

Bid Document Content for which Clarification is Required	Queries	Answers
Bidding Company should have a minimum net worth equivalent of US\$ 2.5 million or a turnover of US\$ 2.5 million per annum.	The statement in Page 77 Q1 and Page 6 iii seems contradictory, kindly clarify which statement to consider	It is confirmed that the Bidding Company should have a minimum net worth of US\$2.5 million or annual turnover of US\$2.5 million based on the average of last three years. Annexure-D, II, Q1 is amended accordingly in corrigendum
In the case of joint ventures, the participating companies should collectively satisfy the financial criteria with each partner individually meeting at least 30% of the financial criteria specified and at least one company should satisfy the experience criteria regarding outsourcing operations.	Whether joint venture means group companies?	Yes. For the purpose of this RFP, the term Bidding company should be taken to include Joint Ventures and Consortia of Companies, who may or may not operate in conjunction with a local partner
Colombo will be managed by both L1 and L2	Being L1 & L2 are going to be operating in Colombo whether Mission is going to define the business volume in terms of certain geographical regions of Colombo to L1 and certain geographical regions of Colombo to L2?	No geographical regions. The applicants can apply at any one of the IVAC
Colombo will be managed by both L1 and L2	Being L1 & L2 are going to be operating in Colombo whether Mission is going to define the that the applicants of L1's geographical region should not approach L2's service center?	Not Applicable

<p>In the event of a significant adverse change in the circumstances that results in a verifiable drop of over 20% in the number of applications in Sri Lanka, due to the introduction of e-Tourist Visa (eTV)</p>	<p>Requesting Mission to share tentative period of introduction of e-Tourist Visa (eTV)</p>	<p>e TV already introduced from 14 April 2015 for Sri Lankan nations. The Avg number of applications is 400 per month,</p>
<p>The visa applications received by Post/Courier should be brought in to the main system on the same day of receipt</p>	<p>Requesting Mission to share the annual percentage of applications received through POST, WALK IN and Agents</p>	<p>Around 50 % of the applications are through walkin and rest is through agents.</p>
<p>The Service Provider should provide a monthly certification that it does not hold any records of applicants beyond the stated limit.</p>	<p>Whether self-declaration stating the criteria is acceptable by Mission?</p>	<p>Yes. But the mission has the right to verify the monthly certification details</p>
<p>The Service Provider should install the software "CONSPROM" provided by the National Informatics Centre (NIC) whenever required by Mission.</p>	<p>Requesting Mission to share tentative period of introduction of CONSPROM</p>	<p>New service provider has to implement the CONSPROM From starting itself</p>

<p>The Service Provider is responsible for enrolment of ten finger and facial biometric data of the applicants, as prescribed by the Mission/ Post in Annexure B</p>	<p>Requesting Mission to share tentative period of introduction of finger and facial biometric systems</p>	<p>probably from starting of the contract</p>
<p>The staff of the IVAC should have appropriate visa/ work permit as per local regulations.</p>	<p>Whether IVAC staff should have visa/work permit even though IVAC staff is citizen of Srilanka?</p>	<p>If citizen of Sri Lanka no visa / work permit is needed. But proper employment contract is necessary.</p>
<p>Call waiting times - not more than 8 minutes response period</p>	<p>Requesting Mission to define criteria / stages to measure waiting time response period</p>	<p>The service provider has to ensure multiple lines on the same number so that the waiting time will be less</p>
<p>We also understand that the concept of Sponsor (passive partner) not meeting the requirements of a local partner is not approved in the RFP and we have no objection to the same.</p>	<p>Whether "passive partner" means group companies?</p>	<p>Passive partner cannot be a single company or a group of Companies. However, the Holding Company to which the bidding company is a subsidiary is not considered a sleeping partner for the purpose of this tendering process.</p>

Queries	Answers
Requesting Mission to share approximate monthly percentile break-up between Tourist/Business/employment/passport and e-Tourist Visas and consular services from all the 4 Mission/Posts for the last 3 years	This exact number of different visa category details are not available with us. But 70 % of the visa are tourist. Also E-tourist visa is issued not from the mission.
Could the mission provide a split on applications received by post and by courier in each location? Please provide us with the monthly break up	Presently the applicant have to directly apply or apply through IATA travel agent for Visa. No Courier or Postal applications are accepted
Due to high volume of applications projected, would the mission consider making appointments mandatory to lodge visa applications? Emergency and urgent visas will be exempted	The service provider can give appointments during peak season for submission of visa applications
Does the Bidding Company itself need to meet the financial criteria or is it sufficient to show that the Group of companies in which the Bidding Company sits cumulatively meets the financial criteria?	The bidding company should meet the experience and financial criteria for taking part in the tender process. However, for the purpose of this tendering process , it is enough if the Holding Company of the Bidding Company meets with the financial criteria and gives guarantee for the financial liabilities including provision of Bank Guarantees
If the Group's financials are sufficient and are audited – would a certificate from an Auditing Agency still be required?	Yes. It must be certified by an authorized external Auditing Agency.
In Annexure D, Sec2 - FINANCIAL STRENGTH OF THE COMPANY, in question 1 reference is made to an authorised external Auditing Agency – please advise what Auditing Agencies are authorised?	This is as per provisions of the Companies Act 2013. The Auditing Firm should be registered with Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) or with Fellow Members/Associate Members of ICAI in case operating from outside India.
Annexure D Sec2, Question 3 requires capacity to provide insurance – will a declaration signed by the Authorised signatory of the bidding entity suffice? If not, please advise how this should be evidenced?	No. This must be certified by an authorized external Auditing Agency(not related to the Company)
RFP refers to Specimen Main Agreement and Service Level Agreement – can draft version of these of these documents be provided?	SLA Will be provided soon

Queries	Answers
With reference to the size of office premises there is no specific dimensions mentioned as to what should be the size of the office IVAC in Sri Lanka. Request details on the specifications of the IVAC size and number of employees.	The specifications are given Annexure-D Mandatory Criteria CI.no. III Q3
Would the bidder require to quote separate service fees for Visa/Passport/Consular services?	Please Refer VIII. DETERMINATION OF SERVICE FEE
If the Service fee is different for Visa/Passport/Consular services. How would the 80:20 formulae be calculated?	Please Refer VIII. DETERMINATION OF SERVICE FEE
Certain value added services are below the prevailing market prices e.g. Photograph. How does the embassy expect to provide services below the market prices?	All the value added services are given according to current market prices
Across all countries there is a huge requirement for express visa's. This is communicated by the customers itself. Such services need to be approved at the time of the tendering process. Will Express visa's be serviced by the partner. If not why?	No Express visa service is provided by Missions in Colombo
Quite a few high profile customers walk in at the IVAC for biometric enrollment. Such applicants need special treatment and services. Will Mobile biometrics be allowed?	Mobile biometrics for service provider is under study for implementation.
Can alternative locations close to the mentioned locations be suggested if they are more convenient?	The location of IVAC should be with in 5 kms of mission
What will be the servicing hours?	45 hrs excluding weekends with minimum 9 hrs per day.
With reference to the issuance of Passports it is mentioned that the Service Provider will be required to switch to PSP platform for Passport services whenever a decision is made in this regard.	Passport applications at Missions are currently processed on the NIC platform. The Service Provider will be informed of any shift to the PSP platform well in advance. There will not be any additional cost involved by way of infrastructure requirement. The software will be provided by TCS to the service providers.
We would like to know what is PSP platform, what is the timeframe to switch to this platform. Is there any IT infrastructure and additional costs involved to switch to this platform.	

Queries	Answers
<p>There is no mention of SMS services. Will that be a part of value added services?</p>	<p>Refer Para IX. SCOPE OF WORK AND DELIVERABLES REQUIRED clause xv. The Service Provider to provide 4 mandatory SMS updates for Postal/courier visa applications (i. receipt of application in the IVAC, ii. despatch of documents to the Mission/Post, iii. receipt of documents in the IVAC from Mission/Post and iv. despatch of documents by Courier/Post). In regard to applications received in person in the IVAC, only ii, iii and iv may be required.</p>
<p>As mentioned under Clause 9 E (Return of documents to applicants) it mentions that on receipt of the passports from the Mission/Post, the Service Provider should arrange delivery to the applicants in person or despatch them as approved. In no case should passports be sent by unregistered Post or by unverifiable means. Does this mean the documents need to be handed over only to applicants or sent by courier. Please clarify?</p>	<p>The applications have to be handed over to the applicant or by courier only</p>
<p>Please provide details on bank guarantees?</p>	<p>Please refer X. BANK GUARANTEES, Exact amount will be fixed after the service charge is determined</p>
<p>In clause No IX (a)(xv) – It mentions that 4 mandatory SMS update to be provided. Whereas in the VAS there is no SMS. Is it that the Service provider has to bear the cost ?</p>	<p>SMS charges are included in service fee</p>
<p>Mobile biometrics as mentioned in clause IX (12)(g)(vi) is optional services. The charges would be as per Service fees or avail of Camp services as per the prices fixed for the same. Would this be undertaken as a value added service? If yes will it be considered in the 80:20 calculation?</p>	<p>Mobile biometric will be under value added services</p>

Queries		Answers			
-Kindly give us the total number of applications received month wise in the following tabular format for 2013, 2014 and 2015.		Only detail of Colombo is available now. Other missions the yearly count is given			
(Year) 2014	Colombo	Kandy	Jaffna	Hambantota	
Total No of Visas	166701	18792	15043	1653	
(Year) 2015	Colombo	Kandy	Jaffna	Hambantota	
Jan	12705	19675	14821	1960	
Feb	14655				
March	13603				
April	10341				
May	8530				
June	9887				
July	19730				
August	19064				
September	18879				
October	16075				
November	16195				
December	16702				
	176366				
Could you also give breakup of visa/passport/consular application's.		Exact figures are not available in 4 missions. But 90 % of applications are visa and rest is passport and OCI			
Also, for 10 applicants expected everyday, the area required in Hambantota is also very high. Can this be reduced as per judgment of the bidder ?		All requirements are done in accordance with number of applications. Hambantota presently no IVAC is there. Any change in IVAC size will be decided by the High Commission Colombo later after the premises is identified			
Also, kindly give the number of staff currently hired by the current service provider in All IVACs in Sri Lanka.		Colombo - 13 Kandy - 4 Jaffna - 4			
In whose name does the Bid security of USD 50,000 need to be released?		High Commission of India, Colombo			

Queries	Answers
<p>There is no mention of the word transition in the entire document. Failure on the part of the incumbent service provider has not been addressed at all in the RFP. Detailed information is solicited as far as transition is concerned to ensure that a process is defined to ensure accountability. Below is a sample of questions that need clarification:</p>	<p>The Transition from old service provider to New service provider will be done under the supervision of respective missions. Adequate time will be provided at the time of changing from old to new service provider</p>
<p>i) When will the incumbent service provider end accepting applications?</p>	<p>the tentative date is Feb 1 but it may change if any delay</p>
<p>ii) When will the contact centre of the incumbent service provider discontinue its operations?</p>	
<p>iii) Will the applications that were processed by incumbent be handled?</p>	
<p>iv) How will the handover of the unprocessed applications, courier labels, passports, etc. be implemented?</p>	<p>the applications received by old service provider will be handled by them only</p>
<p>v) Will the new service provider charge their service fee for handling applications handed over by incumbent service provider?</p>	
<p>Due to poor transition, there are disastrous consequences and can cause major inconvenience to the applicant community, the service provider & the Indian Mission abroad.</p>	<p>This will be handled by the High Comm of Colombo</p>
<p>Will the other service provider agree to this ?</p>	
<p>Could you please advise on the duration post new contract start date, when the drop in applications will be reviewed, for this clause to be in effect?</p>	<p>As of now the new contract start date is Feb 1, 2016.</p>
<p>Kindly provide the details on number of calls and emails received from the applicants on a daily basis?</p>	<p>Calls are around 300 to 350 and email data not available</p>
<p>We understand that new service provider will be digitising records from the day it starts the operations and will not be responsible to complete digitisation of past records.</p>	<p>Yes</p>

Queries	Answers
Is the service provider allowed to charge extra (fee specified by the mission) for Urgent Visa Applications Additionally, please provide month wise count of applications processed under this Urgent category in the last 3 years?	No Urgent visa is issued in Sri Lanka
We have experienced applicants contacting the new service provider for applications submitted at the previous service provider. In this event, the current service provider should be asked to continue their telephone and email helpdesk for at least two weeks after the last date of their contract. Kindly advise.	The formal launching of visa outsourcing services by new service provider is scheduled for Feb, 2017. A reasonable overlapping time period would be provided for smooth transition of visa services from the existing servicing provider to new incoming service provider
Service provider should be allowed to return the applications that do not have all the mandatory documents in the postal package received after deducting the service provider fee and the return courier charges.	It is already mentioned in the RFP
This certification can only be provided after the operations have begun and taxes are filed at the end of the 1st financial year. Please confirm if our understanding is correct.	Yes
Since the courier company will charge a fee for return of incomplete documents, such charges should be deducted from the refund as per the VAS schedule along with the service provider service fee.	It is already mentioned in the RFP
"no of days" should be replaced with "per business day"	No changes can be made in this regard.
"No of Days" should be replaced with "per business day" in the relevant clauses under this section.	
- With respect to this clause, In case one of the two service providers fails to complete necessary formalities within timeframe and is removed from the process, this burden will fall on one service provider. Assuming the successful service provider has already made the necessary arrangements of Infrastructure, People and investments, will the Mission ask the same service provider to scale up the capacity, if yes how ?	If either L1 or L2 withdraws from the tender process, then the entire work will be awarded to the other company. Since the volume will be higher, the lone Service Provider will have to enhance the infrastructure accordingly. Since the revenue will also increase, no change in Service Fee will be allowed. The additional infrastructure should be provided within two months from the date of intimation by the Mission or the time frame allowed by the Mission whichever is shorter.
Example, would you expect the service provider to get another office of 5000 sq ft in Colombo ? if yes, then kindly describe in detail the requirements and timelines in this case.	

Queries	Answers
<p>We would like to respectfully state that we have noted that all the bidding procedures involving the L1&L2 format have been delayed. We request that the current bidding procedure in Sri Lanka be made for only one (L1) service provider.</p>	<p>There won't be any change in the decision for the two service provider model.</p>
<p>We would also like to highlight that it is very difficult for a bidding company to derive an optimum service fee when the bidder is not aware of the number of applicants expected to submit applications at the VAC throughout the contract tenure. Are we to assume that the Indian Mission <u>will ensure</u> that L1 and L2 will get equal number of applications during the contract tenure, so that the bidder can do an effective budgeting exercise ?</p>	<p>This has been explained in the RFP where the division of centers has been indicated. However, wherever two service providers will be operating in the same area, the bidding companies should work on the basis of 50% volume, although this cannot be guaranteed. The actual volume will depend on the quality of service provided to the applicants.</p>
<p>We would like to respectfully state that this procedure be explained in detail.</p>	
<p>We are to understand this as follows :-</p>	
<p>1) It is only after the opening of the financial bids that the L1 price will be disclosed.</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>2) After opening the financial bid, L2 will be given an opportunity to get back at a later time to confirm if L2 will work at L1 price or not.</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>3) It may be that there could be a huge discrepancy between L1 and L2.</p>	<p>L2 can accept to work on L1 or reject the proposal. The penalty regime will become operative only if the L2 after having been informed of the L1 price and agreeing to work on that price, withdraws thereafter. This has been indicated in the RFP and there is no ambiguity in that. Hence it is clear that, L2 can refuse to work on L1 price and there will not be any adverse consequences unless they agree first and then renege</p>
<p>4) In that case, if L2 is not given an option to decline, and asked to work on L1 price, the whole purpose of submitting the Annexure C by L2 will be defeated.</p>	
<p>As per the RFP, the initial division is unfair. Jaffna has low count compared to Kandy and Hambantota.</p>	<p>This cannot be changed</p>

Queries	Answers
<p>We request if the Mission, in the spirit of fair competition, also make it mandatory for L2 to open centers in all 4 locations including Colombo ?</p>	<p>This cannot be changed</p>
<p>As mentioned above there are two possibilities in the event of one service provider withdrawing from operations without any valid reason- either the second service provider will be entrusted with the entire outsourcing services, or alternative arrangements will be made to select a second service provider for the remainder of the term. Can the Mission please advise if these two possibilities are mutually exclusive, or it may be the case that initially one service provider takes over by scaling up its operations, and later on a second service provider is brought on board ? In case the latter is true, the earlier service provider could be at a loss for waste of additional infrastructure and investment incurred to scale up the operations.</p>	<p>The decision to award the Contract to the single remaining company or to opt for the second company will be intimated as soon as the Mission receives notice of a withdrawal.</p>
<p>Annexure C requires that all components in the Standard Cost Sheet for outsourcing of CPV Services in High Commission of India Colombo including Posts in Kandy, Jaffna and Hambantota, be provided for each centre separately. However, the RFP also states that L1 will take care of Colombo, Kandy and Hambantota and L2 will have a centre in Colombo and Jaffna. Is the bidder expected to give standard cost sheet for all locations even though the endeavour is to be L1 and in this case L1 is not required in Jaffna ?</p>	<p>The bidder is requested to consider all the 4 centers for calculation of service fee</p>
<p>For Bank Guarantee under Section X. 13. G. 3 it is mentioned that Premature termination of Contract Service Fee x 180 x number of applications per day on the basis of last 12 months. If this is going to be a two service provider model, we request that all the BGs expected be reduced to the tune of at least 50%.</p>	<p>Bank Guarantee under Section X. 13. G. 3 , for Premature termination of Contract Service Fee x 180 x number of applications per day is standard for all Indian missions. So cannot be changed</p>

Queries	Answers
<p>What are the service types covered under 'Miscellaneous Consular Services'? This information is required as time taken for different consular services is important. This also directly effects service provider's internal software requirements.</p>	<p>The service provider will be given full details when the SLA is given</p>
<p>Under XV. 19. c. 7. It is mentioned that Telephonic queries will be responded to from 9 A.M. to 7 P.M. But under IX. 12. a. x. It is mentioned that The telephonic enquiries should be attended from 9AM to 5.30 PM. Please confirm on the timings.</p>	<p>Telephonic queries will be responded to from 9 A.M. to 7 P.M.</p>
<p>Annex D 2.1.1 Number of Centres mentions only one centre in Colombo whereas the requirement is two centres, one each by L1 and L2. Therefore, should the updated table look like below</p>	<p>The IVAC in Colombo is 2.</p>
<p>In the table given in pg 4 under point 3, the average application count seems to have been given taking 238 working days in a year. Will the Mission confirm number of working days per year in Sri Lanka ?</p>	<p>The no of days is calculated as per 250 days per year</p>
<p>For Bank Guarantee, the RFP states 'Currency of the Bank guarantees will be determined by the Mission, but the currency for all the bank guarantees should be the same' but in the table provided under Section X. 13. G. usage of USD as well as LKR as currency is visible. Can we get clarification as to which currency is required to be taken into consideration ?</p>	<p>All Bank Guarantee should be given in LKR and from Local bank in Sri Lanka</p>
<p>Are travel agents allowed to submit applications, if yes what is the % across locations and services?</p>	<p>Yes, IATA recognised travel agents can submit the application 50 % of the applications are done by agents</p>
<p>The RFP mentions that the service provider is required to capture biometrics from applicants. What is the expected timeline for the introduction of biometrics?</p>	<p>From the start of new contract</p>
<p>What is the duration for retaining a postal application (after attempts of contacting the applicant) that has been received in an incomplete state?</p>	<p>No postal applications are processed presently</p>

Queries	Answers
Please provide data on number of cases or percentage of applications received as family cases at each of the 4 cities.	data not available for family cases
In Annexure B- Provisioning Implementation of Biometric Enrollment at Indian Missions, the RFP mentions that the Government of India may provide the facial capturing software for the purpose. We request the Embassy of India to provide clarity on this aspect as this will impact pricing.	The software will be provided by the Ministry / High commission
Can the Mission clarify the estimated time lines for implementation of 'Conspro' system in Sri Lanka?	From start of contract
Will the format of the data transfer to be done to the Missions be identical across Sri Lanka?	Yes
What will be the approximate number of pages to be digitized per application?	For Tourist : 5 pages, Business: 10 to 15 pages, other category : 8 to 10 pages (Approx)
When should we digitize the applications? Is it at the time of submission to the mission or after the approval/rejection by the mission on the applications?	The applications are to be digitilised after the issuance of visa
Once biometrics is introduced for passport applications, all applicants will be required to visit the centre in person and no applications will be acceptable by post. Please confirm.	Yes. Mobile biometrics implementation is under process