

CLARIFICATIONS

Reponses to:

- (i) written queries, and
- (ii) queries raised in Pre-Bid Conference held on 01.02.2021.

S. No.	RFP Clause	Query	Response
1	Page 4 Chapter II: Introduction Point 4	The Mission handled approximately 569780 Consular/Passport/visa transactions in the last three years(2017-2019) Please provide bifurcation of approx. consular applications among three ICACs	Consular services are outsourced by this Mission for first time. The number of consular services month-wise during the years 2017, 2018 and 2019 is given at page 87 of the RFP for prospective bidders to have an idea.
2	Page 5 Chapter III (I) request for Proposal point 7.	The contract signed will be valid for a period for 2 years. The Mission will have the option of further extension of contract. Please suggest what will be the duration for which the contract will get renewed.	At the end of the contract period, the Mission will have the option of further extension of contract with the approval of the Ministry for a period to be mutually agreed upon by both parties on the same terms and conditions or with modifications with mutual consent of the Mission and the Service Provider concerned.
3	Page 7 Chapter V Mandatory Criteria Point c- Mandatory Partner/Sponsor	<p>The concept of 'Sponsor' (Passive partner) is not acceptable unless the sponsor also has the same criteria stipulated for local partner.</p> <p>In refer to Pre Bid Meeting Held on 1st Feb, wherein it was confirmed by the committee that the condition for local Sponsor will remain same as per previous RFP.</p> <p>As per your previous response to RFP</p>	If the Bidding Company proposes to implement the project in collaboration with a local business partner, details of partnership, including a copy of agreement must be provided. Partner company should have at least 50% of the net worth stipulated for the main Bidding Company. In addition, the local partner must also meet all other eligibility requirements indicated in the RFP for the Bidding Company:

		<p>clarification questions- Kindly confirm our understanding that the concept of Local Sponsor will be acceptable and as per local regulation we can take a Passive partner/Sponsor</p> <p>Previous response received for our clarification was- 'Since according to local laws foreign entity cannot operate in Kuwait without any association with local sponsor. It is not necessary that local Sponsor should meet all the criteria of the local partner. Further, the local sponsor (Passive partner) could be from different industry / business than the bidder.</p>	<p>The eligibility requirements are given in Chapter IV: Eligibility Criteria and Chapter V: Mandatory Criteria of the RFP. The local partner must also meet these requirements.</p> <p>Definition of local partner is provided in para 11(q) of the RFP.</p> <p>The concept of 'Sponsor' (Passive partner) is not acceptable unless the sponsor also has the same criteria stipulated for local partner.</p> <p>The concept of 'Sponsor' (Passive partner) has been incorporated since according to local regulations, a foreign entity cannot operate in Kuwait without any association with a local sponsor. It is not necessary that local sponsor should meet all the eligibility criteria of the local partner. Further, the local sponsor (Passive partner) could be from different industry / business than the Bidder.</p>
4	Chapter VI. Determination of Service fee 12.a	The Service fee per consular/passport /visa applications should be quoted as per the Financial bid format (Annex-C inclusive of any local taxes and VAT currently applicable in Kuwait. It is the responsibility of the service provider to pay applicable taxes to the Governmental Authorities. Please confirm the exchange rate that will be applicable for US\$ vs KD will be as of Jan 2021 or Feb 2021.	January 2021
5	Chapter VII Point h Page 15 Biometric Enrolment	The OSP shall also be responsible for enrolment of ten finger and facial	Enrolment of facial biometric as per the Indian e-Governance standards is

		biometric data of the passport applicants (wherever required), and forward the same electronically along with the case file of the applicant. Kindly provide the technical specifications for Facial Biometric Capture	available on http://egovstandards.gov.in/ . Government of India will provide the facial capturing software for the purpose
	Page 15. I) Biometric Enrollment	Would it be possible to suggest tentative Go live date for biometrics enrollment.	Sufficient time will be given before such service is introduced
6	Chapter VII -Digitization and Indexation of documents-Point ii Page 16	The digitization process shall be completed within three working days of handing over the documents to the OSP. We may request you to kindly consider that the digitization process will start only after getting the application processed from embassy and getting the data from CONSPROM and shall be completed within 15 days.	1. The digitisation/ indexation of documents must be done simultaneously by the OSP. The procedure outlined in the RFP should be followed. 2. Those visa applications which are submitted directly at the Indian Mission will be handed over with supporting documents/ enclosures to OSP and shall be scanned/digitized/ indexed within three working days of handing over the documents to the OSP.
7	Chapter VII (I)Consular services Page 16	Consular application process. As per our understanding when a request is submitted for Consular services the same gets processed in 1 hour, please suggest if we need to provide separate Cabin for Embassy officials to conform with turnaround time	Yes
8	Chapter IX: Optional Services point 19 Page 19	Optional Services. Please confirm that quoting zero amount for any optional services are acceptable or not.	Optional Services (OS) can be charged on a reasonable basis subject to their sustainability and approval of the Mission. Any offer of complimentary OS has to be in letter and spirit and will be subject to scrutiny.

		Also, can we propose optional services over and above the additional services mentioned in the RFP	In this regard, attention is also drawn to Chapter XII: Guide to Bidders, Para 21 (m) of the RFP No
9	Chapter XV: Service Level Metrics/Penalties, Point 22 Page 33, Five Stage Website Tracking Mechanism	The OSP agrees to ensure that the status of processing and movement of documents shall have the following checkpoints, to be updated on a real time basis. The 5-stage tracking would be possible for passport and consular services. The same is not possible for visa as the CONSPROM does not allow – kindly clarify	The 5-stage tracking has been mentioned for passport services as per the requirement. Tracking stages could be fewer as per requirement
10	Annexure C: Financial bid-Page 58, Part II- A	Proforma for Service Fee and OS charges. Please specify currency of service fee	Kuwaiti Dinar
11	Page 10: Dealing with Applicants and Documents. Point number: 3. The OSP shall not capture any data information from the applicant on/through its website.	For effective appointment systems, Postal applications, online payment system, grievance/complaints management, the OSP will need to collect data online from the customers. It's understood the referenced Clause refers to application forms only and OSPs will be able to collect data for such purposes as listed above which are other than applying for Consular, visa or passport service. Kindly confirm.	This clause refers to application forms only however any further information will be collected only with the approval of Mission.
12	Page 11: The service provider should provide an efficient and courteous telephonic enquiry system.	1. Could number of Calls emails received during the earlier years be provided for planning of call center operations (Calls and emails)?	1. Prospective bidders are expected to anticipate as per their experience and expertise. 2, 3 & 4 - No

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Can the call center operations be outsourced and managed through a professional call center service provider within Kuwait? 3. Can the call center operations be outsourced and managed through a professional call center service provider outside of Kuwait? 4. Can Optional services like Form Filling over phone and Passport notification via auto dialer can be offered for additional fee? <p>Are there any requirements on storing call recordings of specific duration?</p>	
13	Page 12. Provide a barcoded receipt to each applicant showing following details.	While acknowledgement can be sent over SMS, the Original receipt of postal applications can be sent only with return documents, Also given that in case of incomplete documentation documents may have to be sent back to the customer. Are electronically receipts over email acceptable?	Kuwait being a small country requirement of postal services are not preferred.
14	Page 13. C) transfer of amounts to mission accounts.	Since the fee will be collected in multiple modes can the remittance to mission be done in same modes? In certain cases for example the courier cases the CPV fee will be received over demand draft. Can demand drafts of mission fee amounts be sent to mission as is or they will have to be deposited with the bidding company bank account first and then remitted to the mission as online transfer?	All kind of fee will be collected only in Kuwaiti Dinar (KD) either in Cash or through POS machine, if installation of POS machine is decided by the Mission.
15	Page 28. Bounced Cheque Failed transaction	In case of cheques paid by customers will need to be first deposited with the bidding company. Can the monies be	No payment through cheque will be accepted

		transferred online? In what scenarios cheque payment will need to be made?	
16	Please refer Pg. 6 Eligibility Criteria Pt. 10 iii & iv vis-a-vis Mandatory Criteria Pt. f. on Pg. 10 Eligibility criteria requires minimum net worth of USD 5 Mil and av. Annual turnover of min. USD 500,000 for last 3 yrs. whereas Mandatory Criteria it is mentioned as min. net worth of USD 5 Mil or annual turnover of USD 500,000.	Please confirm if both requirements need to be fulfilled by the bidding company or either of the one to qualify.	Both condition mentioned in Chapter IV Para 10(iii) & (iv) need to be fulfilled.
17	Please refer Pg. 35 Pt. 32 Insurance policy needs to be submitted within 3 months whereas Pg. 18 Pt. 14 iv. Mentions submission in 2 months	Please confirm the period after award of contract for Insurance Policy submission	Three month
18	Please refer Pg. 39 Pt. 33 b. mentions Refundable Deposit whereas Pg. 8 Pt. o does not have Refundable deposit	Request your confirmation since Refundable Deposit is not applicable.	Refundable Deposit is not applicable.
19	Page 5 The area desirable for ICAC proposed VAC at Sharq is 465 sq m approximately	1. Can we propose 2 floors in the same building. One part will be for Visa and Consular services and the other would be for passport services 2. Can the ICAC at Sharq locality be made as 2 offices within the same premises – 1 office exclusively for Attestation for easy access to customers? Can the area limit be extended from 4 Km to 6 km this will ensure that the Service providers are able to offer better properties.	The ICACs premises will only be finalized subject to satisfaction and with the approval of Mission No
21	Page 8: Point o: Bid Security may be submitted either in the form of a DD or	In case demand draft is submitted for bid security do we still need to update Annex	Annexure J is for Bank Guarantee only

	BG drawn in favour of EOI, Kuwait (Annex J)	J?	
22	Pag 16. m) Digitization and indexation of documents	<p>1. It is our understanding that digitization process can be outsourced to an external vendor. MEA to confirm / correct this understanding.</p> <p>2. It is our understanding that digitization process for the service provider will start only after the award of the contract and that there is no backlog of applications to be digitized. MEA to confirm / correct this understanding.</p> <p>3. Would it be possible to know an estimate on number of pages to be digitized per applicant?</p>	<p>1. Service Provider is responsible for digitization of applications along with enclosures as per the parameters prescribed. The responsibility for digitization lies with the Service Provider. Those documents which are already uploaded in the system need not be digitized again.</p> <p>2. Service Provider is responsible for completion of digitization of documents that have been created/serviced during the validity of the outsourcing agreement. May also please see Chapter XV: Service Level Metrics/Penalties (page 26-36) sl. No. 9).</p> <p>3. Estimated number of pages to be digitized per applicant:</p> <p>(i) Passport 6-7 pages (minimum) to 12-14 pages (maximum).</p> <p>(ii) Visa 5-6 pages.</p> <p>(iii) Consular approx. 05-15 pages.</p>
23	Page 21. Point H The ability to computerize operations related to the accounting of fee collection. The Service Provider should introduce 'CONSPROM' software of the National	Does Mission has any tentative date for introduction of CONSPROM in Kuwait?	It is desired that CONSPROM system is introduced at earliest.

	Informatics Centre when required by the Mission/Posts.		
23	Page 75. Data security and secure transfer of data including possession of appropriate certification and full compliance with local legal regulations.	It is our understanding that PSK system is already introduced in Kuwait and that transfer of Passport files to the local Missions will be as per the format mandated by PSK system. Kindly confirm.	GPSP system is already introduced in this Mission. Those documents which are already uploaded in the system need not be digitized.
24	Page No: 3 Note (iii)	“In case the Bidding Company decides to bid with a local Partner, the Organization Profile should be submitted for that company too. The details of the partnership arrangement proposed should also be provided”. Can the partnership arrangement be an MoU / Teaming Agreement between IVS Global and the local partner organization?	The details of the partnership arrangement proposed should be provided
25	Page No: 8 Point : o	“The Bidding Company must deposit a Bid Security (EMD) of US\$ 84334/- (eqv Kuwaiti Dinar (KD) is 25697.00) or 5% of the tender value, whichever is higher as per Proforma at Annexure J either in US Dollars (USD) or in Kuwaiti Dinars (KD). Tender value is average of annual Service Fee of last three years (2017, 2018, 2019) multiplied by total contract period in years (for example, months/days may be converted in to years).” Can the EMD amount be assumed to be fixed at US\$ 84334/- (eqv. Kuwaiti Dinar	EMD is US\$ 84334/- (eqv Kuwaiti Dinar (KD) is 25697.00)

		<p>KD25697) or would there be any variation if the 5% of the tender value exceeds this amount? To avoid any mismatch of the EMD amount, can the Mission specify this figure? (Also kindly refer to Page number 18, Chapter VIII, Section 14(ii) wherein it is fixed at KD 25697)</p>	
26	<p>Page No: 25 Point: k</p>	<p>The Mission shall arrange a Pre-bid Conference about the bidding process, prior to the last date for submission of bids. The pre-bid conference should be followed by presentations by Bidding Companies as per the date and time fixed by the Mission. These are to enable the Bidding Companies to prepare the proposals with full knowledge of the requirements of the Mission and for the Mission to clearly assess the capabilities of the Service Provider. Presentation will also be evaluated in annexure E or RFP.”</p> <p>Does the presentation carry separate weightage / marks or would the presentation content be referred to, against the evaluation criteria, together with the Technical Bids?</p>	<p>Presentation will also be evaluated in annexure E of RFP.”</p>

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