

Department of Contracts  
Notre Dame Ravelin  
FLORIANA

To Ministries  
Heads of Departments and Entities

08 May 2026

**DYNAMIC PURCHASING SYSTEM (DPS) FOR THE SCANNING AND  
DIGITISATION OF FILES TO GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND ENTITIES**

1. Ministries, Heads of Departments and Entities are hereby informed that a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) for the scanning and digitisation of files to government departments and entities has been established.
2. This DPS is available to all Contracting Authorities, including those that have already integrated the Corporate Electronic Document Management System (CeDMS) as well as those that have not yet enrolled in or implemented it.
3. The DPS enables Contracting Authorities to procure scanning services within short timeframes, by inviting Economic Operators from a pre-established pool whenever a Specific Contract is required.
4. Specific Contracts shall be limited to technical and financial information only.
5. A Specific Contract shall be awarded to the tenderer submitting the lowest-priced offer.
6. Where the estimated value of the procurement exceeds €10,000 excluding VAT but does not exceed €750,000 excluding VAT, Specific Contracts under the DPS shall be published by the Sectoral Procurement Directorate (SPD).
7. Where the estimated value of the procurement exceeds €750,000 excluding VAT, Specific Contracts under the DPS shall be published by the Operations Directorate within the Department of Contracts.
8. Contracting Authorities shall use the templates provided and attached to this Circular when publishing a Specific Contract. No amendments shall be made to these templates unless expressly allowed by DG Contracts.
9. Contract management, performance monitoring and all payments due under each Specific Contract shall be the responsibility of the respective Contracting Authorities.

10. Information on how a DPS works is also being annexed. The terms of reference of the established DPS are being included in this Circular.

11. The DPS shall remain in force until the 24<sup>th</sup> of April 2028 or until the allocated budget of Euro3,000,000 for Specific Contracts has been fully utilized, whichever occurs first. The Contracting Authority reserves the right to allocate more funds as necessary

Contracting Authorities intending to make use of this DPS are required to notify the Document Management Unit (DMU) within the Coordination and Implementation Division within the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) at [dmu.opm@gov.mt](mailto:dmu.opm@gov.mt) and provide the estimated cost of service. Upon this notification, the DMU will issue a reference number. This confirmation email must be submitted with the tender documents to SPD/Operations as applicable, and the reference number must be quoted in the relevant tender documentation.

Adrian Dalli  
Director General (Contracts)

## **DPS TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**IMPORTANT** – This Section includes a high-level overview of the technical specifications terms of reference of the established DPS. Each Specific Contract will include more detailed technical specifications/terms of reference in accordance with the particular requirements of the same Specific Contract.

### ***4.1 Background***

This DPS is being publishing for a period of three (3) years to be used as a flexible and efficient procurement mechanism for a number of Contracting Authorities to scan files. This DPS is available for use by Contracting Authorities that will be incorporating in the Public Service Document Management System – Therefore, as well as by those that have not yet enrolled in or integrated this system into their operations. Such a mechanism will provide the ability to avail of scanning services and expedited time frame by having a pre-set pool of suppliers readily available to provide their services whenever a Specific Contract is required.

### ***4.2 Objectives***

#### ***Stage 1: Project Initialization, Planning & Formalisation***

- During this stage, conducting an on-site visit for optimization and refinement, as well as developing the Project Plan
- Setting up communication channels to support the project throughout its lifecycle.
- Establishment of procedure to handle updates to authorized personnel at the Contractor for the purpose of Data Protection Policy compliance.
- Defining the format for project management meetings and enhancing improvements to quality control measures/objectives monitoring
- Establishment of collection and return service, along with methodology for tracking & identification of documentation.
- Establishing methods for document inventory and indexing and outlining procedures for naming digitized documents.

#### ***Stage 2: Service Delivery (Collection, Scanning and Return of Materials)***

- **Collection**
  - Contractor shall perform the document collection service as described in 4.2.1 Specific Activities and formalized during Project Initiation, Planning and Formalisation. (Refer to 4.2.1 - specific Activities 2a for further details).
- **Scanning and Digitisation of Materials**
  - The contractor shall commit to the scanning and digitization of physical documentation falling within the scope of this project, among other particulars:

- Performing scanning and digitization services described in 4.2.1. Specific Activities, whilst providing ongoing quality checks against required upon indicators with the Contracting Authority; and
  - Providing regular project updates via formal documentation, as per Article 24 of the special conditions and as agreed with the Contracting Authority.
- **Returning of material (applied to Physical original and electronic equivalents)**
    - The contractor shall perform the document return service described in 4.2.1 specific Activities and formalized during Project initiation, Planning and Formalisation.
    - The Contractor shall commit to, among other particulars:
      - Providing for the delivery of electronic scans in a pre-defined folder structure to be made available for secure access and download for the Contracting Authority (e.g. The use of VPN-protection secure file transfer methodology provided by the contractor, hard-drive which needs to be scanned for any malware before and after giving it to the contractor, or through mydrive using a CORP Account<sup>1</sup>) as well as the collection and return of physical documents to an agreed location without no extra cost for transport, and
      - Providing an ongoing index of documents scanned to the requirements as outline in 4.2.1 specific activities.

#### **4.2.1 SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES**

Specific activities of the Contract related to each stage of the scanning process shall be as follows:

##### **Stage/Milestone 1: *Project Initiation, Planning & Formalisation (Month 1 from project commencement date)***

(i) Awarded Contractor shall conduct a detailed onsite visit and carry out a sample-test of physical documentation to be digitised. Further to the on-site visit and discussions with the Contracting Authority, the Contractor shall propose a detailed project implementation plan for the Contracting Authority's approval, indicating at a minimum the: scheduling of collection, scanning rate, and return operations. (service to be provided free of charge).

(ii) The Contractor shall establish agreed upon formal communication channels with the Contracting Authority to maintain throughout the longevity of the scanning lifecycle and to coordinate pick-up, delivery, storage as well as return of scanned materials. To use mentioned communication channels to provide the Contracting Authority with timely updates on status

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<sup>1</sup> Where MyDrive using a CORP Account is mentioned, 'MyDrive' refers to any storage drive that can be linked to a CORP Suppliers Account. This setup enables suppliers to securely store scanned material, which can then be conveniently accessed and downloaded by the Contracting Authority.

of scanning and digitisation of batches collected in agreement with the Contracting Authority.

(iii) The Contractor shall establish the procedure by which the list of associated individuals to be involved in the project shall be provided and updated (e.g. personnel conducting scans, personnel conducting transportation, etc.). The Contractor shall proceed to provide the list of associated individuals involved in the contract, including the collection of signatures to act as declaration of compliance to the Contracting Authority's Data Protection Policy. The list and corresponding signatures are to be updated as and when required.

(iv) The Contractor shall establish a format for project management meetings and quality control measures/objectives monitoring as defined within clause 8 *below - Monitoring and Evaluation* which will at a minimum provide effective visibility of indicators described therein.

(v) The Contractor is to demonstrate the collection & return service tracking method and how this methodology provides means of identifying physical document batches collected, transferred, scanned, and returned in a manner that allows for the easy identification of the contents, location, and status of each batch. The methodology is to be submitted for the Contracting Authority's approval during the Inception Phase. Should it be found that the procedure needs to be optimised/fine-tuned during the implementation of the Contract, such necessary fine tuning is to take place by the Contractor subject to the Contracting Authority's discretion and approval.

**Inception Report:** As part of this task, the Contractor is to submit a Project Initiation and Inception document which shall include any findings discovered during the on-site visits. The Report shall also document the agreed upon:

- Implementation Plan indicating at a minimum the: scheduling of collection, scanning rate, and return operations.
- Formal communication channels.
- The list of associated individuals and corresponding signatures as well as the agreed upon procedure of updating such list.
- Quality control measures/objectives monitoring and Risk Register to be put in place.
- The collection & return service tracking methodology to be put in place.

***Stage / Milestone 2: Performance of Scanning & Digitisation Operations (Month 2 to Month 32)***

- This stage encompasses the performance of the scanning & digitisation service. The Contractor shall maintain a detailed plan and record of the scanning operations covering the defined project period and regularly update and communicate this plan with the Contracting Authority (refer to clause 8. Monitoring and Evaluation – Progress Monitoring).

**Stage / Milestone 2a: Collection of Materials**

(i) The Contractor shall operate a flexible collection and return schedule for both scanned and physical documents, subject to discretion and approval by the Contracting Authority. The transport expenses of the physical files are to be incurred by the contractor)

(ii) The Contractor is to put in place a tracking procedure providing means of identifying physical document batches collected, transferred, scanned, and returned in a manner that allows for the easy identification of the contents, location, and status (in transit/ pending/ scanning/ processing/ complete/ delivered) of each batch.

While the amount of pages per batch may be modified during Stage/ Milestone 1, this is to be subject to the Contracting Authority's approval.

- (iii) The Contractor shall supply appropriate mode of packaging and transport for the transfer of physical documentation from Contracting Authority sites to Contractor scanning sites and *vice-versa*, subject to approval by the Contracting Authority. The Contractor will be expected to provide a means of formal documentation/record to maintain document integrity while transporting documents between sites, as well as to record the successful delivery of materials.

#### **Stage / Milestone 2b: Scanning & Digitisation of Materials (applies to physical originals and electronic equivalents)**

- In preparation for scanning, the Contractor shall dismantle/unbind the documents to maximise the quality of the end result of the scanning process. The Contractor is expected to re-assemble/re-bind documents to the original state following the completion of the scanning process.
- The Contractor will store scanned electronic copies in a folder/file hierarchy defined by the Contracting Authority which will typically contain a folder and 1 or more sub-levels, and name processed files according to a pre-defined file-naming convention (Example: Category – Year – File Number – Cover/Insertions/Minutes)

The above may be reviewed by the Contracting Authority. Variant naming structures may be applicable according to the batch being scanned. It is envisaged that to aid the Contractor, particularly with initial document batches with recognising the various types of documents, the Contracting Authority will provide various types of assistance, such as guides/visual aids, and on-site monitoring/content training. The level and style of assistance can be reviewed as necessary as the contract implementation progresses.

- The Contractor must be able to accommodate the scanning of a vast range of document size formats. While most of the physical documentation may be assumed to be of A4 type, the Contractor must be able to scan both text-based and non-text-

based instances of large documents (e.g. A0 and also down to small business-card size documents, as required).

- The Contractor must be able to handle specific non-standard cases, such as (i) illegible data; (ii) obvious duplicate data; (iii) other as may be encountered. The Contractor shall set up a standard procedure for handling such cases in discussion with the Contracting Authority.
- Ministries, Departments and Entities that have already adopted the Public Service Document Management System – Therefore:

1. Scanned documents shall not have the option of Optical Character Recognition (OCR).
2. DPI should not be more than 300DPI
3. Compression of files. To use iHQC technology or similar, and as estimates, on a 6-page document of original size 3.4Mb, the results should be around 486KB in B\W scanning, and 528 if in colour with no OCR.
4. File name output - must be able to supply scanned documents based on a given folder structure (which department will provide on a case by case), and Pdf file named per Therefore Case Number.

- Ministries, Departments and Entities that have not already adopted the Public Service Document Management System – Therefore.

1. Scanned documents shall constitute an Optical Character Recognition (OCR)-ready documents and must be easily text-searchable using standard PDF viewer search facility.
2. Compression of files. To use iHQC technology or similar, and as estimates, on a 6-page document of original size 3.4Mb, the results should be around 486KB in B\W scanning, and 528 if in colour with OCR.
3. File name output - must be able to supply scanned documents based on a given folder structure which the Contracting Authority shall provide

### **Stage / Milestone 2c: Return of Materials**

- i. The Contractor shall provide all electronic scans in a folder structure pre-defined by the Contracting Authority (as mentioned above) to be made available for access and download for the Contracting Authority (e.g. The use of VPN-protection secure file transfer methodology provided by the contractor, hard-drive which needs to be scanned for any malware before and after giving it to the contractor, or through mydrive using a CORP Account)). The location of the digital files at the contractor's end should be safe from unauthorised file access and supplier is to ensure access management is in place to allow only trusted users.

- ii. An audit trail of access is also to be provided on request raised by the Contracting Authority.
- iii. Complete Electronic scans as detailed above are to be made available for download by the Contracting Authority (note: on a case-by-case basis, a longer time period may be allowed for specific batches);
- iv. The Contractor shall operate a physical and electronic document return schedule subject to the approval of the Contracting Authority in line with the agreed, formalised Implementation Plan, including the complete deletion of electronic data assets belonging to the Contracting Authority from the Contractor's facilities after a pre-defined period, following the approval of the Contracting Authority.
- v. The Contractor shall return physical documentation in boxes at an agreed location. The provision of boxes shall be the responsibility of the Contractor and subject to approval by Contracting Authority.
- vi. The Contracting Authority may retain the physical boxes once returned to the Contracting Authority. Documentation shall be returned in good order and condition as further specified by quality indicators defined.

#### **Stage/ Milestone 2d: Archived Documents**

- i. As indicated in Clause 2.2 Specific Objectives, documents can either be active or archived documents.
- ii. (Scanning and Digitisation of Archived Documents is to be executed as per specifications defined under Stage / Milestone 2a, 2b and 2c above. However, some exceptions to the specifications listed above apply:
  - a) The Contractor will store scanned electronic copies of scanned Archived documents in a folder/file hierarchy defined by the Contracting Authority which will typically contain 1 folder level. The naming of processed files will be carried out according to a pre-defined file-naming convention.
  - b) The Contractor is to return digital scanned copies of Archived documents within a maximum of 30 working days from collection of corresponding physical batch.

#### **General Process – as a summary**

- 1. Confirmation of delivery of files
- 2. Creation of folder to store documents with folder name the same as file reference.

The scanned digital documents will be stored by the supplier (whether at the CA site or the supplier site). If stored at the supplier, these digital documents need to be destroyed from the bidder's storage facility once uploaded in the CA site.



3. Capture of front cover of file
4. Deconstruction of file (removal of staples, paper clips, other clips, treasury tag, rubber bands, etc.)
5. Minute sheet (from left hand side of file)
6. Insertions to be scanned as a whole document
7. File to be re-assembled to original condition.
8. Quality control check to ensure scans are accurate.
9. File cover to be stamped as 'Scanned'
10. Persons working on scanning are to have a clean Malta police conduct certificate issued within one month of starting scanning work
11. In the case of foreign workers not yet having been in Malta for a period of at least 3 years, they must provide a conduct certificate from their previous countries of residence up to 3 years from current date.
12. Foreign non-EU workers are to provide necessary working documents.
13. Weekly spot checks to verify staffing and processes with check on file scanning.
14. No mobile phones or other photographic equipment are to be allowed near where the scanning process is taking place.
15. Transfer of files to and from registry to contractor premises to be done in sealed boxes.
16. A sample of the files returned from each box will be checked against the digital copy. If there are any errors, the whole box is to be checked. Penalties are to be applied in case of any errors.
17. The following Data Security Parameters for Physical Copies are based on but not limited as listed in the GDPR Questionnaire: Eligibility document
  - a) Access Control: Authorised Personnel Only: Restrict access to storage areas to authorised staff both from the CA and the contractor, and everyone should log their time when accessing documents.
  - b) Physical Security Measures: Locks and Barriers: Storage facilities if scanning is being done outside CA premisses should be under lock and key.
  - c) Environmental Controls: If scanning is done outside CA premisses files should be stored in an environment protected against fire hazard and climate controlled due to document degradation
  - d) Inventory Management: Regular Audits: Conduct periodic audits to ensure all documents are accounted for.
  - e) Tracking Systems: Implement systems to track the movement and location of documents.
  - f) Handling Procedures: Training: Train staff on proper handling and security protocols.
  - g) Secure Transportation: Use secure methods for transporting documents to prevent loss or theft.
18. Data Security Parameters for Scanned Copies are based on but not limited as listed in the GDPR Questionnaire: Eligibility document

- a) Access Control: User Authentication: Implement user authentication methods, such as passwords, biometrics, or multi-factor authentication.
- b) Role-Based Access Control: Assign access permissions based on user roles and responsibilities.
- c) Data Encryption: Encrypt data stored on servers, hard drives, or other storage media. Also data should have secured protocols (e.g., TLS/SSL) to encrypt data during transmission.
- d) Network Security: Firewalls: Install firewalls to protect against unauthorized access and cyberattacks.
- e) Backup and Recovery: Regular Backups: Regular backups should be scheduled to prevent data loss.
- f) Audit and Monitoring:
  - i. Audit Logs: Maintain logs of access and changes to data.
  - ii. Continuous Monitoring: Continuously monitor systems for security breaches and unauthorised access.
- g) Secure Storage Solutions:
  - i. Trusted Cloud Providers: Use reliable cloud storage providers with robust security measures.
  - ii. Secure Physical Storage: Ensure physical security of servers and data centres.
- h.) Regulatory Compliance: Adhere to Standards: Comply with relevant data protection laws and standards.
- i. Incident Response:
  - i. Response Plan: Develop and implement an incident response plan if there is data breaches as listed in the GDPR Questionnaire: Eligibility.
  - ii. Reporting: Establish a system for reporting and managing security incidents.

19. Data Security Parameters for Ensuring Data Deletion of Scanned Copies are based on but not limited as listed in the GDPR Questionnaire: Eligibility document

- a. Data Deletion Methods:
  - i. Standard Deletion: Remove files using operating system commands.
  - ii. Secure Deletion Tools: Use specialised software tools that overwrite data multiple times to prevent recovery.
- b. Overwrite the data once with random or specific patterns.
- c. Deletion Procedures: Document and follow standard operating procedures for data deletion.
- d. Automated Deletion:

- i. Automated Deletion Schedules: Implement automated deletion schedules to regularly remove data that is no longer needed.
- ii. Lifecycle Management: Use data lifecycle management tools to automate the transition of data from active use to secure deletion.

e. Verification of Deletion, Post-Deletion Verification: Use software tools to verify that the data has been overwritten and is not recoverable.

f. Logging and Reporting:

- i. Deletion Logs: Maintain logs of all data deletion activities, including date, time, method used, and personnel involved.
- ii. Audit Trails: Create audit trails to track the deletion process for compliance and accountability.

g. Regulatory Compliance:

- i. Adherence to Standards: Comply with relevant data protection laws and standards).

At any time during contract execution period, the Contracting Authority may schedule an onsite visit at the Contractor's premises to inspect premises and scanning infrastructure to inspect handling of file preparation for input into scanner; monitoring of scanning process; record keeping of incoming and outgoing documentation; etc.