31 July 2026

Clarification #	Question	Response
1	For accuracy of pricing submission, can you supply more detailed information around the quantities in the pricing schedule.	As this contract is a drawdown agreement designed to support ongoing & fluctuating recruitment campaigns, exact drawdown volumes cannot be guaranteed. However, for the purpose of a transparent & equal evaluation of all bids, tenderers must input their costs against the specific baseline quantities currently detailed in *Pricing Schedule V 1 PB*. This ensures all submissions are assessed on an identical financial footprint.
2	In the spreadsheet Pricing Schedule V 1 PB, there are exact quantities to price, however in the request for tender document 1_PDF Merchandise V5 there is a requirement for variable unit quantity pricing. It is impossible to give an exact price per unit when you require quantities varying from 501 to 1000 etc. For example, a unit price for 500 would be more expensive than a unit price for 1000.	We appreciate that economies of scale significantly impact production costs. Costs should be entered against the quantities indicated on the Pricing Schedule
3	Where we see 1001+ could be any figure, for example 5000. The unit price here would change if you only order say 2500 & since you did not stipulate exact pricing it would stand.	See Question 2
4	Are there fixed quantities available to quote on.	No, there are no guaranteed or fixed purchase quantities for the duration of this framework, as spending is entirely demand-led. The quantities listed in the tender documents are careful estimates based on historical recruitment cycles & are intended solely as a baseline mechanism for scoring your financial templates.
5	You require options in colour of Black, Gold, White, Navy, Blue & Green for every item. Printing a colour logo on colour items will affect your logos &	The mandatory branding palette of the Defence Forces is comprehensively detailed in the newly uploaded DFPP_Brand_guideline document. This

	some items do not come in all the colours required. Can we supply the colours available in the items?	document outlines the permitted logo versions, background contrasts & colour application rules to protect the integrity of the crests. If a specific merchandise item cannot be sourced in a required colour, you may propose the closest commercially available alternative matching the guidelines. **Clarification Request for Tenderers:** Please formally list on Tender response document which specific merchandise items face colour restrictions & what alternative shades your supply chain can offer that align with the approved brand guidelines.
6	Would you be able to share with us the logo required on the branded merchandise or the number of colours required for branding the merchandise. As it is impossible to price branded merchandise without knowing how many colours are required for the logo.	The official logos, crests, layout specifications, & precise Pantone colour references are fully outlined in the DFPP_Brand_guideline document, which has been uploaded to the eTenders portal. For the purpose of your financial submission, please calculate all print costs based on a standard three-colour print process as specified within these guidelines.
7	In Section 3.2A of the RFT states that tenderers must have a minimum annual turnover of €1 million for each of the last three financial years, supported by an Auditor's Statement. However, Step 3 of the Tender Response Document (TRD) states that tenderers should declare they have an average annual turnover in excess of €250,000 over the last three years. As these two requirements appear to be inconsistent, could the Contracting Authority please clarify which turnover requirement applies for this competition?	We acknowledge this administrative error & thank you for bringing it to our attention. In accordance with the principle of proportionality under national procurement guidelines, the lower threshold is the correct requirement. The financial capacity criterion is officially amended to a minimum average annual turnover of €250,000 over the last three financial years. A revised RFT & TRD will be issued to reflect this.
8	Could the Contracting Authority please confirm the branding specification to be used when pricing the products in Appendix 1 & the Pricing Schedule? Specifically:	Yes, unless explicitly stated otherwise in the item description within Appendix 1 or the DFPP_Brand_guideline, all pricing must be based on a single branding position (front centre for garments, or single-side print for pens/mugs).

9	Should pricing be based on a single branding position?	No. As noted in the response to Question 6 & in accordance with the DFPP_Brand_guideline, tenderers must assume a three-colour print process as the baseline for all printed items to accommodate the standard Defence Forces/Joint Recruitment Office branding.
10	Where products typically use different branding methods (e.g. embroidery, laser engraving or digital print), should tenderers price using the standard branding method appropriate to the product?	Yes, tenderers should utilise the industry-standard branding method most appropriate to the durability & material of each specific product, while strictly adhering to the application rules in the DFPP_Brand_guideline (e.g., embroidery for apparel, laser engraving for metal items, screen/digital print for plastics). Please clearly specify the chosen branding method within your technical submission for each item.
11	Should artwork origination & setup costs be included within the unit prices?	Yes. To satisfy public sector accounting & evaluation rules, all setup, origination & tooling costs must be amortised & fully inclusive within the unit prices submitted in the pricing schedule. No separate or hidden setup fees will be paid during the contract term.
12	Are all the items to be branded or blank? Also, if branded is it a how many colours is the logo?	All items under this framework are to be supplied fully branded according to the rules in the DFPP_Brand_guideline. Blank items are not required. As stated previously, please calculate all costs using a standard logo application.
13	Do you want us to offer sustainable products where they are available?	Tenders must submit their proposals strictly in accordance with the specifications, requirements and evaluation criteria outlined in the published RFT. Please refer to Section 3.3.1 for specific environmental and sustainability scoring applicable to the products requested.
14	Do evaluation samples need Defence Forces branding or are identical products with alternative logos acceptable?	Defence Forces branding or colours are NOT required for the purpose of the sample evaluation.
15	The RFT asks for prices on multiple price breaks but on the excel they only	Pricing for evaluation should be provided on Appendix 2 – Pricing Schedule. As this

	mention the quantity per year. How are we to submit the pricing?	the best estimate on actual quantities required. Pricing on multiple price breaks should be pr0voided separately – clearly identifying the products and quantity break pricing as per RFT
16	The RFT mentioned multiple logos so should we quote based on a full colour print or one colour print?	Quote on one colour print will suffice.
17	On the TRD do we only need to submit prices and samples for the core items?	Samples are required for the core items only; we request pricing for all items but for evaluation purposes core items only will be evaluated.
18	Are the samples to be submitted on the same date as the tender?	All required product samples must be submitted on or before the closing date and time for the receipt of tenders, as specified in the RFT documentation. Samples received after the deadline will not be accepted or considered for evaluation. Tenderers must ensure that all samples are clearly labelled with the tenderer's name, the tender reference number and the specific item name from the core items.
19	The tender documentation refers to the successful supplier providing warehousing and stock management for drawdown throughout the framework period, while also identifying deliveries to multiple Defence Forces locations. To ensure all tenderers adopt a consistent pricing methodology, could the Contracting Authority please clarify the expected operational model for stock holding and distribution? Specifically: Is the successful supplier expected to hold stock for ongoing drawdown throughout the duration of the framework?	Yes. The successful tenderer must maintain sufficient stock levels to meet ongoing drawdown requirements throughout the framework term. The objective is to guarantee security of supply and swift fulfilment of orders as specified in the RFT documentation. • *Successful tenderer will be required to store three months' supply of stock at any one time.* • *Successful Tenderer must provide a Quarterly Stock Take report or when requested* • *Successful tenderer will be required to deliver Merchandising to the following locations"*
20	If so, can the Contracting Authority provide any guidance on the anticipated drawdown model, such as expected order frequency, typical order	Drawdowns are demand-driven. Tenderers should assume one coordinated reorder per quarter to all designated locations.

22	quantities, estimated number of delivery locations, or any minimum order values that tenderers should assume for pricing purposes?	Tenderers must reference the annual quantities specified in the pricing schedule (Excel sheet) provided with the RFT. See above Delivery is required to the following seven specific Defence Forces locations: • G1 Recruitment Officer, 1 Bde Headquarters, Collins Barracks, Old Youghal Road, Cork, T23 VA02 • G1 Recruitment Officer, 2 Bde Headquarters, Cathal Brugha Barracks, Dublin 6 • Air Corps Recruitment, Irish Air Corps, Casement Aerodrome, Baldonnel, Dublin 22 • G1 Recruitment Officer, DFTC Headquarters, Curragh Camp, Co. Kildare, R56 TK26 • Personnel Management Section, Naval Base, Haulbowline, Cork, P24 FY71 • Office of Reserve Affairs, Ceannt Barracks, Curragh Camp, Co. Kildare, R56 XV50 • Joint Recruitment Office, Defence Forces Headquarters, Newbridge, Co. Kildare, W12 AD93 No minimum order value or volume is guaranteed per individual drawdown. Tenderers must formulate their pricing based on the quarterly delivery model described above.
21	Where products are supplied through multiple drawdown orders to different Defence Forces locations, should all associated costs—including warehousing, inventory management, pick-and-pack, packaging and individual deliveries—be deemed to be included within the tendered unit prices?	Yes. The core items listed in the RFT. All associated costs—including warehousing, inventory management, pick-and-pack, packaging and final delivery to the seven locations listed above must be fully absorbed and factored into the tendered unit prices.
22	Could you please clarify the following:	

	In clarification point 6 it is stated that we must price for a 3 colour logo. In clarification point 16 it is stated that we must price for a one colour logo. Could you please clarify this point, as a 3 colour logo is more expensive than a one colour logo, additionally some items only have one colour print available.	Tenders must ensure that their pricing submissions strictly align with the visual specifications of the logo provided in the tender documentation: • **Single-colour Logo**: Where a one-colour logo is specified or provided, the submission must be priced based on single-colour production. • **Three-colour Logo**: Where a three-colour logo is specified or provided, the submission must be priced to reflect three-colour production.
23	For the tender there appears to be differing draw down points for each different brand. People have pointed out that printing and quantities are supplied at different price points depending on the confirmed order. I note there are five different brands • Army • Air Corps • Naval Service • Reserve Defence Forces • Joint Recruitment Office (Defence Forces) Is the branding the same across all items or will it vary depending on the brand of defence forces? I.E a 3000 unit order would be split separately at 600 pieces each because it will be defence forces (army). Or will be the branding be the same distributed to all branches.	See Document Core Items, which has a breakdown of quantities for each arm. There is different logos and branding • Army • Air Corps • Naval Service • Joint Recruitment Office (Defence Forces) The Reserve Defence Forces would usually use either the Army/ Naval Service or Defence Forces.
24	Basis of pricing across the branches As it has been made clear that larger quantities attract larger discounts, and the breakdown now shows that the	Tenderers must submit a single, uniform blended unit price for each item on the existing pricing template. This blended rate must apply consistently across all

	quantities per individual brand are smaller, I want to confirm how you would like pricing presented. Would you prefer a single blended price averaged across the entire Defence Forces, so that every branch receives the same rate regardless of its individual volume? In practice this would mean taking all five branding pieces plus the artwork set ups and averaging them into one price, rather than a larger branch such as the Army attaining a better rate than a smaller unit such as the recruitment office. There is individual setups for each brand, logo etc. Alternatively, would you prefer individual pricing quoted separately for each branch, reflecting each branch's own quantity?	branches, formations and recruitment offices, irrespective of the smaller volume distributions or varied branding requirements of individual units. Tenderers should factor all setup, artwork and production variations for the individual service arms into this single blended unit rate.
25	I have reviewed the documents and cannot find the payment terms stated. Could you please confirm how they will operate for this tender. My reason for asking is as follows. To achieve the more favourable prices at the reduced per brand quantities, tenderers will need to commit to the full annual quantity. Holding that stock is not a problem for us. The issue is holding it for up to a year without payment. So, to offer the lower prices, would payment be made upfront on order, or on a draw down basis as stock is called off? As mentioned, if it’s a quarterly order, now look at putting the given quantities in 1/4's for us ordering and the DF to pay.	Payment will not be issued upfront upon initial bulk production or stock placement. Payment will be made strictly on a drawdown basis as goods are issued and delivered to the designated locations. All invoices will be settled in accordance with standard Irish Public Sector Prompt Payment terms (payment within 30 calendar days of receipt of a valid invoice, unless otherwise specified in the contract terms).
26	If we are required to quote in accordance with the Core Contract Document, each item must be priced across the five different quantity bands, as each quantity has a different logo, it would be considered a separate order. Could you please provide an updated pricing schedule that includes these	No updated pricing schedule or separate quantity bands will be issued. As stated in the response to Question 24, tenderers must utilise the existing pricing template to submit a single, comprehensive blended unit price per item. This single unit price must encompass all logo setups, branding variations and delivery

	quantities? This will enable us to clearly show the unit cost per logo for each quantity band.	requirements for all participating military branches.
27	It is mentioned that stock must be held for swift drawdown and supply. Can you elaborate on what you consider to be swift?	For the purposes of this agreement, swift drawdown and supply is defined as a maximum delivery lead time of 10 working days from the formal receipt of an order(s) to final delivery at the designated Defence Forces location(s).
28	it is mentioned that a supply of 3 months of stock must be held at any given time. Just for confirmation of what you expect; • A 3-month supply of 18 different products to be held for drawdown at any moment. • Stock to held with branding already applied for swift drawdown. • Stock will not be paid for in advance and the Economic Operators must bare this initial cost. • No guarantee is made that stock will be drawdown.	The parameters as follows: • The requirement to hold a rolling three (3) month safety stock applies strictly to the Core Product Items identified in the RFT, • To reliably fulfil the mandatory ten (10) day delivery lead time, core stock must be held in a pre-branded state matching the historical quarterly demand patterns outlined, • Payment is executed strictly in arrears upon final delivery of validly ordered goods, • To align with sustainable practices and mitigate vendor risk, the contract conditions will be amended to include a Stock Buy-Back Clause. Upon the natural expiration or formal termination of the framework agreement, the Contracting Authority will purchase any remaining, uncalled pre-branded core stock up to a maximum value equivalent to the designated three (3) month safety stock buffer, provided the stock meets the original quality specifications.
29	Having carefully reviewed the latest clarifications, we remain concerned that the proposed commercial model does not accurately reflect the way the promotional merchandise industry operates.	

	In many public sector framework agreements for categories such as office stationery, office supplies and standard clothing, suppliers hold generic, unbranded stock as part of their normal business operations. That stock can be sold across multiple customers and sales channels, significantly reducing commercial risk. Promotional merchandise is fundamentally different. Products are manufactured and branded specifically for an individual customer. Once branded with Defence Forces logos, they have little or no commercial value outside this contract and cannot be sold through alternative channels. The clarification responses now require suppliers to: • purchase and hold three months' pre-branded stock; • deliver within a maximum of ten working days from receipt of an order; • absorb all warehousing, stock management, pick-and-pack, packaging and delivery costs; • submit a single blended unit price across multiple Defence Forces brands and logos; and • accept payment only as products are drawn down. 1_Clarifications V8 dated 30 Jul 2026 2.pdf In the promotional merchandise industry, the lowest manufacturing costs are achieved by producing larger quantities of a single branded design. This tender requires suppliers to blend multiple logos, multiple production setups, differing production quantities and unknown drawdown patterns into a single fixed unit price without sufficient information to accurately quantify these variables. As a result, tenderers are not pricing against known operational requirements, but against a number of	

	commercial risks that cannot be measured with any reasonable degree of accuracy. This is likely to result in either increased pricing to account for risk or suppliers making commercial assumptions that may ultimately prove unsustainable. **Could the Contracting Authority please confirm that it is satisfied this pricing methodology represents best procurement practice, delivers best value for public funds, and will not unnecessarily restrict competition by transferring an exceptional level of commercial risk to the successful supplier?**	 To explain the context, the PDF cannot use a single standard branding, unlike most CAs, e.g. the Garda Siochana. We are recruiting and advertising for the Army, Air Corps and Naval Service and the Reserve Defence Forces. In addition, our Recruiting Office has a branding to cover the Defence Forces in total. Hence the need for different branding and the need for branded stock to be held to meet PDF requirements in a short period (10 days). There is a requirement for three months stock to be held for **CORE products only,** covering all above listed elements of the PDF. As an example, with regards to Water bottles: 3 months stock for Army is 290 bottles, Naval Service – 70 Air Corps 45. PDF has stated in its requirements that Stock level reports are required. This will allow both the PDF and the successful tenderer to identify the optimum stock level and ongoing to have a more structured drawdown, minimising stock holdings for tenderers. On the last year of the contract stock levels will be ran down ensuring that the successful tenderer will not be left with excess stock and the PDF committed to taking up to three months stock should this arise. Tenderers should price the products considering these points and being full cognisant that they will not be left with stock at the end of the contract.

		Qty Per Annum	**Qty Per Annum**	**Qty Per Annum**	**Qty Per Annum**	**Qty Per Annum**

		Army	Naval Service	Air Corps	Reserve Defence Forces	Joint Recruitment Office
Item No.	**Regular Use**					
1	600-750ml Clear Water Bottle	1,080	270	180	270	200