effect of willingness to change on the relation between change and wellbeing.*



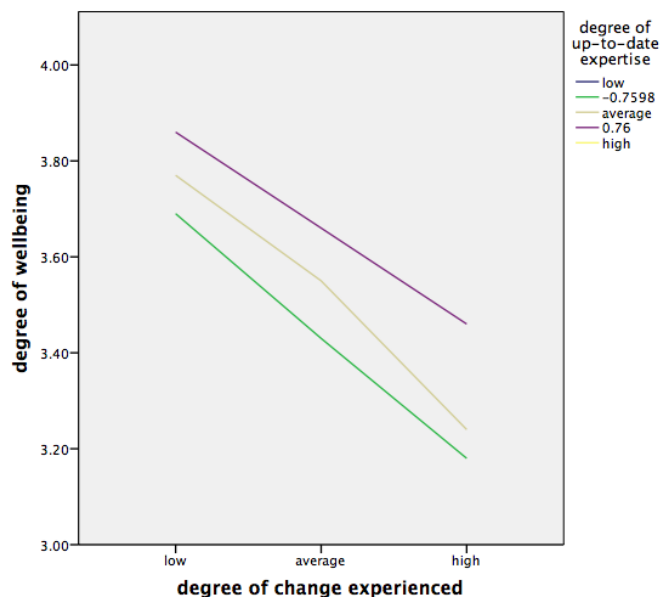


The graph shows that for higher levels of willingness to change, the effect of organizational change still decreases the degree of wellbeing experienced, but is less than when willingness to change is low. Low, average and high stand for  $\pm 1$  (-.9982), 0 and  $\pm 1$  (.9982) standard deviations from the mean.

The relation and overall model of up-to-date expertise as a moderator in the relation between organizational change and wellbeing is significant ( $F(3, 124)=7.806$ ,  $p<.001$ ,  $R^2=.144$ ). For values of up-to-date expertise ranging anywhere from 1.7559 standard deviations below and .7941 standard deviations above the mean, the effect on the organizational change to wellbeing relation is significant. The range of effect is from -.2860 at an UTD value of 1.7559 SD below the mean until an effect of -.1971 at .7941 above the mean ( $M=3.91$ ,  $SD=0.77$ ). All effects ranging in that spectrum are negative, meaning that for those values, an employees' up-to-date expertise can decrease the (negative) effect of organizational change on their wellbeing ( $H1$ ,  $\beta= -.344$ ). Having up-to-date expertise thus proves to be of importance in dealing with organizational change. However, the data shows not that having *more* up-to-date expertise means a better sense of wellbeing; the outcomes show that having *less* up-to-date expertise means that one's wellbeing will be affected more by change. The outcomes are in favor of the hypothesis. The results are presented in a graph below:

Figure 6:

*Moderating effect of up-to-date expertise on the relation between change and wellbeing.*



The graph shows that for higher levels of up-to-date expertise the effect of organizational change on wellbeing is less negative than it is for lower values. Low, average and high stand for  $\pm 1$  (-.1001), 0 and  $\pm 1$  (.1001) standard deviations from the mean.

The last hypothesis was tested with linear regression analyses and also consisted out of regression analyses with both willingness to change and up-to-date expertise: Employees' willingness to change positively affects performance, can be accepted for ( $F(1,131)=1.36$ ,  $p<0.1$ ,  $R^2=.092$ ,  $\beta=.29$ ), meaning that when an employee's willingness to change increases by 1, their self-rated performance will increase with 29%. Employee's up-to-date expertise positively affects performance, can be accepted

( $F(1,133)=4.284$ ,  $p<0.05$ ,  $R^2=.065$ ,  $\beta=.228$ ), meaning that an increase of 1 in an employee's level of up-to-date expertise, increases their self-rated performance with about 23%. I will elaborate on these two outcomes further on, since all hypotheses considering performance were found not to be significant except for these two.

Regression considering effects on wellbeing and performance are presented in the tables below:

Figure 7: *Multiple regressions: effects on Wellbeing*

	B	SE	$\beta$	B	SE	$\beta$	B	SE	$\beta$	B	SE	$\beta$	B	SE	$\beta$
Age	.12	.10	.190	.009	.010	.134	.019	.011	.280	.013	.011	.183	.011	.011	.160
Tenure	-.037	.009	-.106	-.007	.009	-.105	-.009	.010	-.140	-.002	.010	-.036	-.007	.010	-.104
Gender	-.282*	.133*	-.212*	-.114	.144	-.080	-.204	.148	-.145	-.186	.150	-.131	-.260	.145	-.184
Education	-.037	.087	-.043	-.030	.092	-.032	-.032	.097	-.035	-.052	.097	-.057	-.050	.096	-.055
Org. change	-.22**	.07**	-.31**												
Workload				-.55***	.151***	-.36***									
WTC							.267	.163	.179						
UTD										.207	.109	.207			
PCJ													.171	.105	.162
F	3.571			24.95**			1.533			1.661			1.409		
R <sup>2</sup>	.163**			.169**			.076			.08			.069		
Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	.117**			.411**			.026			.032			.02		

\* $p<0.05$ , \*\* $p<0.01$ , \*\*\* $p<0.001$

The non-significant regression coefficients are in line with the correlation matrix.

Figure 8: *Multiple regressions: effects on Performance*

	B	SE	$\beta$	B	SE	$\beta$	B	SE	$\beta$	B	SE	$\beta$	B	SE	$\beta$
Age	-.005	.012	-.065	-.005	.011	-.071	.005	.012	.070	.000	.011	.003	-.002	.011	-.031
Tenure	.011	.011	.168	.010	.011	.147	.010	.011	.143	.014	.010	.200	.009	.011	.135
Gender	.164	.159	.108	.195	.162	.129	.185	.155	.121	.235	.156	.157	.146	.156	.097
Education	.005	.105	.005	.006	.104	.006	-.007	.103	-.007	-.003	.102	-.003	.012	.104	.012
Org. change	.029	.081	.037												
Workload				-.207	.170	-.129									
WTC							.48**	.17**	.29**						
UTD										.242*	.14*	.228*			
PCJ													.062	.115	.054
F	.489			.645			1.95			1.36			.423		
R <sup>2</sup>	.158			.032			.092			.065			.021		
Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	-.026			-.018			.045			.017			-.03		

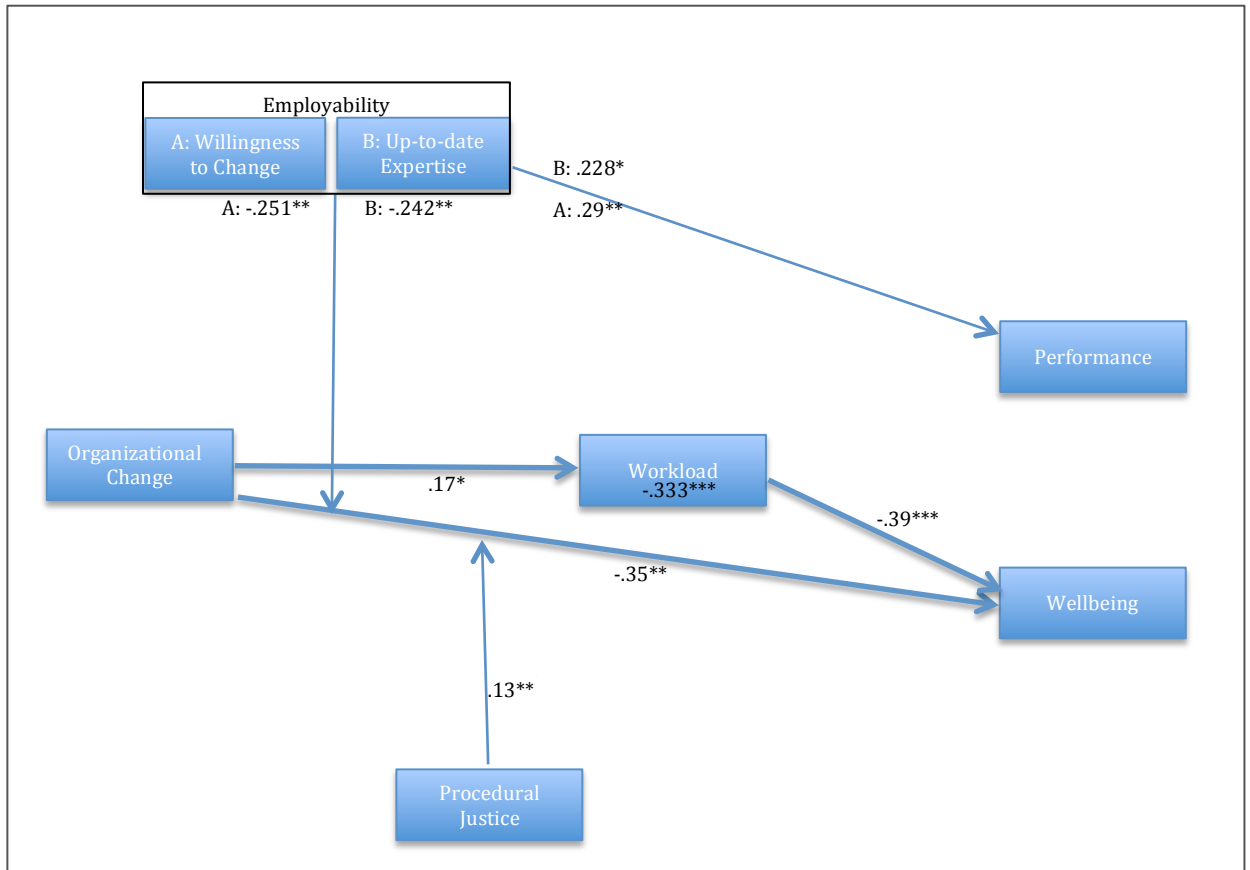
\* $p<0.05$ , \*\* $p<0.01$ , \*\*\* $p<0.001$ .

The non-significant regression coefficients are in line with the correlation matrix.

### 4.3 Final model

The research findings are visualized in the following model:

Figure 9: *Final model of significant effects*



\* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.001$

*Effect-sizes for moderating relations are averages based on the highest and lowest significant values as found with Johnson-Neyman technique, since no single effect-size was found for these presented relations.*

*All values are  $\beta$ . The numbers correspond with the lines showing their relations: the value at 'workload' symbolizes the mediation.*

## 5. Conclusions

This research focused on employee perceptions on organisational change, as a specific form of the concept of downsizing. At a sub-department of Rijkswaterstaat, Verkeer- and Watermanagement, the research was conducted among 148 internal advisors: their perceptions considering their wellbeing and performance, and the influence of workload, their perceived procedural justice and their employability were researched. The accompanying main question for this research was:

*“To what extents are VWM’s internal advisors’ performance and wellbeing affected by the way they experienced organisational change, and to what extent are these relationships mediated by workload and moderated by their employability and perceived procedural justice?”*

The research has shown that organisational change does not affect the way employees rate their own performance. That is to say, I hypothesized that organisational change would negatively affect the way people rate their own performance; it turned out that the employees of VWM rated their own performance very highly (8.1 on a scale of 10). The consequently positively filled in scale raises some question to say the least: a possible explanation could be that employees feel the urge to rate themselves highly out of fear of possibly losing their jobs or current position. This is a common ‘survivor-syndrome’ characteristic (Applebaum et al., 1997; Mossholder et al., 2000), which I will further address in the discussion. The hypothesis suggesting the relation between organisational change and performance turned out not to be insignificant, from which I could only conclude that organisational change does not negatively affect the way employees rate their own performance.

Wellbeing is a different story: it turned out that organisational change does have a significant and not to be denied negative effect on the wellbeing of employees. As expected beforehand, the wellbeing of employees is altered by the differences created by organisational change. New policy, new ways of working and new colleagues prove to be challenging: It is not surprising that organisational change doesn’t influence wellbeing *very* much in a negative way: reorganisation is not by definition a negative process, and organisations often create new processes to improve situations at work (Cascio, 1993, Boxall & Purcell, 2011). The fact that processes and policy at work change causes a stir and a shock among employees, which takes time for employees to deal with (Trevor & Nyberg, 2008). The founding of VWM started in 2013, so the actual effects of the reorganisation already had some time to incubate. However, the aftermath of change resonates through the organisation, as is shown by inconsistencies in the answering of the questionnaire: people scale themselves highly on a performance level, but also show a decrease in wellbeing which is correlated with their experience of organisational change. In all, I can conclude that VWM’s advisors are still affected by the new ways of working, but have found their ways with the new organisation: this is the case because they are still being affected in their wellbeing, but rate themselves as good performers anyhow.

The second part of the main question concerns a mediating factor. Not only does organisational change have a direct effect on their performance and wellbeing, it is

partially mediated by their experienced workload. Firstly, I have found that the change at RWS does still increase the perceived workload of the advisors, just as workload decreases the sense of wellbeing of employees. This is in line with theory and the posed hypotheses. Workload is a tenuous concept, due to the fact that both too much and too little can be counter-productive (Boxall & Purcell, 2011). Hypothesizing that workload negatively affects performance is, as I acknowledge, somewhat dubious, since an increase in workload can, according to theory, also enhance performance by making people work harder (Kantowitz, 2000; Boxall & Purcell, 2011). Not surprisingly, workload plays no mediating role in the relation between organisational change and performance: not only because that relation is not significant in the first place, but also because workload and performance turn out to not be significantly correlated in this research. I will elaborate on the use of a different performance scale in the discussion chapter.

Wellbeing is affected by workload, and so it turned out that workload does play a mediating role in this relation. Where workload can have an influence on performance when being either too high or too low, the influence on wellbeing is often linked with higher amounts of work. Of course, a lot has been written on too little workload causing boredom, which eventually distillates in less wellbeing, but workload mostly associated with having too much to do, resulting in stress and burnouts even (Vahatera, & Pentti, 1997). This research found that higher levels of workload decrease the sense of wellbeing of employees, which is in line with the posed hypotheses and theory.

The third part of the main question considers two moderating factors, which were both hypothesized to be decreasing the effect of organisational change on the other variables. As to be expected when reading this conclusion, no moderating effect has been found in the relation between organisational change and performance, for no significant relation exists between these two variables in the first place. There has been found a significant moderating effect of procedural justice in the relation between change and wellbeing: by feeling treated *less* justly, the effects of organisational change are enlarged and the effect on wellbeing becomes higher. I argued that feeling treated justly helps employees understand company choices and thus helps them cope with change. The research turned out this relation the other way, showing that feeling treated less just makes them understand less of the processes of change and thus show a decrease in perceived wellbeing. This does confirm that procedural justice plays a role in the dealing with organisational change.

Although the moderating effect of both willingness to change and up-to-date expertise on the relation between organisational change and workload were both not significant, discarding the related hypotheses, Johnson-Neyman technique showed that for a certain range of values a significant influence could be found. However, as with procedural justice, the effect of employability showed that if an employee scored lower levels of willingness to change and up-to-date expertise, the effect of organisational change on workload would be more negative. Said must be that the found area of significance only included a small change; a conclusion can thus be drawn that the extent of influence of employability as a moderating factor is not necessarily that important considering an increase in workload due to organisational change. This may imply that employees deal with organisational change on their own, with which I mean that reorganisation effects are not as negative as one would assume in the first place, and that being employable does not necessarily help employees in dealing with it in

terms of their perceived workload. For VWM this could mean that the change in workload due to organisational change is not something that causes and caused too many problems after all: how VWM implied its new policies and ways of working proves to be decent and clear, since it has not caused any notable negative reactions.

The moderating effect of willingness to change and up-to-date expertise on the relation between organisational change and wellbeing did turn out to be significant. Both factors of employability showed somewhat of a similar effect-size, which underlines that both are important parts of the concept. As with the other moderating variables, it turned out that being less employable makes effects of organisational change on wellbeing more negative. Where workload and performance turned out to be discussable concepts in the situation at VWM, effects on wellbeing stood out which leads to the conclusion that the perception of wellbeing at work is an important part of this research. Although the effects of the reorganisation and founding of VWM proved to be less dramatic as was expected at the beginning of this research, the aftermath of the downsizing practises on employee wellbeing were still noticeable. I must admit that, as mentioned in the theoretical framework as well, wellbeing can be influenced by many external factors of which it is almost impossible to take them all in account. Any research considering wellbeing would acknowledge this, although it is remarkable that clear results considering effects on wellbeing in this particular situation did prove to be significant. It can be concluded that being less employable makes it harder to cope with organisational change, leaving employees feeling more tense and stressful at work. For Rijkswaterstaat, this is a useful insight since investments in employability are usually long-term investments (van Vuuren, Caniëls & Semeijn, 2011): improving employee wellbeing on the long-term is valuable for any organisation, which leads to the practical conclusion that in order to make the reorganisation and the new department work, VWM should consider investing in the expertise of its employees: the effect of up-to-date expertise was larger than the effect of willingness to change, from which I can conclude that keeping employees educated and challenged can significantly reduce the impact of change on employees' wellbeing, since a lack of expertise can emphasise the inevitable negative effect of downsizing practises.

## 6. Discussion and suggestions

In this chapter, the results and conclusions of this research will be discussed. The research generated some interesting and unexpected outcomes, which will be addressed to here: firstly, those outcomes will be named and placed in a broader context to better comprehend them. Second, limitations of this research will be presented. Third, recommendations for future research will be mentioned.

### 6.1 A different approach to self-rated performance

A remarkable result of this research is that organisational change nor workload had a significant correlation with performance. Based on theory, it was expected that performance would be negatively affected due to changing circumstances, a more challenging environment and an increased amount of tasks. The pressure of reorganisation did however not have significant effects on how people perceived their own performance; quite the opposite could be stated since the participants scored an average of 4.29 on the self-rated performance scale. This is, on a scale from 1-5, remarkably high. Even before testing differences in, for example, different age or tenure groups, it can be stated that VWM's employees see themselves as good employees. After performance, one question was asked about a self-rated grade for each employee. On a scale from 1-10, employees could score themselves, resulting in an average grade of 8.01.

A few things could be the cause of this: firstly, one might argue that employees felt the urge to rate themselves high out of fear of losing their job or getting negative feedback from their managers. After all, they operate under supervision to some extent that questions their added value for the organisation. It could be perfectly comprehensible that the employees would at least make a statement by rating their performance as very high. After processes of organisational change and changes in jobs, it is logical for employees to question their own position at work. This might push them into presenting themselves as the best possible employees to be assured of their position at work. Especially in the Dutch public sector, where employees cannot easily be fired but where they can be replaced: there is not a lot of difference between a transfer to another company and a transfer to a different department (Dalton, 1997). People like to stay at their current position and are naturally reluctant to change (Vakola & Nikolau, 2005). The fact that employees rate themselves so high might be a sign to me as a researcher and to Rijkswaterstaat as their employer to show that they are at the right place right now, and need to stay there as time goes on.

This gives room for thought, which brings me to a second explanation for this outcome: the high scores on performance might imply that a measure for self-rated performance does not necessarily measure actual performance in this case and context. If employees get the change to rate how they perform labour at work, the underlying question might imply that employees rate the way they are *motivated* to perform. If employees do their best, how could they rate themselves as bad performers? Especially in times of organisational change it is to be expected that employees work hard in order to keep up with the organisation and keep their current jobs. A reorganisation is difficult for everyone involved, since everybody needs to find his or her way around with the new organization. In the aftermath of the founding of VWM, it can therefore be expected

that employees feel the urge to perform adequately in order to make VWM work. It would be interesting to investigate differences in self-rated performance between employees who are highly motivated at work and employees who are poorly motivated at work in order to test this assumption.

A second explanation for the insignificance of performance could be that the chosen measure of self-rated performance is not suitable in this situation. There proved to be no difference between age groups (when these age groups were made and divided in SPSS) and no difference in tenure. This, opposed to their perception of workload, is remarkable. Performance showed no significance with any of the other variables except for employability. I deliberately started the survey with questions about performance, with the idea to gain as much honest answers I could. However, the opposite may have been true. Possibly, the respondents were limited in the way they could express their own perceptions: on a scale of three items considering performance, it may be more tempting to score high at all three items. This is in line with the conclusion of Vandenaabeele (2009), who also noted a possible bias in the value of performance. However, in his article, he generalizes performance the same way as I did in this research and was also limited by access to certain information. This played a part in choosing his scale. As I noted in the theoretical framework, a more concrete definition of performance (such as pay, output, etc.) or, as others call it, a more formal instrument would possibly have been better, albeit that in public sector organisations the use of self-rated performance is more common and accepted (Vandenaabeele, 2009; Bright, 2007).

## **6.2 Stress and more reorganisations**

Whereas performance proved to be somewhat of a problem in this research, very interesting results were obtained when looking at the concept of wellbeing. In fact, the wellbeing-outcomes are arguably more important than any other, especially in a research that focuses on perceptions. Wellbeing is, as all variables in this research, a multi-interpretable concept and very dependent on a specific context. To illustrate this, wellbeing was approached from a professional setting as 'wellbeing at work'; Lots of research has been done on work-life balance and the importance of stable relationships at home for one's feeling of wellbeing at work. As written in the theoretical framework, it is fairly impossible for any research that includes the concept of wellbeing to take all possible factors that influence it in account.

Stress emerged very frequently in the literature used for this thesis. When designing the research, I tried to be as complete as possible and tried to avoid a focus that would be too specific and thus not representative for the group of respondents. Together with Rijkswaterstaat, the idea of this research was to create a complete as possible, general insight in the perceptions of the advisors in the aftermath of organisational change. Large concepts as wellbeing and performance were, from a practical point of view, inevitable. When looking at the literature and the outcomes of the research in hindsight, stress might play a larger role than one would expect. It can be argued that stress could play a predicting role and act as a moderator between organisational change and wellbeing (Bell, Rajendran & Theiler, 2012).

When looking at the reorganisation at Rijkswaterstaat, it is comprehensible that employees experience stress. The founding of VWM, the organisational change on which this research is built, is just one of many reorganisations employees had to deal with in



recent years. Although the outcomes provide an insight in the perceptions of employees in the aftermath of reorganisation, the next one is approaching at a rapid pace: in 2018, a new reorganisation will take place and further reduce the size of Rijkswaterstaat. Besides this, Rijkswaterstaat is essentially a government-controlled institution, which means that overarching policy is subject to politics. This makes working processes uncertain to some extent, solely due to the fact that people can not anticipate too far in the future. Employees have to deal with that knowledge and uncertainty, which could logically increase their stress-levels. As with downsizing effects, stress can have negative influences on people on both the short- and long-term (Lundberg & Frankenhaeuser, 1999; Boxall & Purcell, 2011). Internal job transfers can have a range of negative effects related to stress, such as exhaustion and strain (Halbesleben, Wheeler & Paustian-Underdahl, 2013). It is therefore of importance to acknowledge the fact that stress can be dangerous for organisations, especially when they have to encounter changing policy on a regular basis.

### **6.3 Willingness to change and up-to-date expertise**

Although such a changing context may have a negative impact, it must also be said that working for a public sector organization, and a government agency in particular, somewhat implies such a changing context by definition. People must be able to deal with the fact that every some period, policy changes due to new political choices, economic prosperity or setback and many more factors of influence. As I argued, it is beneficial for employees to be willing to change; however, being willing to change does not necessarily mean that employees accept all change they encounter, nor does it mean that they will change in an instant when asked. Especially when put in a challenging situation such as reorganization, it would be fairly ignorant to simply expect employees to be both willing to change and accepting those changes without any consent. The opinion and terms of the employee play a big part as well. People can show initiative for change, as was found in the moderating role of willingness to change to workload: it turned out that an area of significance was found where being willing to change actually increased the perception of workload. This may be the case due to the double standard of workload, meaning that both too much and too little is a negative thing. It could also mean that when people may be willing to change, but not willing to therefore accept all negative outcomes from reorganization by definition. Workload can still increase, even if people are ready to accept a change in the tasks they carry out. Future research around this factor of employability can take a more subtle approach to the concept of 'willingness to change', acknowledging the above.

I must note that there was one finding considering employability factors that raises questions. As willingness to change may have a deeper layer, as described above, the same could be the case for the concept of up-to-date expertise. When researching the moderating effect of up-to-date expertise on the relation between organizational change and workload, areas of significance were found in which having certain levels of up-to-date expertise would actually increase workload. This finding is contradictory to say the least; the suggestion that having up-to-date knowledge and expertise would eventually cause employees to have a higher sense of workload is remarkable. It could be argued that an increase in up-to-date expertise causes employees to become more eager to learn new things and work harder which would therefore increase their perceived workload: being able to do more enables someone to do more. This

interpretation could be elaborated, but not very relevant from a realistic point of view. The change in effect is not very big, and only the seemingly contradictory trend would imply a different approach to the concept. When future research would continue on the findings of this thesis, this finding has to be taken in account, even though the effect-size was not that big. Maybe, as with willingness to change, up-to-date expertise also implies that people can keep up with modern technology and ways of working, but do not necessarily prefer continuous development and automation processes, which may be redundant from their perspective.

#### **6.4 Limitations**

As with all research, this project also had its limitations. The choice for quantitative research alone is to be discussed in this particular case. Due to a lack of time at Rijkswaterstaat, it was difficult to arrange meetings and personal conversations in the starting phase of this research. The initial proposition for this research revolved around more rigorous downsizing practises and included the laying off of employees. The interviews gave more insight in the satiation at Rijkswaterstaat, which led to the conclusion that no employees were actually fired, but were transferred to other departments within Rijkswaterstaat or other Dutch executive ministries. Due to pragmatic reasons and a lack of time from Rijkswaterstaat, more in-depth interviews with other employees was not an option, leaving quantitative research the most suitable method to research their problem. It could be argued that having in-depth interviews over a larger period of time better attains a better insight in employee perceptions.

The is not necessarily a negative limitation, however: Since the group of respondents is so diverse and spread out over the country, both myself and my supervisor at RWS chose for a more pragmatic way of researching this problem. The arguments for quantitative research also lie in a suspected fairness people would have when they would have the chance to answer in private, instead of facing a researcher in person. The satisfaction survey, referred to as the *Tevredenheidsonderzoek*, which employees have been attending for over a year, seemed to have created a sense of research-overload for the employees of VWM: this may have resulted in reluctance towards in-depth interviews. I could not have succeeded in interviewing enough employees for this research to be of any value, for which we eventually choose a quantitative approach. However, I acknowledge that it would have been very valuable to speak with more employees and hear their complaints and stories in person. This would have been valuable to understand the situation a little better and thus be more solid in my explanations. A mixed-method approach, combining quantitative and qualitative research, would thus have probably been a more suitable way of researching the problems as posed by Rijkswaterstaat.

From a practical perspective, the response of the group of advisors was very satisfyingly high and representative for the entire group. It is not necessarily common that nearly three-quarters of a target group is willing to respond. For practical implications and interpretations, the validity of this research is thus very useful. From a theoretical perspective, I must acknowledge that the research is limited by the exclusivity of participants: only a very select group of people in an, internationally seen, unconventional situation took part in this research. Generalizing results for theoretical and scientific implications must for that reason understand that it could very well be that contextual factors play a large role in this research. On the other hand, both the

practical and theoretical relevance somewhat revolve around this uniqueness, whereas the specific downsizing situation at an organisation that is so protected by Dutch legislation is very interesting as opposed to a 'normal' private sector company.

### **6.5 Future research: a scale for organisational change**

The scale for organizational change is worth writing about a little more as well. It proved to be a very challenging task to find a proper measure for an excessive concept such as organisational change. That is, a measure for change at one given moment in time: longitudinal research is of course more suitable to really specific measure change and either positive or negative development (Willet, 1988). Even in such research, it is hard to capture 'change' in one scale, for it is always stripped down to a few measurable items. Even measures for downsizing proved to be hard to find, or were always downgraded to a single or few measurable concepts. It is, in a way, quite ironic that the concept of downsizing is often downsized.

Change and reorganisation have also yet again proven to be very context-dependent concepts. However this may sound very logically, much literature is based on the concept and does not really attempt to provide an adequate overarching scale. Even the 'founders' of downsizing literature, meaning some of the most influential writers in the beginning of downsizing literature - such as Cameron, Cascio, Spreizer and Mishra - did not provide an adequate 'downsizing-scale' in the articles used in this thesis. In an attempt to create one, a combination was made between information on change from scientific literature and information from the official RWS documents that were available to me, conversations with my supervisor from both VWM and the University, and common sense.

The scale was originally made just to give a primary insight in the degree of change at VWM, for no one was able to exactly pinpoint a list of specific changes. The scale would have initially served as a tool of insight, but was the first thing I measured in order to precede with the rest of this research. Simply put, if the majority of respondents answered 'this does not apply to me' on this scale, the point of the research would be fairly lost. However, not only did the scale prove to have a noticeable high reliability (.889), it also yielded some personal reactions and interesting primary results. First of all, the five options for answering need some more explanation. One may ask what the difference is between 'somewhat the same' and 'somewhat changed'. I deliberately put both of the answering options there for the following reasons: firstly, since this research revolves around employee perceptions, the same self-rated approach applies here, where 'somewhat the same' has a more positive connotation than 'somewhat changed'.

Future research could build on this scale in order to pursue an overarching measure for reorganisation, which could hopefully be applied to more organisations. It would not necessarily matter whether those organisations are public- or private sector organisations; the formulation of the scale and according questions has been deliberately composed in a general way. This research has shown that the scale provides a useful insight for both practical and theoretical implications. Adding to HRM-related literature, this measure in relation with variables that revolve around employee perceptions can be of good use in future research on change, reorganisation and downsizing practises. Especially since a common assumption with change is that only specific factors change: this is an underestimation, and it can't be stressed enough that almost everything changes when encountering a reorganisation (Cascio, 2015).

Although its negative impact has yet again been proven, I believe that downsizing does not have to be a dark practise on the long-term. As long as organisations are willing to be clear and open about their motives to enhance such practises, and as long as employees are willing to accept and understand those motives, organisational change can be fully embraced by all who are involved with it. Investment in personnel in terms of their health and mental wellbeing is above all important for any organisation encountering a phase of change.

## **6.6 Recommendations**

Dealing with organizational change is, as this research has shown, difficult. Although much has been written about this, organization still struggle with proper ways to tackle downsizing problems. For Rijkswaterstaat, the practical question revolved mainly around the added value of their advisors and their importance in the guiding of the new organization. Based on this research, I can only recommend that investing in the employability of employees is of great importance in order to keep working accordingly. From a strategic human resource management perspective, it has been proven that the way people perceive their own performance is not the main issue in dealing with organizational change: effects on wellbeing, albeit short- or long-term, prove to be of greater importance. Being fair about procedures and communicating them properly plays a role in dealing with organizational change. Besides that, one must not forget that being employable does not always mean that employees are open for anything. Especially in this particular situation, where organizational change is about to happen yet again, it is very important to monitor employee perceptions in order to prevent negative effects on wellbeing, rather than finding more and new ways of coping.

In line with findings of this research, Cascio (2004) writes nine ways of dealing with downsizing in a proper manner: he firstly advises people to consider the rational behind the organizational change in order for employees to understand *why* it is happening. Second, he emphasizes that people do not naturally like change and should thus consider the virtues of a stable situation at work. Third, he stresses the fact that employee input in change management is of importance in order to maintain trust. As a fourth factor, he mentions that top-management should play an exemplifying role: in the case of Rijkswaterstaat, this would be an argument against the double pressure put on the advisors. Fifthly, also in line with the conclusions of this thesis, he emphasizes the importance of fairness of procedures and the perception of those procedures when organizational change is inevitable. Continuous communication and keeping employees up-to-date is a sixth recommendation. The investment in employees in terms of giving them a good reason to not grow any turnover intentions is the seventh point he mentions, followed by the eight point which states that training both management and personnel is an important factor in dealing with change. Finally, he mentions that when encountering change, it is important to keep track of all facets that are subject to this change (Cascio, 2004). These recommendations embody dealing with change in a very broad perspective, for which it is relevant to mention. As long as Rijkswaterstaat acknowledges the findings of this research, and is open to take a direct approach to communicating and executing new policy without forgetting the effects it has on employees, organizational change does not necessarily have to be a dark HR practice after all.

## 8. References

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**Other resources:**

*Totaalrapportage september-oktober 2015: 'Mijn beleving van de organisatieverandering'*  
Rijkswaterstaat. (2015)

Houtskoolschets Rijkswaterstaat Verkeer- en Watermanagement (2013)

*"Mijn beleving van de organisatieverandering"* Rijkswaterstaat (2015)

**Websites:**

<https://www.rijkswaterstaat.nl/over-ons/onze-organisatie/organisatiestructuur/index.aspx>

<https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/ontslag/documenten/besluiten/2015/05/11/ontslagregeling>,

<http://ontslag-krijgen.nl/ontslag/ontslagrecht-ambtenaren>

<http://afhayes.com/index.html>

## 9. Appendix

Figure 10, organisational structure Rijkswaterstaat

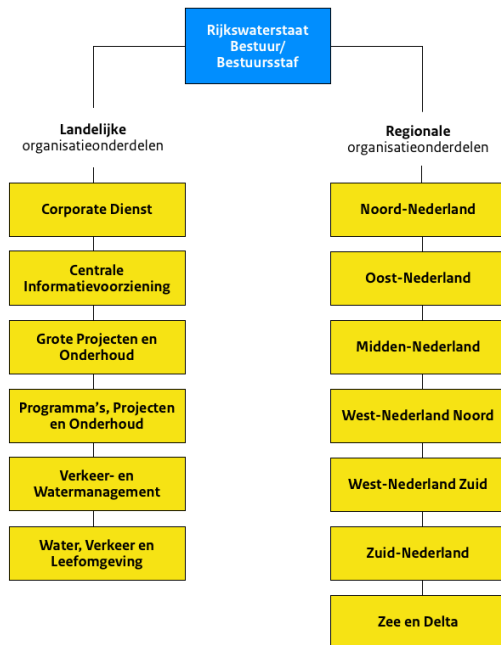
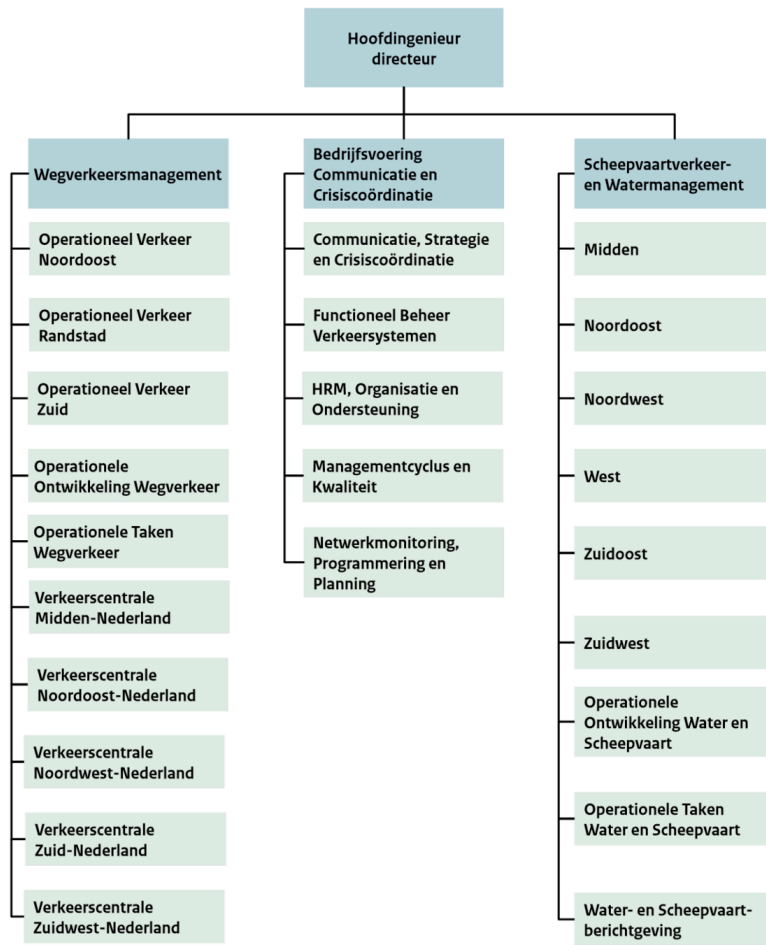


Figure 11, organisational structure Verkeer- en Watermanagement



## Onderzoek Verkeer- en Watermanagement

Dank voor uw deelname

Geachte medewerker van Verkeer- en Watermanagement,

Mijn naam is Frank Kars, masterstudent Strategisch HRM aan de Universiteit Utrecht. Met toestemming vanuit Verkeer- en Water Management doe ik een afstudeeronderzoek naar de werkbeleving en ervaringen van adviseurs en ondersteunend personeel met de reorganisatie en het bijbehorende herplaatsings-proces dat in 2015 is afgerond. De uitkomsten van het onderzoek worden inzichtelijk gemaakt, om zo een beeld te krijgen van de heersende percepties binnen VWM.

Graag nodig ik u uit om deel te nemen aan dit onderzoek door op de volgende pagina's een korte vragenlijst in te vullen. Dit kost u slechts 5 tot 10 minuten.

Belangrijk: Deelname aan het onderzoek is volledig anoniem. Niemand binnen Verkeer- en Watermanagement krijgt uw antwoorden te zien. Uw privacy is gegarandeerd, uw gegevens worden anoniem opgeslagen en enkel door mij verwerkt. Gerapporteerde resultaten van dit onderzoek zullen nooit tot individuele antwoorden te herleiden zijn.

Eventuele opmerkingen kunt u aan het einde van de vragenlijst kwijt. Voor vragen kunt u mij benaderen via het emailadres: f.j.kars@students.uu.nl

Ik bedank u alvast hartelijk voor uw deelname!

Met vriendelijke groet,

Frank Kars

### 1. Uw werk bij Verkeer- en Watermanagement

	grotendeels mee				
	geheel mee oneens	oneens	niet oneens, niet eens	grotendeels mee eens	geheel mee eens
1. Naar mijn mening draag ik bij aan het succes van VWM	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Ik vind dat ik goed presteer bij VWM	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Ik vind dat ik een goede werknemer ben.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### \* 2. 4. Hoe heeft uw leidinggevende tijdens uw meest recente RKW[resultaat- en kwaliteitsgericht werken]- of functioneringsgesprek uw prestaties beoordeeld?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Vul een cijfer in van 1 t/m 10, waarbij 1 de meest negatieve en 10 de meest positieve beoordeling is.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### 3. Gedurende de afgelopen vier weken voelde ik mij tijdens mijn werk ....

	grotendeels mee				
	geheel mee oneens	oneens	niet oneens, niet eens	grotendeels mee eens	geheel mee eens
5. Gespannen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Kalm	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Ontspannen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Bezorgd	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Ongemakkelijk	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Tevreden	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

#### 4. Veranderingen

	grotendeels mee				
	geheel mee oneens	oneens	niet oneens, niet eens	grotendeels mee eens	geheel mee eens
1. De nieuwe ontwikkelingen die zich in mijn functie voordoen, zie ik echt als een vooruitgang.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Tegenwoordig houd ik een werkdag lichamelijk minder goed vol dan vroeger.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Werkzaamheden waar ik goed in ben, worden steeds minder van belang.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Als Rijkswaterstaat mij de kans biedt op nieuwe werkervaringen dan grijp ik die graag aan.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Mijn werk als adviseur is de laatste jaren inhoudelijk veranderd.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Ik vind het belangrijk om mezelf breed te ontwikkelen, zodat ik ook andere functies binnen de organisatie kan uitvoeren.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Geestelijk inspannend werk kan ik tegenwoordig minder goed aan.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Technologische ontwikkelingen maken veel van mijn kennis en vaardigheden overbodig.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Ik ben <i>niet</i> bereid om in een andere functie te gaan werken.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. De veranderingen die VWM doorvoert zijn strijdig met waar het in mijn werk om draait.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. Veel werkzaamheden houd ik minder lang vol dan jonge collega's.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. In het geval van organisatorische veranderingen wil ik graag op mijn huidige afdeling blijven.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. In het geval van organisatorische veranderingen wil ik graag met mijn huidige collega's blijven werken.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. Veel vaardigheden die ik bezit worden tegenwoordig niet meer op prijs gesteld.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15. Technologische ontwikkelingen kan ik gemakkelijk bijhouden.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16. Veranderingen op mijn werk vind ik vervelend.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## 5. Uw prestaties

	geheel mee oneens	grotendeels mee oneens	niet oneens, niet eens	grotendeels mee eens	geheel mee eens
1. Ik heb genoeg tijd om mijn werk succesvol uit te voeren.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Mijn baan heeft <i>geen</i> zware werkdruk.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Ik moet hard werken bij VWM.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Ik moet snel werken bij VWM.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Ik ervaar meer werkdruk dan voor de reorganisatie.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Tijdens de reorganisatie heb ik mijn mening en gevoelens voldoende kunnen uiten.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Ik heb invloed gehad op mijn verplaatsing van mijn vorige werkplek naar VWM.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Er is zijn tijdens de reorganisatie zonder vooroordelen en vooringenomenheid keuzes gemaakt door mijn leidinggevende.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. De verplaatsing van medewerkers naar VWM is volgens een eerlijk proces verlopen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Tijdens de reorganisatie ben ik met waardigheid en respect behandeld door mijn leidinggevende.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Tijdens de reorganisatie heeft mijn leidinggevende mij voorzien van accurate en duidelijke informatie.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## 6. Er is na de start van Verkeer- en Watermanagement veel voor mij veranderd, zoals:

	1 = geheel hetzelfde gebleven	2 = enigszins hetzelfde gebleven	3 = enigszins veranderd	4 = geheel veranderd	5 = niet van toepassing
7. Mijn fysieke werkplek	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Mijn directe collega's	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. De inhoud van mijn werk	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Mijn zin om te werken	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. Mijn werkplezier	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. Mijn contact met mijn leidinggevende	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



**7. Wat is uw geslacht?**

- Vrouw
- Man
- Wil ik niet zeggen

**8. In welk jaar bent u geboren?**

**9. Wat is uw hoogst genoten opleiding?**

- Basisonderwijs/lager onderwijs
- LBO/VMBO/MAVO
- MBO
- HAVO/VWO/MMS/HBS/Gymnasium
- HBO
- WO (Universiteit/Post-HBO)
- Overig
- Wil ik niet zeggen

**10. Hoe lang werkt u al bij Rijkswaterstaat?**

Afsluiten