

GENERAL DIRECTION OF ARCHAEOLOGY, FINE ARTS AND LANDSCAPE
SERVICE II
CIRCULAR 4

Subject: Concession of research and archaeological excavations (Legislative Decree 22.01.2004, No. 42, Articles 88-89). Instrument of address in relation to requests for excavation and research concessions

PREMISE

In implementation of the functions and tasks referred to in Article 2 of Ministerial Decree no. 44 of 23 January 2016, this Department considers it appropriate to continue updating the procedures related to the granting of the concession for archaeological research and excavations, pursuant to Articles 88 and 89 of Legislative Decree 42/2004, by reordering the directives issued with the previous circulars, coordinating them with the current regulatory principles on the subject and providing procedural guidance for future requests for excavation and research concessions.

This activity is necessary, in particular, in consideration of the progressive implementation of the reorganization of the structure of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities, arranged with the DD.MM. (Acts) nn. 43 and 44 of 23th January 2016 and with the D.M. 198 of 9th April 2016, that have entered their operational phase. This activity is also aimed at responding to the need to enhance the standardization of documentation and the rationalization of procedures, in order to ensure greater efficiency and speed of procedures, as well as the need to make more effective the safeguard of the discovered archaeological items. This is also done with the aim of a more precise control on the research activity, on the conditions in which the sites are left at the end of the annual excavation campaigns, as well as on the preservation methods applied of the finds.

LEGAL PREMISE

D.M. 44/2016 - Competences

In order to outline the overall and homogeneous picture of the subject, it is worth recalling a summary of the regulatory and procedural references relating to the granting of research and archaeological excavations.

As is well known, the general rules governing the execution of archaeological research and the granting of excavation and research concessions are dictated by articles 88 and 89 of Legislative Decree 42/2004, which establish that archaeological research activities are reserved to the MiBAC¹, which may exercise them directly or entrust them in concession to public or private entities. In particular, pursuant to art. 2, letter e) of Ministerial Decree 44/2016, this concessionary function is attributed to the exclusive competence of the General Directorate for Archaeology, Fine Arts and Landscape.

The procedures for entrusting the execution of archaeological excavations to any subject different from the State are dictated by the articles of Chapter IV of Royal Decree No. 363 of 30 January 1913² (and, in particular, by Articles 100-101, 103-104, 106-108) and by circulars and related letters of this Ministry³.

In this framework, from the date of issue of this Circular, the procedural indications and procedures

¹ Translation note: the MiBAC is the Italiana Minstry for the Cultural Heritage and the Cultural Activities.

² Translation note: Italy became a Republic after the Second World War; in 1913 Italy was a Kingdom. but several Royal Acts have been imported in the laws of the Republic and if never diversely decided, they are still valid nowadays.

³ Circular n. 94 of 10.07.2000 of the Central Office for Environmental, Architectural, Archaeological, Artistic and Historical Heritage; circular letters prot. 14184 of 30.09.2004 and prot. 958 of 04.10.2005; circular n. 24 of 04.12.2012 of the Directorate General for Antiquities, n. 3 of 09.02.2015 and n. 6 of 15.02.2016 of the Directorate General for Archaeology; n. 21 of 25.10.2016 of the Directorate General for Archaeology, Fine Arts and Landscape.

contained in the previous Circular no. 21 of 25 October 2016 of this General Directorate, concerning authorizations for investigation activities that do not involve earthmoving, but that are not performed directly by the Superintendencies, must be considered revoked.

In this regard, we outline that, following the issue of Ministerial Decree no. 44/2016, registered by the competent Control Office of the Acts of the Court of Auditors on 29 February 2016, the previous General Directorate for Archaeology, issued with Article 14 of the organization regulations approved by D.P.C.M. n. 71 /2014, has been suppressed, as well as the Superintendence of Archaeology referred to in Article 33 of the same provision, and the responsibilities of the sector have been attributed, at central level, to the only General Directorate for Archaeology, Fine Arts and Landscape (ABAP) and, at peripheral level, to the Superintendence of Archaeology, Fine Arts and Landscape (ABAP).

In addition, in defining the tasks of the General ABAP Director, Article 2, paragraph 2, letter e) of Ministerial Decree no. 44/2016 established that it is up to the General ABAP Director to give "*in concession to public or private entities the execution of archaeological research or works aimed at the discovery of cultural heritage, in accordance with Article 89 of the Code*".

Given the generic nature of the formula, the normative dictation must, obviously, be interpreted in an extensive manner, including in its definition any research activity or work that, regardless of the mode of conduct, is aimed at the identification of archaeological heritage, whether it is performed with non-invasive methods or through excavation campaigns.

This interpretation brings together very different activities. In particular, while excavation activities often take several (possibly many) years to be completed, non-invasive investigations (geophysical surveys, photogrammetric or hyperspectral surveys carried out with the help of a drone or by plane or using satellite data, etc..) might require a few days or at most several weeks to be carried out, depending on the case. Even if archaeological excavations and non-invasive methods of investigation have been actively and fruitfully collaborating together in the field for a long time now, it is semantically wrong to combine two types of research so different from each other in regulatory terms. Moreover and above all, this can have negative repercussions on multidisciplinary research activities, which nowadays constitute a universally recognized key factor for enhancing the knowledge and the correct exploiting of the archaeological sites, in a way that is as much a possible scientifically deep and rigorous.

In the light of the renewed organizational structure, and in particular considering the fact that also architects and art historians have been appointed to the direction the newly established Superintendence ABAP and, therefore, because of the consequential varied composition (in terms of professional skills) of the territorial managers of the Superintendencies ABAP, it is considered in any case inopportune to confirm the delegations granted at the time (in apparent continuity with the pre-existing organizational structure) by the General Director for Archaeology, Fine Arts and Landscape to the territorial managers (not all archaeologists). Among other things those delegations were valid only for the year 2017, as specified since the subject of the same measure and, therefore, for the future, the granting of **the concession to applicants that are not part of the BAC Administration for the execution of non-invasive archaeological research is of exclusive competence of this General Directorate for Archaeology, Fine Arts and Landscape.**

The archaeological skills are not, and were not, of the exclusive pertinence of the Superintendents but they were and are competences of the Superintendencies meant as work groups. The current ABAP Superintendencies derive from the merge of the previous Archaeological Superintendencies with the previous Architectural and Landscape Heritage Superintendencies. Consequently, archaeological competencies are inside the current ABAP Superintendencies, thanks to the archaeologists who work in them, regardless of whether the local Superintendent is himself/herself an archaeologist or not. The statements contained in this point of the circular seriously disown these professionalisms, while instead the archaeologists working in the ABAP Superintendencies are

people who have been doing their job for years with competence and often self-denial. In particular, the archaeologists working in the Superintendences have the opportunity to know the territories and the archaeological problems of the various sites within their competence certainly better than a single centralized structure. Among other things, as we will emphasize in the following parts of the circular, important functions of control and verification are delegated to the local ABAP Superintendences. These functions evidently require archaeological skills, which in this way are implicitly recognized in the same document that explicitly disowns them. There is a clear contradiction that unjustifiably mortifies these skills.

Valletta Convention - art. 3 measures to safeguard the archaeological heritage

In accordance with the principles contained in the "European Convention for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage, approved in Valletta on 16 January 1992", introduced into the internal legal system with the ratification law n. 57 of 29 April 2015:

- the execution of any archaeological research by private individuals and/or public entities other than the MiBAC must necessarily be subject to the prior and specific licensing procedure referred to in art. 89 of Legislative Decree no. 42/2004 with the consequent impossibility of resorting to different procedural forms, which, therefore, will be considered illegitimate. Therefore, it will be the responsibility of these Superintendences to invite the holders of agreements concerning excavations and archaeological research to submit a regular request for a concession, if they intend to continue the activity already underway;
- MiBAC is responsible for monitoring the adequacy of the documentation of the deposits found and the proper preservation of any structures, which the dealers must ensure through the implementation of appropriate restoration work (according to the directives provided by the competent Superintendence) and / or through the reinterpretation of the excavation areas for conservation purposes. The Superintendence will therefore be responsible for ensuring that the concessionaires provide exhaustive documentation of the investigations carried out and the measures adopted for the conservation of the evidence found;
- it falls within the competence of the MiBAC to ensure that archaeological research is carried out only by qualified persons with adequate specialization. It should be noted that, it is categorically excluded the possibility that subjects other than graduates or university students in archaeological disciplines or related topics (including in this definition, for example (but not limited to) physical anthropology, geoarchaeology, archaeology, paleobotany etc..) can take part to the archaeological excavation. Other subjects can collaborate, if formalized agreements have been taken, to activities collateral to the excavation, or they can assist to excavation for educational purposes.

To this end, it will be a task of the Superintendences to assess with particular attention those requests for concessions for excavation that should provide for the involvement of amateurs and enthusiasts, regardless of whether the excavation activity is free of charge or not.

In order to carry out this type of control, it is clear that archaeological skills are needed. This provides more evidence to the fact that for the Superintendence it is mortifying not to see recognized and confirmed their right and duty to issue concessions for excavation and possibly non-invasive research (which in some cases the same Superintendences have directly commissioned in the past).

In relation to this last aspect, please note that requests for concessions that include the formula of the *Summer School*, or similar formulas, may be accepted only on condition that the participants are archaeologists or students of archaeology and that the proceeds from the participation fees are used to cover the costs of the participants' own board, lodging and insurance, or the out-of-pocket expenses associated with the conduction of the campaign. Such proceeds shall not in any case constitute a profit for the concessionaire, since the archaeological excavation is an activity aimed at

the knowledge, protection and enhancement of the cultural heritage, to be carried out in a relationship of collaboration with the Administration and not for profit.

Summer Schools can be important moments to encourage research and education at the same time. It is not by chance, for example, that the European Cost Actions have financed many schools, some of which have carried out non-invasive investigations in archaeological sites or monuments of cultural interest. In addition, many schools have been organized by Italian universities, foreign universities and various research institutions (Italian and from other countries) and have sometimes provided non-invasive prospecting in archaeological sites or more generally in places of cultural interest. Moreover, Summer Schools with non-invasive prospecting of archaeological sites are useful not only for archaeologists and students in archaeology but also for many geophysicists, geologists, engineers, doctoral students and professionals who can learn a lot and can give to the archaeologists working in those sites the opportunity to acquire useful data. Finally, it may or may not be acceptable that there are no personal fees for those who organize and contribute to the success of a school but, in any case, we believe it is fair that explicit reimbursement fees should be provided for teachers. The circular does not clarify this point and it even seems to imply a contrary opinion. Moreover, we think that the case of Foundations and no-profit associations and organizations should be treated differently than the case of a company. In fact, no-profit subjects reuse any money earned for their mission and not for providing any personal profit. Incidentally, it is worth noting that a Summer School can also end up in the red.

In short, schools on archaeological sites are a good thing, but this passage of the circular almost seems to look at them with suspicion and hinders the work of those who want to organize them, customarily only for the sake of his job, culture and research.

Discovery prize in favour of the owner ex Art. 92 L. D.,es. 42/2004

In order to limit as much as possible the expenses related to discovery prizes, it should be noted that no requests for excavations and researches in lands owned by private individuals will be authorized, unless there is an explicit declaration of renunciation of the prize by the owner or a declaration by the concessionaire to take charge of it, paying directly to the person entitled the amount to be calculated on the basis of the calculations made by the competent Superintendence and keeping this Administration exempted from any adverse financial consequences.

In this regard, it should be noted that, by virtue of the opinion of the Legislative Office of the Ministry prot. 4167 of 13 March 2013, transmitted by Circular 8/2013 of the General Directorate for Antiquities, it is admissible that the concessionary or another juridical entity indicated by it assumes the responsibility to pay discovery prizes, but no single person can do it, because individuals cannot offer the necessary guarantees for solvency, given that the request for the prize may be made by the entitled people even years after the discovery of archaeological goods, even if only within the ordinary chronological limits prescribed by the jurisprudence.

With regard to the local authorities that are also owners of fields interested by the excavations under concession, the Council of State has clearly established the principle that they are not entitled to achieve any discovery prize because they are entities institutionally aimed "to the achievement of the public interest in the conservation and enhancement of the cultural heritage of the community" (Council of State, Section VI, judgment no. 2302/2015). Notwithstanding, it is repeated here that it is appropriate to continue to explicitly request the renounce, as a precautionary measure. This is because the quoted verdict of the Council of State decided on a specific case, is a mere juridical precedent case and does not constitute a general law.

PROCEDURAL INDICATIONS

The concessions will have a minimum duration of one year and a maximum term of three years, with possibility of renewals.

The circular associates the excavation and research concessions, in conformity to the folder "Concession of research and excavations", although the following context mostly refers to the excavation concessions. However, it is right to stress that applying for the concession of a one year non-invasive research is inconceivable. In particular, non-invasive researches do not include excavations and therefore do not include material finds, so it is right to consider them separately, allowing to the same concessionaire of the excavation (or the Superintendences if there is not currently an excavation concessionaire for a certain site) the possibility of commissioning or granting any non-invasive investigations. Incidentally, this can facilitate and speed up the possibility of presenting projects at regional, national and international level, for which there are sometimes tight deadlines and for which having to follow a slow administrative process (certainly slower than achieving a declaration of intents from the concessionaire of the excavation) at national level could mean failing to present the project, thus losing valuable opportunities to finance our research and our culture, which is an essential part of our future.

With regard to the submission of future applications, following the provisions of circular no. 37 of September 17, 2018, it should be noted that as part of the collaboration between this Department, through the "Istituto Centrale per l'Archeologia", and the General Management Organization for the implementation of the New Portal of Procedures of the MiBAC, and in line with the provisions of Legislative Decree no. 82 of March 7, 2005, a new form for the submission of applications for excavation concessions has been prepared, resulting in simplification, speeding and dematerialization of the procedure.

Pending the activation of this Portal, which in the future will allow the entire process to be managed online, the forms will be downloadable from February 4, 2019 from the folder "Concessions of research and excavations", specially prepared on the website of this Directorate - Central Institute for Archaeology, at the address:

http://www.ic_archeo.beniculturali.it

The operating instructions for the compilation of the above mentioned forms constitute the Annex 1 of this circular.

It should be noted that the amount of documents provided for in the procedure will remain the same and, therefore, the institutions applying for the concession of excavation will have to attach the following to their applications:

- a) an application for the concession of excavation dated and signed by the legal representative of the requesting body, in which the name of the sole excavation director must be clearly indicated (without prejudice to the possibility of sharing the scientific responsibility for the research among several subjects), including the exhaustive list of all the bodies involved in the project for various reasons;
- b) a detailed business plan;
- c) a programmed report on the research activities planned, broken down per year in the case of multiannual requests;
- d) piece of the cadastral plan showing the parcels concerned by the surveys;
- e) georeferenced plan of the excavation area;
- f) the professional curriculum vitae of the excavation director, if not already provided in advance;
- g) the organization chart showing the roles and institutions of the staff members with positions of responsibility for the excavation;
- h) a declaration of renunciation of the discovery prize by the concessionary body, signed by its legal representative and accompanied by a copy of the valid identity document;
- i) a declaration of waiver of the discovery prize, as a precautionary measure, signed by the excavation director accompanied by a copy of the valid identity document;
- j) a declaration of renunciation of the discovery prize of finding, as a precautionary measure, signed by each member of the staff who have positions of responsibility for the excavation, each of which accompanied by a copy of a valid identity document of the signer;
- k) a declaration of renunciation of the discovery prize by the owners of the buildings, if different

from the State, or a declaration of acceptance, by the concessionaire, of any amounts due in this respect, signed by the legal representative of the requesting body;

- l) a declaration for the acceptance by the concessionaire, signed by the legal representative of the requesting body, of any possible cost due to the temporary occupation of the land interested by the archaeological investigations;
- m) a declaration, signed by the excavation director and/or the body applying for the concession, concerning insurance cover for all the people involved in the excavation and/or a copy of the relevant insurance policies; in case of renewal, a copy of the insurance policy must also be attached;
- n) an end of excavation plan updated to the last campaign with provision for further expansions;
- o) detailed maps of the individual tests on an appropriate scale;
- p) photographic documentation consisting of 4-8 significant images of the surveys conducted;
- q) proof of having delivered the scientific documentation to the competent local office.

In the case of renewals, in fact, the telematic sending of the documentation necessary for the acceptance of the request does not imply the fulfilment of the preventive obligation, at the end of the investigations, of the delivery to the competent peripheral Office of all the scientific documentation.

The concessionaires will send to the local offices of reference, preferably through PEC, the complete documentation in its entirety, in digital format, within a folder as specified in Annex 1.

The peripheral Offices, having verified the completeness of the documentation and carried out the appropriate evaluations, will insert the *file* with the relative opinion card in the folder above, which can also be downloaded from the *link* above.

It will be the responsibility of these Superintendencies to verify before forwarding to this Direction that the documents produced by the bodies requesting the concession of excavation, both for renewals and for new requests, are complete with all the necessary information and statements, and in particular:

I. that the excavation plan contains the forecast of expenditure for the backfilling of the excavated area and the design indication of the methods to be adopted for the purpose, paying attention to differentiate the procedures required in the event of total exhaustion of archaeological presences or in any case in completely disrupted stratified soils from those required for the protection of unexcavated soils, the investigation of which is postponed to subsequent initiatives, as well as the procedures for the protection of structures that remain, even temporarily, in the site. If for various reasons, and especially for the possible imminence of other interventions of enhancement and restoration, these Superintendencies consider the covering inappropriate, they can report on the matter, so dismissing the concessionaire from his/her tasks. This also applies to concessions in course;

It is very clear that the delegation of such a control activity, which also applies to excavation concessions already granted and which could therefore even lead to their revocation, needs to require, and consequently has to acknowledge, the archaeological competences of the ABAP Superintendencies.

II. that the business plan is detailed and adequate to the commensurate with the engagements that the applicant for the concession intends to assume. In the case of multiannual concessions, the plan has to be broken down per year and has to contain:

- a) an undertaking of obligation towards this Administration, to be guaranteed also through the stipulation of a specific guarantee policy, to keep it free from any liability action in case of harmful events against the persons involved in the excavation operations, and to guarantee the safety of all operators in the field, with the explicit assumption of all the relative legal obligations;

b) a percentage not smaller than 15% of the total economic allocation for research, reserved expressly for the restoration of the possibly discovered movable structures and materials. The restoration has to be started within the solar year during which the archaeological investigations were carried out. **In this regard, the start of the research for the following year will not be allowed if the restorations relating to the findings of previous years have not been completed. The Superintendents are directly responsible for the punctual respect of this condition;**

c) a sum, not smaller than 15% of the total economic allocation for research, reserved expressly for the safety and/or for covering the excavation area at the end of the campaign, subject to the use of appropriate measures for the protection of structures and/or artefacts found during the research (for example, to cover the structures with non-woven fabric and layers of sterile landfill) on the basis of the instructions that will be given in this regard by these Superintendences. This holds also in the case when it is necessary to provide for the adoption of temporary protection measures of the area under investigation until the new resumption of research;

III. that the professional *curriculum* of the excavation director, identified on the basis of the specific skills acquired for university and post-graduate training in the archaeological field, for the activities carried out and duly documented, contains the explicit indication of its specific preparation and consistent with the research to be undertaken.

Should we need a further recognition for the archaeological skills of the ABAP Superintendences, we read here that they even evaluate (and therefore can promote or reject) the scientific curriculum of the concessionaire of the excavations, which in most cases is a university professor.

Please note that the same excavation director may not carry out, for each year, researches in more than three sites, at the same time or at different times;

IV. a brief, but well-articulated, report of the campaigns previously carried out on the same site, with an illustration of the results obtained.

The requests for renewal shall be also accompanied by:

- a detailed report on the activities carried out during the last excavation campaign, with explicit reference to the conservation and restoration activities carried out on the structures brought to light and/or to the solutions adopted for the safety and covering of the excavation area as well as the conservation activities on the mobile materials found;
- the declaration that the list of materials has been delivered to the Superintendences.

The file, complete with the opinion form, will be sent, by the local offices, to dg-abap.concessionidiscavo@beniculturali.it (which you are invited to contact for any clarifications) within 45 days from the date of receipt of the request, so as to allow the DG-ABAP to conclude the procedure within 90 days.

90 days can be an enormous amount of time, proving that this measure does not speed up the excavation concessions. If an application for a research project has to be submitted, 90 days is a deadly time in most cases.

OBLIGATIONS OF THE CONCESSIONAIRE

Restoration of structures

The concessionaire is required to promptly carry out the interventions (consolidation, shoring, beating, draining, roofing, fencing, *etc.*) aimed at guaranteeing the conservation, protection from external agents, natural and otherwise, and from other causes of deterioration of all the structures

found during the excavation.

The concessionaire is in any case required to carry out the final consolidation and restoration work, agreed in advance with the local Superintendence at the end of the excavation campaign.

Conservation measures for mobile equipment

The concessionaire has to guarantee in any moment the security conditions and the access to the competent officials of the deposits in which the mobile equipment is stored.

At the end of the campaign, the movable finds must be formally delivered to the Superintendence, in accordance with the following indications:

- the archaeological material recovered during the excavation, after washing, must be kept in containers in an orderly manner, with precise indication of the origin, the number of US and the date of discovery;
- the archaeological materials, if necessary for their correct conservation and/or for the needs of graphic and photographic documentation, must be the subject of preliminary restorations, agreed in advance with the Superintendence itself;

Therefore, the Superintendences are also competent with regard to restoration issues.

- for materials not considered necessary for the study and use of the context under investigation, after examination by the competent officials of the Superintendence, it will be possible to agree on a different destination (for example a burying);
- an exhaustive list of all the fund materials must be drawn up.

The materials themselves may be given for temporary storage to the concessionaire for scientific purposes (e.g. study, final restoration and publication). In this case, a regular memorandum of the delivery has to be written and the duration of the deposit has to be established. The Superintendence can at any moment require access to the place where the materials are stored. At the end of the pre-established deposit period, which may be renewable, the Superintendence decides on the final destination of the goods.

Delivery of excavation documentation

At the end of each campaign, the concessionaire, independently from the study and publication forecasts of the results of the research, is required to submit to the Superintendence the scientific report with attached documentation of the excavation, including US cards, graphic and photographic material along with the aforementioned list of materials found.

OBLIGATIONS OF THE SUPERINTENDENCE

In expressing its opinion of competence, the Superintendence is required first of all to verify whether the activity proposed by the applicants for scientific, educational and/or fruition and enhancement purposes:

-is or is not in line with the need to safeguard the archaeological heritage;

-is consistent with the research programs developed or already started by the Superintendence itself, highlighting the usefulness, value and importance or the existence of aspects and / or problems that may adversely affect the proper and timely execution of the research activity subject to concession;

From this passage, we deduce that the Superintendences develop and launch research programs. We were already aware of this and we believe that the Superintendences should have the opportunity to do so for the future on their own initiative, without the need for a central body to put any useless (if not harmful) bureaucratic restraints on these activities.

-is able to have an immediate and/or future impact on the management of the territory under its jurisdiction, especially with regard to conservation problems relating to any structures brought to

light and the finds found.

The final advice of the Superintendence should also highlight the following aspects:

- the methods of finding or adapting the spaces intended for the storage of the finds, as well as the methods of handing them over to the concessionaires for study purposes;
- the economic or organizational impact that the methods of conducting research, once authorized, will have on the activities of each office;
- **the conditions under which, in the past, at the end of each campaign, the sites under investigation were left, by the same concessionary institution, also in different areas. In any case, if the advice concerns the renewal of a concession under a multi-year research program, it has to indicate the condition under which the relevant site has been left. Moreover, the advice has to indicate, also through appropriate photographic documentation, the cases of missed restoration or missed consolidation of the found structures or mobile objects (especially metal finds or in any case particularly perishable material), the cases of incomplete or too summary lists of the findings themselves, the cases of inadequate coverages of the explored land carried out with little accuracy or with any damage or risk to properties or persons, etc.**

It should be noted that the objective of ensuring greater uniformity, speed and efficiency in the procedures for issuing authorizations remains a prior requirement for this Department and, therefore, this act renews the request to these Superintendences to appoint a single contact person for excavation concessions (without prejudice to the specific responsibilities of the officials responsible for the various territorial areas) and to inform the undersigned, if this has not already been done, of the name and contact details of this person.

If an appointed referent for the excavation concessions is needed, which can only be an archaeologist, we do not see why this person cannot also have a proxy to grant himself / herself excavation concessions.

Incomplete or different applications will be considered inadmissible.

The specifications regarding the delivery formats of the documentation at the end of the excavation will be detailed in a forthcoming circular.

Finally, the ABAP Superintendences shall write and transmit to this Office the list of all the applications for excavation concessions and possibly other researches to be done in areas managed by Museum Poles or Institutes with special autonomy. The list shall be complete with the appropriate specifications related to the location of the areas of excavation, so that this Direction will have the possibility to inform appropriately the competent Offices (General Direction Museums, Museum Poles, etc..).

If the intention is really to implement and follow procedures that pursue both common sense and efficiency, we believe that an excavation concession or a permit for non-invasive research on a site operated by a Museum Pole should be granted or denied by that Museum Pole itself (due to the fact that in the Museum Pole also work many archaeologists). On the contrary, we deduce that a concession for excavations or researches requested to a Museum Pole for a site of its competence should (if the Museum Pole evaluates it positively) be passed to a Superintendence that then will have to evaluate it and pass it in its turn to the National Archaeological Direction for the definitive permission or denial. Among other things, the Museum Poles should be responsible for their actions on the territory to the National Museums Directorate, which in this passage of the document is instead completely ignored.

All the local offices in the address are invited to give maximum publicity to this circular and to the new formats of compilation, specifying that with regard to applications already sent to this

Directorate prior to the date of the entry into force of the present circular, is not necessary to send further updates, unless expressly requested by the writer.

The following measures are to be considered abrogated: circular no. 94 of 10.07.2000 of the Central Office for Environmental, Architectural, Archaeological, Artistic and Historical Heritage; circular letters prot. 14184 of 30.09.2004 and prot. 958 of 04.10.2005 of the Directorate-General for Archaeological Heritage; circulars no. 24 of 04.12.2012 of the Directorate-General for Antiquities, no. 3 of 09.02.2015 and no. 6 of 15.02.2016 of the Directorate-General for Archaeology, no. 21 of 25.10.2016 of the Directorate-General for Archaeology, Fine Arts and Landscape.

THE GENERAL DIRECTOR
(Dr. Gino Famiglietti)