RESPONSE TO BIDDER QUERIES

Terms of Reference
10 April 2025

SASSA: 29-24-CS-HO

Contents

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The Terms of Reference indicated that SASSA would respond to the enquiries five (5) working days after the briefing session date.

Number	Bidder	Bidder Query	SASSA response
1	Pedro Peters (InfoFile (Pty) Ltd)	Is this bid only for a single service provider or is there going to be a panel of service providers that are going to be chosen?	This will be for one service provider to render the services in all nine (09) regions.
2	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	In terms of the timelines that have been given. And taking into consideration the public holidays that are coming up, is it not possible to provide an extension to the deadline closing of the bid?	The advert was published on the 27th of March 2025 and the bid will be closing on 22 April 2025 which gives 26 days. In terms of law, we are allowed to advertise for a minimum of 21 days, but we have made this to be 26 days because we were considering the holidays in between. At this stage we are not promising any extension but just asking from the bidders to try to work everything around within this period so that at least we finalize everything as required. These services are needed as urgently as possible by the Agency.
		From the time that we receive clarity on our questions, which is the 10th, there is only 5 working days to conclude the bid, it does not give a lot of time for any other questions bidders may have afterwards.	In terms of supply chain processes, we also count the weekends/holidays which will give 12 days after the 10th of April 2025.
3	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	Can you confirm how many pages per file for scanning?	The files are different in terms of the contents. So, we what we have been able to provide at this stage is the volumes of records which is 62,000,000 averaging about 80-100 files in a box. What you are trying to obtain is to say how many pages per file in each - it is different, and it would be difficult to quantify, and it is something that we attempted at one stage with no success. We even did benchmark with other departments. And therefore, we quantified our volumes in terms of the files that we have. Also, quantified that in archival boxes, we may have between

		In terms of us being able to bill correctly, we do need to understand, especially because you are asking for the billing or the cost per thousand files. So we do need to know how many pages would be in there that thousand files and is not possible to give us some sort of an idea based on the recent exercises that you guys have just done so that everyone can work on the same level?	80 and 100 files. So that was the best we could do in terms of averaging the files because it created serious problems to count each page for 62 million records. So, we cannot confirm that we have 10 pages, 20 pages, 30 pages because the files are different. That was our initial approach on scanning. From our benchmarking we also found that there is a whole lot of work that needs to be considered before the actual scanning per page because how do we quantify the number of staples that must be removed, how the paper must be handled, how you put the metadata and all of those items, the manpower that goes into that when you take a batch of paper that you feed into the machine and for the machine to provide images. The question would be then, how do we quantify those particular inputs and resources that go into the actual scanning as compared to the pages. We were made to understand that the actual feeding or per page is an easier part as compared to how you handle the page, how you retrieve those parts and everything else, and even after that stapling it in the same order that it was. So, we were made to understand that the way we wanted to approach this thing was limiting in terms of the actual work that is input cost, pre prep and proposed prep and that was our biggest challenge as we were only able to work it to this level.
4	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	The specifications require for the retrieval of 6000 files per day for scanning and will you provide us a list of 6000 files that we would have to retrieve individually, and if it could be retrieved from 6000 different boxes if each file is stored in a different box?	How you scan is at the bidder's disposal? The only thing that we need to control as an Agency is the destruction, because then that is where we are held accountable. Once you destroy that file, we can never get it back. We will provide with a list in segments of 1000 – as per

			Annexure F. So, there we have given the minimum but if you can scan more than that and work at a faster pace, that is all fine.
5	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	Can you just confirm in case of a relocation to a new service provider, do we have to recapture all the files within the box, within 24hours of receipt?	The boxes with contents are barcoded. The winning bidder will be given an such inventory by the current service provider.
6	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	When do you expect the contract to start?	The current contract is ending 31st of December 2025. However, the contract for this bid will be initiated upon award. This means the winning bidder has 12 months from award to establish these facilities. As and when each of the facilities is ready, the files may be relocated. Once SASSA has done its inspections and happy then relocation of files will start.
7	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	Your retrieval volumes do not cater for the destruction.	Those destructions are dependent on the files that have been approved after scanning. So, you scan 200,000 files for example, and they've been approved, and SASSA has paid for the scanning. We initiate our internal processes for requesting approval. Once that approval has been granted, we will give you that list to destroy at your liberty. SASSA needs to have destroyed all such records by the end of the contract. So the quicker you can be able to scan and deliver good quality and all of those things are satisfied then the quicker we can be able to initiate our processes which do not really take more than a month for approval.
8	Pam Groenewald (The	Is it possible to provide us with a destruction schedule of how the boxes or the files will decrease over the time	On average, it takes a month. If you scanned 100,000 boxes across all the 9 regions, that is 900 thousand boxes in one month, for example. A month after that we would have provided you with an

	Document Warehouse)	and because that will depend on how long it takes for SASSA to approve destructions as well.	approval for destruction across all nine regions. So we are leaving this process to the service provider to give us the proposals in terms of the resources that are required, the inputs that are required to deliver this over this period. The reduction of the boxes will be completely dependent on the ability and the quality of the scanning that we received.
09	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	The terms of reference, has quantities that were calculated in June 2024, which is almost a year ago. What will happen if the actual quantities differ from what has been provided in the terms of reference with regards to costs?	Roundabout that time we stopped delivering any more files to the Records Management Centres because at that particular time SASSA had started implementing online applications and other digital ways of applying. Even at that time point, the growth was about 0.5 on a monthly or yearly basis. So, between that time and now, there were no additional significant numbers of files that are going to RMC's. And at this point in time, actually, we might even have less numbers of files. By the time this contract starts, we will have files that have already reached their lifespan. Secondly, we are busy with destructions in all regions as we speak for those files that are due.
10	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	What happens to the admin officers after five years?	SASSA is busy on the side with the reutilization of staff members within those RMC's, so the numbers might even reduce once there is a realignment of the digitization process. Once the contract is finalized, SASSA will remove all its employees and release them to other functions.
11	Pam Groenewald (The	The terms of reference say that files must be captured into the system of the appointed service provider as	Yes, that is a normal requirement. It has become very difficult to adjudicate over this process. Therefore, we try to be as specific and

	Document Warehouse)	they are being collected from the current service provider storage facility. Is that a requirement?	clear as possible of our expectations hence this briefing session.
12	SASSA	Clarification from SASSA	Page 11 of 21 of the Terms of Reference refers to Annexure F as Letter of commitment to have the facilities ready within twelve (12) months of award. The definition of Annexure F throughout the document is Scanning Requirements/Process
13	Petrus Janson (Alteram)	Could you please consider at least a 2-weeks extension on the closing current date of 22 April 2025?	Given the nature of this service and the concern raised by multiple bidders, requesting the same, we have initiated a request for this extension accordingly. However, the approved period of extension can only be communicated at a later stage, if at all approved, with a new closing date through the SASSA website and National Treasury's e-tender portal.
14	Thabang Mahlakoleng	With regards to the above tender, do you want ONE company for all provinces or we can bid for selected provinces?	This will be for one service provider to render the services in all nine (09) regions.
15	Bids Office (Metrofile)	In the previous submission, reference letters were evaluated based on the volume of records per client, whereas in the current tender, the evaluation appears to be based on the number of files managed per client. Kindly confirm whether "records" and "files" are considered synonymous for evaluation purposes in this context.	Reference **to Page 4 of the Terms of Reference** - Glossary of Terms, Records has been defined as "Recorded information regardless of form or medium" and Files "means beneficiary files". Therefore, for the purposes of this bid, they are considered synonymous for evaluation purposes in this context.
16	Bids Office (Metrofile)	Additionally, we have reference letters that mention boxes instead of specific file counts. Would it be acceptable to attach an explanatory letter behind each reference letter, indicating the estimated number of records/files per box volume, to support compliance	Contents of the boxes in storage facilities, are not at all times files, many other different items can be stored in boxes besides actual files. The requirement in line with the Terms of Refence is that the records/files managed on behalf of your clients should be indicated on the reference letter provided by your clients. Verification will be conducted with your clients directly; therefore, any clarification should be on your client's reference letters. Any information, outside of the stipulated requirements compromise the legitimacy of this process

		with the current requirements or how would the box count reference be evaluated?	because at any other section, explanatory letters/notes/affidavits etc could be attached, which ones should SASSA accept, and which ones should SASSA reject. For fairness of process, only requested documents in line with ToRs will be accepted.
17	Bids Office (Metrofile)	On the staff accommodation it is making reference to a scanning bureau. Is that area for SASSA staff or for Metrofile to do the scanning?	That area is specifically for SASSA. This is because, the Agency currently has scanning machines being utilised and will eventually be relocated to the facilities of the appointed service provider. It is also important to note that bidders need to determine their own space requirements for scanning purposes, in alignment with your proposes process flow, equipment etc.
18	Bids Office (Metrofile)	Is it correct that you do not require back up electricity and water for some of the sites because it is not listed on the needs assessment for some of the regions?	**Reference to Annexure B – Building Maintenance** is applicable to all nine (09) regions, even though it may not be included in the respective region needs assessment. The following have been specified: 1. Install separate meters for water and electricity (i.e. SASSA office space & service provider's office space) for billing purposes. 2. Service provider to provide back –up water system in case of water shortages (ie. Water tanks). 3. Service provider to provide back –up power system in case of power outages, which will provide sufficient power for business continuity.
19	Bids Office (Metrofile)	Is the shredding room part of the destructions coming out of storage or a room for SASSA staff to shred their own documents?	That area is specifically for SASSA. This is because, the Agency currently has shredding machines being utilised and will eventually be relocated to the facilities of the appointed service provider. It is also important to note that bidders need to determine their own space requirements for shredding purposes, in alignment with your proposes process flow, equipment capacity etc. **NB*** Those destructions are dependent on the files that have been approved after scanning. So, you scan 200,000 files for example, and

			they've been approved, and SASSA has paid for the scanning. We initiate our internal processes for requesting approval. Once that approval has been granted, we will give you that list to destroy at your liberty. SASSA needs to have destroyed all such records by the end of the contract.
20	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	**Tender** Can an extension be granted to accommodate public holidays or peak holiday periods?	Given the nature of this service and the concern raised by multiple bidders, requesting the same, we have initiated a request for this extension accordingly. However, the approved period of extension can only be communicated at a later stage, if at all approved, with a new closing date through the SASSA website and National Treasury's e-tender portal.
21	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	If there are any discrepancies in volumes stated in the tender and subsequent answers to Tender questions vs Actual physical volumes, would SASSA grant variance orders?	No variance orders will be issued. **NB*** The volumes were confirmed in June 2024, and in September 2024, we stopped delivering any more files to the Records Management Centres because at that particular time SASSA had started implementing online applications and other digital ways of applying. Even at that time point, the growth was about 0.5 on a monthly or yearly basis. So, between that time and now, there were no additional significant numbers of files that are going to RMC's. And at this point in time, actually, we might even have less numbers of files. By the time this contract starts, we will have files that have already reached their lifespan. Secondly, we are busy with destructions in all regions as we speak for those files that are due.
22	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	2.1. Pg. 5 of TOR – As per the tender specifications, the stated file and box volumes are as of June 2024.	The volumes were provided by our current service provider, since they manage our files, including retrievals etc. It is therefore expected that they know the location of the files at all times, the correct volumes and monthly growth percentages. That can be brought to the attention of SASSA and it will be dealt with accordingly because, it can then mean the Agency is not aware of

| | | What will occur if the actual volumes are different from those stated in the tender? As the service provider we can confirm that the actual count of boxes and files are higher, which significantly affects both storage and scanning costs. How will this discrepancy be addressed given that this is a fixed bid? Please see below for the box volume schedule.

Volumes as of 08/04/2025:

<table><tr><td>Region</td><td>Current File Volumes for the Region</td><td>Current Number of Boxes</td></tr><tr><td>Eastern Cape</td><td>8 820 129</td><td>166 609</td></tr><tr><td>Free State</td><td>3 088 106</td><td>85 492</td></tr><tr><td>Gauteng</td><td>8 283 368</td><td>121 607</td></tr><tr><td>Kwa-Zulu Natal</td><td>14 743 324</td><td>143 414</td></tr><tr><td>Limpopo</td><td>10 007 252</td><td>78 058</td></tr><tr><td>Mpumalanga</td><td>5 509 943</td><td>50 957</td></tr><tr><td>Northern Cape</td><td>2 175 642</td><td>27 226</td></tr><tr><td>North West</td><td>5 108 015</td><td>52 253</td></tr><tr><td>Western Cape</td><td>6 560 131</td><td>94 740</td></tr></table> | some of its files. That would be concerning, since these volumes are aligned to the information the Agency has about its beneficiaries.

This would then mean also its information our current service providers don't have at their disposal, since these volumes were provided by our current service provider and confirmed with the regions accordingly.

The nature of this bid is such that the winning bidder will manage all the volumes of SASSA records (flat rate model, except for scanning), and not charge per box. Therefore, ideally, this should not negatively impact any aspect of this bid.

As for the current service provider, this will be dealt with accordingly in line with the current Service Level Agreement. |
| 23 | Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse) | How many physical files do you anticipate on average to be collected during the current contract ending in December 2025? | This question is unclear. There are no more files collected from the SASSA Local Office and delivered to the Records Management Centres.

Secondly, the first 12 months are dedicated to the establishment of facilities, but early completions are welcome. |

			However, the current service provider indicated that an average of 400 – 450 boxes per day in each region is a reasonably acceptable amount, to facilitate this successfully and without the risk of misplacing and loosing files.
			Further, page **07 of 21** of the **Terms of Reference** stipulates the required/estimated periods to be able to collect all the files.
24	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	How many physical files do you anticipate on average to be collected during the first 12 months of the new tender contract? And where would these be collected from?	All the files will be collected from the premises of the current Service Provider contracted to SASSA. **Refer to Annexure G – SASSA Regional Offices and Records Management Centres.**
25	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	Do you anticipate any further physical file growth beyond January 2027?	No, there is no anticipated file growth beyond January 2027. SASSA has developed an electronic records management system for all new applicants. SASSA will no longer create any physical files/records that will require transportation to the records management centres. Any new files are created and stored electronically.
26	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	How many boxes that are pending for storage that are in SASSA's RMCs that need to be considered in the storage and scanning volume?	The indicated volumes are inclusive of all SASSA records in the Records Management Centres.

Again, the nature of this bid is such that the winning bidder will manage all the volumes of SASSA records (flat rate model, except for scanning), and not charge per box. Therefore, ideally, this should not negatively impact any aspect of this bid. |
| 27 | Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse) | When is the intended contract start date? | The intended contract start date is 12 months from the date of award. These twelve (12) months is allocated specifically for the establishment of facilities. However, the current contract is ending of 31 December 2025 |
| 28 | Pam Groenewald (The | Is there a designated budget for this tender? | Yes, there is. However, it is not public information now, until such a time that it has been awarded. |

	Document Warehouse)		
29	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	Does this budget account for the Permanent withdrawals and relocation from the current service provider?	The permanent withdrawal of records is part of the current existing contract between SASSA and the currently appointed service provider and not future contract. This contract was concluded in previous transactions and not future transactions.
30	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	Is it necessary to complete Annexure 20 for each region and submit it with the tender or will this be done by SASSA?	No, it is not a requirement of complete Annexure 20 for each region. Annexure 20 is **not** a returnable document for evaluation purposes, it has been included in the terms of reference so that the bidders will note the compliant requirements and the annexure 20 that will be used by SASSA for inspections once the facilities have been established. **NB* SASSA must have continuous access to the facilities during the establishment period for progress monitoring, relocation of SASSA records, assets and connectivity set-up etc.**
31	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	Can you please provide us with the recording of the briefing session?	This request must be made through SASSA's Information Security Unit in compliance with relevant laws.
32	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	If the bid is cancelled will the unopened price schedule be returned to the bidder?	Yes
33	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	How recent must the reference letters be, and what is the required number of letters for this tender application?	**Refer to Section 10** of the **Terms of Reference**: **Administrative Compliance,** which has been captured as follows: **Clients signed letter(s) with contactable references confirming the following:** ➢Duration of the contracts in relation to Records Management Services (Minimum experience of six (06) years).

			➢ Volumes of files managed (Experience)
			Even one (01) fully compliant letter that confirms the above is acceptable. **NB* Bidders should note that SASSA will conduct verifications on the information provided**
34	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	**Storage** Storage – Capturing: If containers are relocated to a new service provider, will they be required to re-capture each file? To ensure adherence to 7.1.1 on page 14 of TOR where accountability of contents and accuracy of these boxes? In addition to adhering to 1.9.2 section C on page 4 of annexure J referring to capturing of files within 24 hours of receipt before going to storage? "Pg 6, 4.1.1, Second last bullet point"	Yes. The appointed service provider is ultimately responsible and accountable for the records handed over to them accordingly with the inventory list provided by the current service provider. **NB* Annexure J – Service Standards** is not a returnable document for evaluation purposes. It has been included in the Terms of Reference to note the service standards for this service.
35	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	If so, what are the expected turnaround times for capturing? In addition to adhering to 1.9.2 section C on page 4 of annexure J referring to capturing of files within 24 hours of receipt before going to storage?	In line with **Section 4.1.1** of the **Terms of Reference** - **Initial Files Intake Exercise**, the requirement is to 'Develop the Initial Files Intake Plan with clear responsibilities of both parties and timelines. The Plan must make provision for records to be captured into the system of service provider as and when they are being received". **NB* Annexure J – Service Standards** is not a returnable document for evaluation purposes. It has been included in the Terms of Reference to note the service standards for this service.
36	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	For the re-capturing process, could you please specify the indexing fields required?	Refer to **Section 4.1.2.3** – of the **Terms of Reference** – **Support Services,** for the Report required by SASSA for operational purposes. This will assist in determining the indexing fields accordingly.

37	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	Storage – Transport: Collection Routes have been excluded and seems as though collecting files from the local offices is no longer a requirement (although the tender contradicts this in some areas such as on pg 12, 5.1.2 & Annexure J, 1.9.2, section E on page 5). Can you confirm that all collections from local offices are no longer a requirement?	Collection Routes have been excluded from this bid, there will be no files collected from the SASSA Local Offices. **Page 12, Section 5.1.2 is an oversight in relation to collection from Local Offices** **NB* Annexure J – Service Standards** is not a returnable document for evaluation purposes. It has been included in the Terms of Reference to note the service standards for this service.
38	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	On page 9, it states that retrievals should happen at a box level, while page 10 also mentions file level retrievals. Will retrievals be done at a file or box level? Could you explain in 1.9.1 section A & B1 on page 3 of annexure A, which of these would pertain to the scanning & destruction project and which of these would be pulled at file level or complete box level. - Pg 9	The appointed service provider should be able to provide retrievals both at file and box level. The required retrievals lists will be provided in alignment with the needs at that particular point, for auditors, scanning and destruction. If its individual files, the list will be provided and as such for boxes.
39	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	The tender mentions transport costs, yet the transport section has been excluded from the pricing schedule.	Collection Routes have been excluded from this bid, there will be no files collected from the SASSA Local Offices. **Page 12, Section 5.1.2 is an oversight in relation to collection from Local Offices** **NB* Annexure J – Service Standards** is not a returnable document for evaluation purposes. It has been included in the Terms of Reference to note the service standards for this service.
40	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	What will the supply of new boxes be used for? Refer to TOR 4.1.2.2, pg 9.	Some of the boxes may be subjected to damages during the relocation to the premises of the newly appointed serviced provider. As and when the boxes get damaged during retrievals, they may need to be replaced. Over the period of this contract, some boxes may also be subjected to damages.

			This is only applicable where there is a need.
41	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	Can you give us an estimate on how many new boxes need to be provided per year?	This is only applicable where there is a need. If boxes don't get damaged there will be no need to replace them. However, in line with Section 4.1.1. There is a requirement to 'Replace plastic boxes in Eastern Cape Records Management Centre with appropriate boxes' as part of the Initial Intake Exercise.
42	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	**Scanning** To help calculate scanning costs, can you please provide the average number of pages per file? NB This figure is critical to the costing of the project and all suppliers should be quoting off the same platform.	The files are different in terms of the contents. So, we what we have been able to provide at this stage is the volumes of records which is 62,000,000 averaging about 80-100 files in a box. What you are trying to obtain is to say how many pages per file in each - it is different, and it would be difficult to quantify, and it is something that we attempted at one stage with no success. We even did benchmark with other departments. And therefore, we quantified our volumes in terms of the files that we have. Also, quantified that in archival boxes, we may have between 80 and 100 files. So that was the best we could do in terms of averaging the files because it created serious problems to count each page for 62 million records. So, we cannot confirm that we have 10 pages, 20 pages, 30 pages because the files are different. That was our initial approach on scanning. From our benchmarking we also found that there is a whole lot of work that needs to be considered before the actual scanning per page because how do we quantify the number of staples that must be removed, how the paper must be handled, how you put the metadata and all of those items, the manpower that goes into that when you take a batch of paper that you feed into the machine and for the machine to provide images. The

			question would be then, how do we quantify those particular inputs and resources that go into the actual scanning as compared to the pages. We were made to understand that the actual feeding or per page is an easier part as compared to how you handle the page, how you retrieve those parts and everything else, and even after that stapling it in the same order that it was. So, we were made to understand that the way we wanted to approach this thing was limiting in terms of the actual work that is input cost, pre prep and proposed prep and that was our biggest challenge as we were only able to work it to this level.
43	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	If there is a discrepancy in what SASSA states is the pages per file and what the actually pages per file are, will SASSA issue a variance order?	No variance orders will be issued. SASSA is digitizing about 60 000 000 records; it is not practical to expect SASSA to create another project inside this project of counting pages in the files of beneficiaries of the records to be digitised.
44	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	The volume indicated in the tender is as of June 2024, has SASSA taken into account that the volumes would possibly have increased. A significant increase in volume would possibly require additional infrastructure, which could impact on the costing. Is it correct to assume that each retrieval list of 6000 will have an assigned batch number by SASSA and that this batch number will be the universal mechanism for tracking during the processing procedures?	The volumes were provided by our current service provider, since they manage our files, including retrievals etc. It is therefore expected that they know the location of the files at all times, the correct volumes and monthly growth percentages. That can be brought to the attention of SASSA and it will be dealt with accordingly because, it can then mean the Agency is not aware of some of its files. That would be concerning, since these volumes are aligned to the information the Agency has about its beneficiaries. This would then mean also its information our current service providers don't have at their disposal, since these volumes were provided by our current service provider and confirmed with the regions accordingly. The nature of this bid is such that the winning bidder will manage all the volumes of SASSA records (flat rate model, except for scanning),

			and not charge per box. Therefore, ideally, this should not negatively impact any aspect of this bid.
			As for the current service provider, this will be dealt with accordingly in line with the current Service Level Agreement.
			NB* The volumes were confirmed in June 2024, and in September 2024, we stopped delivering any more files to the Records Management Centres because at that particular time SASSA had started implementing online applications and other digital ways of applying. Even at that time point, the growth was about 0.5 on a monthly or yearly basis. So, between that time and now, there were no additional significant numbers of files that are going to RMC's. And at this point in time, actually, we might even have less numbers of files. By the time this contract starts, we will have files that have already reached their lifespan.
			Secondly, we are busy with destructions in all regions currently for those files that are due.
45	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	Is the assumption that the 6000 files to be retrieved on a daily basis for scanning purposes? Would the same volume of retrievals (6000) be applicable to each branch? Can the number of files for scanning vary per region based on the volume to be scanned over 5 years and therefore reduce the amount of files required for retrieval on a daily basis proportional to the branch volumes?	No, the requirement of retrievals of 6000 files will be for the SASSA Projects. The scanning pace depends on the bidder's proposals of how many records they have capacity to scan on a daily basis, the requirement is to ensure that these records have all been scanned by the end of the contract. However, it's important to note that it is expected that the appointed service provider facilitates a verification process after the files have been scanned. **(Refer to Annexure F – Scanning Process)** **Bidders will need to propose practical quantities to scan daily across all regions, in consideration of the files pre and post preps.**

			SASSA will also facilitate a verification exercise per batch of a 1000.
46	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	Could you provide further details around the scanning requirements: Black & White or Colour?	**Reference to Annexure F- Scanning Process - Section 4. Quality Assurance, particularly 4.4.1 'which reads as follows "** The images must be the same or an enhanced version of the physical file." Therefore, where contents of the file are black and white, they should be scanned as such and where it is colour, it should be scanned as such. Furthermore, the minimum ISO quality standards have also been listed on the same document
47	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	Required Dots Per Inch?	**Reference to Annexure F- Scanning Process - Section 4. Quality Assurance, particularly 4.5** Minimum quality standards required for scanning: — ISO 19264-1 — ISO 19264-2021 — ISO/TR19263-1: 2017 — ISO/TR13028:2010
48	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	Page sizes (A3, A4...etc)? If there are A3 and larger, should we request a % breakdown of each?	No. SASSA is digitizing about 60 000 000 records, it is not practical to expect SASSA to create another project inside this project of counting pages in the files of beneficiaries of the records to be digitised.
49	Pam Groenewald (The	Scanning and Indexing to be performed at file level only?	**Reference to Annexure F- Scanning Process Section 4. Quality Assurance**

			1 The following metadata must be provided with each scanned image Scan Batch ID, Scan ID, ID Number, CLM Number, BRM Number. Page count 2 Each scanned file must be named in accordance to a file name convention 3 Each file must be quality checked before post-prep and re-boxing.
	Document Warehouse)		
50	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	Are scanned PDFs required to be in searchable format?	Files must adhere to an agreed file naming convention that links the file to the metadata.
51	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	What format PDF is required (PDF, PDF/A-1b, PDF/A-2b etc.)?	Minimum quality standards required for scanning: — ISO 19264-1 — ISO 19264-2021 — ISO/TR19263-1: 2017 — ISO/TR13028:2010
52	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	Should the index be submitted in XML format?	XML is still acceptable if this means direct link to the referenced documents. However, either format is acceptable.
53	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	Is a separate index file required for each image file, or per batch?	Files are retrieved at a file level per beneficiary ID number. — The following metadata must be provided with each scanned image Scan Batch ID, Scan ID, ID Number, CLM Number, BRM Number. Page count — Each scanned file must be named in accordance to a file name convention

54	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	Please confirm the file naming convention of the Images if available?	— The following metadata must be provided with each scanned image Scan Batch ID, Scan ID, ID Number, CLM Number, BRM Number. Page count — Each scanned file must be named in accordance with a file name convention
55	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	How long must images be retained after verification? Is there a defined purge schedule?	This will be subject to the quality assurance process. Once all the scanned records are processed successfully, they will be removed.
56	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	Can you clarify the number of files that need to be scanned daily or monthly or should we assume that all files must be scanned over the full five-year period?	The scanning pace depends on the bidder's proposals of how many records they have capacity to scan on a daily basis, the requirement is to ensure that these records have all been scanned by the end of the contract. However, it's important to note that it is expected that the appointed service provider facilitates a verification process after the files have been scanned. **(Refer to Annexure F – Scanning Process)** **Bidders will need to propose practical quantities to scan daily across all regions, in consideration of the files pre and post preps.** SASSA will also facilitate a verification exercise per batch of a 1000.
57	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	After scanning the boxes, will they be placed back into storage? What will be the retention period for the files?	SASSA will continuously request for approval for the approved scanned files. The files will continue to maintain their retention period as per the approved SASSA retention schedule. Until approval has been granted, then the list of approved files will be provided for destruction.
58	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	Can we assume that SASSA will supply and manage the File Share, Kofax and ECM system, and that the service provider is not required to supply this?	**(Refer to Annexure F – Scanning Process)** **5. Provisioning of data.** 5.1. The bidder will have access to a shared drive to allow for remote provisioning of data.

			5.2. data will be uploaded to the above shared drive together with the metadata. 5.3. Files must adhere to an agreed file naming convention that links the file to the metadata. 5.4. These files will be access by SASSA for further processing.
59	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	Can we assume that SASSA will provide the necessary connectivity to support the transfer of scanned image batches and index files to the "file share", as referenced in Annexure F – Section 5.1. The File Server, which is assumed to be a server/s within SASSA's ICT Infrastructure.	Yes, ICT will ensure that the required file share capabilities are provisioned and supported for the during of the contract.
60	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	With reference to the scanning requirements, the tender refers to backlog scanning. What is the plan for handling new incoming documents, especially where collection and transport may be affected?	There are no more files collected from the SASSA Local Office and delivered to the Records Management Centres.
61	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	Must the cover sheet appear included in the image of the file or should it be dropped?	**(Refer to Annexure F – Scanning Process)** **3. Generating of the file Coversheet.** Yes, as it enables the sourcing of the required metadata for each scanned file. The bidder will have access to the BRM system to generate the file coversheet for each file.
62	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	The pricing template asks for a cost per 1,000 scanned files. Can we assume this is for pricing comparison only, and that minimum volume commitments will apply? The concern here is around infrastructure investment	Cost per 1000 is for price comparison. All the SASSA Records Volumes must be scanned and destructed by the end of the contract.

		required without volume certainty. Can SASSA commit to minimum scanning volumes, or to ensuring that all 62 million+ files will be scanned during the five-year contract term?	
63	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	Please provide further details on the scanning rejection process.	**(Refer to Annexure F – Scanning Process)** **6. SASSA quality assurance process** 6.1. Scanned images will be ingested into the KOFAX platform for process together with the metadata. 6.2. These files once processed will be loaded into the SASSA electronic document management system 6.3. A random sample of 100 file per batch (1000 files) will be quality assured by SASSA officials. 6.4. If the batches passed quality assurance, the bidder will be able to bill for the batched. 6.5. **A list of failed batched will be sent to the bidder for re-processing. Bidder cannot bill for these batched until corrected.** NB: All the scanned files will be subjected to a validation process to ensure they comply with the set quality standards. Otherwise, they will be flagged for re-scanning
64	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	Since rejected scanned batches cannot be billed, what are the conditions for rejection? What are the rejection criteria used when a scanned batch is rejected? Please specify the quality assurance thresholds.	**(Refer to Annexure F – Scanning Process)** **Section 4 - Quality Assurance** The following criteria is used for quality assurance The images must be the same or an enhanced version of the physical file. ⎯ The metadata must be provided for each file. ⎯ Minimum quality standards required for scanning: ⎯ ISO 19264-1 ⎯ ISO 19264-2021 ⎯ ISO/TR19263-1: 2017

			$-$ ISO/TR13028:2010 NB: Check response on Item 63
65	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	If images are uploaded to a shared drive, how will we be notified of rejected files, and what corrective process is expected?	A list of failed batches will be sent to the bidder for re-processing
66	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	The BRM system is relied upon to produce cover sheets and this dependency may significantly impact productivity. What uptime guarantees are in place for BRM, or is there a contingency plan in case the system is offline?	SASSA ICT commits to system high availability and prompt updates will be made should there be down time.
67	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	If the BRM system is offline how will this, affect penalties for non-performance?	There will not be any penalties if the issue is from SASSA
68	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	**Facilities** Facilities – Offices: The office space layout appears to exclude provisions for passages, toilets, common areas, filing areas and receiving bays. This will ultimately increase the total accommodation space needed and exceed the m² documented in the tender. Are service providers expected to quote on the total space required including the excluded areas above? "Annexure G"	The Accommodation Space addresses the needs for the SASSA officials. The terms of reference have indicated the intention and objective. It is upon the bidders to propose the best possible way to achieve this objective successfully within the set timelines and necessary resources to achieve this objective. I would not be proper to SASSA to request the experts to provide a service in reaching this objective and then turnaround and tell the experts how to do it. Common areas are required in any professional environment; therefore, bidders should propose the establishment of enabling facilities that will best achieve the objective of the Agency. Annexure G is attached to enable bidders to calculate the distance to their anticipated premises, in compliance with the requirements of this

			bid. '**within the 30 km radius of the SASSA Regional Offices (Except for the Kwa-Zulu Natal Region which must be within 30 km of the Pinetown area)'**
69	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	Fencing: Is Clear Vu fencing (as a specific brand) mandatory, or will equivalent anti-cut, high-security fencing be accepted?	Equivalent quality anti-cut, high-security fencing will be accepted. The intention is to provide clarity of the security components. Clear Vu as a brand, is not mentioned in the Terms of Reference, if it is, kindly bring it to our attention.
70	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	Will biometric access be necessary at both the main gate and the SASSA entrance, or will it be required for the entire building?	In terms of **Annexure D**. Access Control is for accessing SASSA Office Space
71	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	Is there a need to upgrade the current server rooms to meet your specifications?	Yes, compliance to the current Terms of Reference is important to adequately address the needs of this service appropriately.
72	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	**Security** Security: Please confirm night shift guard requirements (e.g., two guards in the security control room and two guards on active patrol at entrance gates).	As per the Annexure D – Security Requirements. There cannot be amendments to the Terms of Reference. The Security of requirements were developed by the SASSA Security Management Unit accordingly, in line with the needs of the Agency. The SASSA beneficiary records are a very important asset of the Agency.
73	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	Access Control: Does the biometric access control system need to be installed only at the main entrance door at the SASSA offices and facility entrance gate?	In terms of **Annexure D**. Access Control is for accessing SASSA Office Space

74	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	CCTV: Can we assume that CCTV requirements apply only to the service provider's premises and exclude internal SASSA office areas?	CCTV as per Section 1.6 of Annexure D – Security Requirements. SASSA internal office space is not listed as a requirement
75	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	**Pricing** There is no mention of destruction in the pricing schedule?	The appointed service provider will be allowed to keep the wastepaper for compensation.
76	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	The Price schedule doesn't include the volumes of retrievals for destruction?	Those destructions are dependent on the files that have been approved after scanning. So, you scan 200,000 files for example, and they've been approved, and SASSA has paid for the scanning. We initiate our internal processes for requesting approval. Once that approval has been granted, we will give you that list to destroy at your liberty. SASSA needs to have destroyed all such records by the end of the contract. So the quicker you can be able to scan and deliver good quality and all of those things are satisfied then the quicker we can be able to initiate our processes which do not really take more than a month for approval.
77	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	What will occur if the actual volumes differ from those stated in the tender? The service provider notes that the actual count of boxes and files is higher, which significantly affects both storage and scanning expenses. How will this discrepancy be addressed given that this is a fixed bid?	No variance orders will be issued. **NB*** The volumes were confirmed in June 2024, and in September 2024, we stopped delivering any more files to the Records Management Centres because at that particular time SASSA had started implementing online applications and other digital ways of applying. Even at that time point, the growth was about 0.5 on a monthly or yearly basis. So, between that time and now, there were no additional significant numbers of files that are going to RMC's. And at this point in time, actually, we might even have less numbers of files. By the time this contract starts, we will have files that have already reached their lifespan.

			Secondly, we are busy with destructions in all regions as we speak for those files that are due.
78	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	As per the tender briefing are we correct to assume that boxes will be destroyed a month after the scanned images have been approved? (Please note this will impact the storage cost pricing)	How, this contract is for a fixed period, using a flat rate model…how is the pricing affected over a month because this contract is for a period of (05) years?
79	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	Are we correct to assume that there will be no physical storage at the end of the 5-year contract? If there are still boxes stored at the end of the period will there be a variance order?	No, there will be no variance orders. It is expected that the proposals will establish and propose timelines that will effectively deliver on this mandate. Therefore proposed, activities, good quality resources etc should aim to reach this objective in the best practically possible manner.
80	Pam Groenewald (The Document Warehouse)	Are we correct to assume that there will be no more collection from local offices?	Yes, as per the terms of reference, there will be no more collection from the Local Offices
81	Bids Office (Metrofile)	Can we recommend alternative fire control measures instead of the ones specified in the tender document?	The Terms of Reference cannot be changed at this point, the minimum requirement is in alignment to the Terms of Reference, any others will be considered as an improved version. Failure to comply to the Terms of Reference is non-compliance to the requirements.
82	Unathi Zibulwana (FTEC)	**Technical and Operational Scope** **System integration:** What specific system does SASSA currently use for BRM tracking, and will the service provider receive API access or system documentation for integration purposes?	Access will be provisioned to the service provider via VPN

83	Unathi Zibulwana (FTEC)	**ICT infrastructure responsibilities:** Who is responsible for procuring and maintaining ICT infrastructure (e.g., network equipment, servers, multifunction printers) as specified in Annexure E? Will SASSA provide any baseline infrastructure?	The requirements on **Annexure E – ICT Requirements** must be provided by the appointed service provider accordingly.
84	Unathi Zibulwana (FTEC)	**Scanning volumes and quality requirements:** With the clarified monthly scanning targets and provided metadata templates, can you confirm if there are any updated minimum quality standards or additional metadata fields beyond what's mentioned in Annexure F? Which level of ISO will be required? Level A, B or C	**(Refer to Annexure F – Scanning Process)** Section 4 - Quality Assurance The following criteria is used for quality assurance The images must be the same or an enhanced version of the physical file. — The metadata must be provided for each file. — Minimum quality standards required for scanning: — ISO 19264-1 — ISO 19264-2021 — ISO/TR19263-1: 2017 — ISO/TR13028:2010
85	Unathi Zibulwana (FTEC)	**Governance and communication** **Future support and system updates:** Are there minimum disaster recovery capabilities expected at each site (e.g., secondary backup facility, data mirroring)	Section 4 of the evaluation criteria refer to evaluating proposal on Service Continuity. (I.e. Electronic system back up against crashing, cyber-attacks, Industrial action etc.).
86	Unathi Zibulwana (FTEC)	**Submission Extension Request** Closing date not sufficient for response preparation, we kindly request an extension of the closing date, as the current timeline does not provide sufficient time for thorough response preparation.	Given the nature of this service and the concern raised by multiple bidders, requesting the same, we have initiated a request for this extension accordingly. However, the approved period of extension can only be communicated at a later stage, if at all approved, with a new closing date through the SASSA website and National Treasury's e-tender portal.