

Questions & Answers

Transportation Services

S-IZ100-12-R-1008

May 5, 2012

Question 1: Regarding solicitation [SIZ100-12-R-1008](#), a concern for this big project is getting the IZ badges and the Authorization to bring in trucks and that can be done through the Iraqi badge office but must be requested through the US Embassy

Answer: The U.S. Embassy does not facilitate IZ access Badges. It is the responsibility of the Contractor to ensure that the required badging and access are in place. A letter will be provided to the contractor on U.S. Embassy letterhead that confirms the contract number and date of validity.

Comment : Under the prevailing conditions in Iraq it is extremely difficult for companies to obtain visas and work permits for foreigners unless the company holds a contract with a state entity of the Republic of Iraq for a duration of not less than 6 months scope.

It is well known that the US Embassy intercedes with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Government of Iraq in support of contractors who hold contracts that are directly involved with supporting the US Mission in Iraq, and therefore facilitates the process of applying for visas for contractor personnel.

We understand that the entire process of applying for visas and obtaining the necessary clearances from the MoI is the responsibility of the individual contractors.

For the Transportation and Mail Delivery Services contract it is essential to employ TCNs and Expats for the expert over-sight and management of activities under the contract, although the majority of operatives would be local nationals.

Question 2: Would the US Embassy act in issuing similar support documentation to contractors on this contract? Or is this contract seen by the Embassy as one that strictly involves only “local work” in Iraq and/or is not critical to supporting the US Mission activities in Iraq ?

Answer: The U.S. Embassy does not facilitate in the visa application process, it is the responsibility of the Contractor to ensure all visa requirements are met. The Embassy identifies the contractor, contract number and period of validity to Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Question 3: Is this likely to be a multiple contractor award ?
If yes, on what basis would it be split up between contractors – geography or activity ?

Answer: See Section M.1.2 and M.1.3

Section C.6.6

The Contractor shall provide to Government of Iraq or any other autonomous government regions within the geographic borders of Iraq (such as the Kurdistan Regional Government) all required information to peacefully transit the roads and checkpoints of Iraq or any other autonomous government regions within the geographic borders of Iraq, required information to transport goods and materials within Iraq or any other autonomous government regions within the geographic borders of Iraq. Such information includes, but is not limited to, driver name, driver's license number (gensiya), make, model, color and description of vehicle entering U.S. Government facilities, as well as escort name, destination of delivery on U.S. Government compound and anticipated start and end date of delivery. Said information must be provided 72 hours (or said other timeframe as may be dictated by the Government of Iraq) in advance of the commencement of the transportation of the delivery. In addition, all deliveries entering or leaving the International Zone must be announced to the Iraqi 56th Brigade. Any delays in contract performance caused by Contractor's failure to timely file the required information and/or as a result of Contractor changing drivers or vehicles from those reported, shall be entirely borne by the Contractor.

Question 4: Please confirm that the US Embassy Baghdad will provide facilitation documentation and support for Contractor vehicles and MHE, and drivers / operators who may not be direct employees of the Contractors, as well as Contractor own employees to access US government facilities in Iraq. Also what safe passage documentation in the form of Diplomatic paperwork that is recognized by the host nation authorities, police and military will be provided to contractors?

Answer: All required documentation is to be provided by the Contractor. The U.S. Embassy will not facilitate in the approval requirements or provide any additional diplomatic documentation. A letter will be provided to the contractor on U.S. Embassy letterhead that confirms the contract number and date of validity.

Comment: C.13, 14, 15, 16

These clauses refer extensively to Storage and Warehouse requirements. This conflicts with language elsewhere in the Scope of Work that specifies that the Contactor shall not put any of the USG property under this contract in storage. Also there is no pricing CLIN for storage.

Answer: Storage requirements in C13, 14, 15 and 16 are included in the event that storage may be required. C5.3 states The Contractor shall not place cargo in any warehouse at Government

expense without prior approval of the COR and daily storage per kilogram is priced in CLIN 5 and 130.

C.20.2

The Contractor shall designate and the COR shall approve a scale to be used for determination of shipment weights. Subject scale must be officially certified by the Iraqi Customs Authorities as accurate and must continually display documentation in testimony thereof. All official certificates of accuracy must be periodically updated and recertified to ensure there is no lapse of certification.

Question 5: Iraqi Customs Authorities do not provide calibration certification for weighing scales. Should this be provided by approved testing and inspection bodies such as Bureau Veritas or SGS?

Answer: It seems that the central organization for standardization and quality control, part of the ministry of planning, can provide the scale certification and calibration services we required. We are currently working on getting the details from the actual office. Definitive information will be provided as soon as obtained.

C.21 CUSTOMS CLEARANCE OF EFFECTS

The Contractor shall obtain customs clearances as per the acquired diplomatic note for customs clearance which will be furnished by the Embassy, noting the fact that all shipments consigned to the U.S. Embassy are exempt from taxes and customs duty. The Contractor shall obtain when required, all approvals from the Iraqi government to include the diplomatic note for customs clearance, expedite and follow-up on the progress of the diplomatic note for customs clearance to include Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), Ministry of Finance (MOF), and Ministry of the Interior (MOI), as needed. Services shall include customs clearance at Umm Qasr, Safwan, Ibrahim Al-Khalil, Trebil, but also other areas of Iraq, Jordan and Kuwait, as requested. The U.S. Embassy shall make available to the Contractor approved diplomatic notes for customs clearance upon receipt. Once provided to Contractor, Contractor assumes responsibility for processing the documents at the port/point of entry for incoming shipments. On the U.S. Government's authorization the Contractor shall pay all processing fees and storage fees that may be charged against shipment. The U.S. Government will reimburse the Contractor upon submittal of an invoice with receipts attached for expenses made. All of these costs and expenses shall be built into the fixed price in the pricing table for the relevant line item. These cost and expenses are not separately reimbursed.

Question 6: Conflicting language in this paragraph. For Customs Clearance work at the borders, and for Vehicle Registration would it not be better to keep receipted official charges of the Port, Airport and Customs out of the fixed price in the pricing table? Would it not be better for both the US Embassy and the contractor to maintain official receipted charges as reimbursable charges?

Answer: No, the fees for Customs Clearance are fixed firm prices.

C.23 TRAVERSING THE ROADS OF IRAQ

The Contractor shall be responsible for preparing and submitting to the appropriate GOI authorities or Local Authorities of Autonomous Regions or Kurdish Authorities in Iraq all necessary documentation in order to traverse the highways of Iraq and negotiate GOI or Local Authorities of Autonomous Regions or Kurdish checkpoints. In addition, the Contractor shall be responsible for preparing and submitting to the appropriate GOI authorities and all Local Authorities of Autonomous Regions and Kurdish Authorities in Iraq, to include the Iraqi 56th Brigade as needed, all necessary documentation in order to obtain ingress to and egress from the International Zone with vehicles carrying Effects, UAB, or cargo acquired in the execution of this contract. Contractor shall be entirely responsible for any charges, fees, or levies for meeting GOI requirements AND responsible for any paying and dealing immediately with any penalties imposed by the GOI or Local Authorities of Autonomous Regions or Kurdish Authorities in Iraq for failing to meet these requirements, including having a qualified attorney to deal immediately with property seizures (both Contractor assets AND our assets) and detainment/incarceration of Contractor agent/employees. In the case of seizure of Embassy assets, Contractor shall be responsible for liberating them or recompensing the value within 15 days.

Question 7: Is this not a quite substantial and unreasonable demand to make on a Contractor ? Should it not be the responsibility of the US Embassy Baghdad to ensure that the host nation authorities (Iraqi Authorities including the Iraqi Police and Iraqi Army) respect the Diplomatic status of USG property in the hands of the Contractor – like it works in the rest of the world?

Answer: Please note that the contractor will only be responsible if they fail to comply with the requirements. If they comply with the requirements, the contractor will not be held responsible.

C.24.1 Customs Clearance and Delivery of Mail from Baghdad International Airport. Contractor shall, upon receipt of approved diplomatic notes provided by the U.S. Embassy, clear the relevant mail bags from the Iraqi Customs officials at the cargo warehouse of the Baghdad International Airport (BIAP). Upon receipt of the cleared mail, Contractor shall deliver it to the U.S. Government mail facility at the Baghdad Diplomatic Support Center (former Sather Air Base) (BDSC), or other designated location, for processing.

Question 8: How would the Contractor vehicles, MHEs and personnel gain access to BDSC? Access to former VBC which is currently under the control of the Iraqi Army is severely restricted. Currently there are Contractors who have access to the former SATHER AB by virtue of on-going US Department of State contracts which places them at an unfair advantage against other Contractors bidding on this Solicitation. How would the US Embassy Baghdad ensure a level playing field in this respect for all contractors?

Answer: It is the responsibility of the Contractor to have the necessary access to BDSC. The U. S Embassy will not facilitate in the application for access. A letter will be

provided to the contractor on U.S. Embassy letterhead that confirms the contract number and date of validity.

Question 9: Prices for transportation with refrigerated freezer truck from origin to destination. What kind of truck you need? 1, 2, 5, 10, 30 ton?

Answer: Amendment SIZ10012M1008-A001 addresses this question.

Question 10: Outbound\Inbound shipments. Will you provide the dip note only or you process the tax and customs documentation?

Answer: Only approved Diplomatic Note is provided.

Question 11: Will you provide the escort for personals, drivers and trucks ?

Answer: Escorting of Contractor personnel and equipment is provided within the U.S. Government facilities with the exception of C.27.2.

Question 12: Regarding the incoming/outgoing shipments via Iraqi air ports customs clearance, normally invoicing is based on airway bill AWB, in your pricing sheet it is based on per Kilogram block # 96, please advise.

Answer: Clin # 96 refers to handling fees, which are calculated by weight.

Question 13: Section B.5

Line #98 references mail. My understanding is that Mail moves under a separate tender out of Washington DC. Are cargoes for mail going to be moving under this IDIQ or AV7?

Answer: See Section C.24 and C.25

Question 14: Section B.5

Line#99 : Can you confirm if the scope is Airport to Airport, if so can you specify the origin airport? Please provide a list of destination airports you would like quoted. How will this line item be evaluated? See section C, C.28 Baghdad expediting services.

Answer: Definitive information will be provided as soon as obtained.

Question 15: C. 5.3 and C. 5.4

C5.3 and C5.4 define the start to finish time as 48 hours. Is this 48 hour period the maximum required transit time for any cargoes within the defined perimeters including Kuwait, Jordan and Turkey? Would you require a 48 hour transit of cargoes from the port of Mersin Turkey to Baghdad for example?

Answer: See Amendment SIZ10012R1008-A001 the 48 hours referenced is the maximum amount of hours from the time the request is placed to the time the Contractor actually collects/picks up the cargo.

Question 16: Section C.6.5 and C.6.6

C6.5 and C6.6 have a stated requirement of a 72 hour notice on some movement. Is this requirement in conflict with the stated 48 hour transit requirement in C5.3 and C5.4? if so, please re-define the transit requirement. If not, please define when and where you expect the transit clock to stop to accommodate the 72 hour notice.

Answer: the 72 hours referred to is the required amount of notice to enable security clearances and site access. This does not conflict with the 48 hours in question 15 above.

Question 17:Section B.5

Line# 95 & 96 : Please define handling ?

Answer: clearance handling

What are the weight and dimension of a pallet for evaluation purposes?

Answer: standard pallet size is 120cm by 120cm See Amendment SIZ10012R1008-A001 Section J Exhibit A

Question 18: Section C 5.1

The government is self insuring. This requirement has an unlimited liability. Would the liability be limited to the industry standard liability of \$0.60/gross lb or 5.00/lb?

Answer: Definitive information will be provided as soon as obtained

Question 19: Section G 2.1

Many Companies have adopted a green policy with regard to invoicing in an effort to reduce carbon footprints. Will the DOS accept electronic invoices and back up documents?

Answer: Yes

Question 20:Section B.5

Line#35: What is the minimum cubic capacity of a refrigerated freezer truck required?

Answer: See Question 9.

Question 21: SCALES

Are crews required to bring portable scales to all pack outs of UAB and HHE?

Answer: Yes, certified scales are required. See Section C20.2

Question 22: SEALS

Are all UAB and HHE shipments required to have numbered security seals?

Answer: Definitive information will be provided as soon as obtained.

Question 23: INVENTORY FORMS

Do all inventory forms for packing UAB and HHE need to be of multiple copy design and contain an explanation of the exception symbols used to describe the condition of the goods?

Answer: Yes, Multiple copy (C.4.2), but multiple copy design is not specified

Question 24: BINGO CARDS

Are all packers required to use "Bingo cards" to record and identify by inventory line item number those items placed in each lift van?

Answer: No

Question 25: TRI WALLS

Are all air shipments required to be packed in new tri-wall containers (tri-wall fiberboard boxes with a minimum 900-pound test burst strength comprised of FOUR LINERS / THREE FLUTES as: liner1 / flute / liner 2 / flute / liner 3 / flute / liner 4)?

Answer: Yes, all UAB shipments are to be packed in New Tri-wall containers. See Amendment A001 section D.3 (e)

Is the maximum size of any tri wall carton limited to no more than 15 CFT inside dimensions?

Answer: No

Question 26: LIFT VANS

Are all HHE shipments moving by surface required to be packed in new and unused heat treated or fumigated lift vans in compliance with ISPM 15 standard?

Answer: Yes. SIZ10012R1008-A001 Section J addresses this

Are all lift vans required to be soundly constructed of ¾ inch plywood and reinforced with an inside framework with a base for easy access for forklift or any other lifting equipment?

Answer: SIZ10012R1008-A001 Section J addresses this

Are all lift vans made of Oriented Strand Board (OSB) prohibited?

Answer: SIZ10012R1008-A001 Section J addresses this

Are the maximum dimensions of all lift vans to be 87 x 47 x 87 inches each?

Answer: SIZ10012R1008-A001 Section J addresses this

Is the interior of each lift van (sides and floor) required to be lined with polyethylene of a minimum thickness of .004 inch?

Answer: SIZ10012R1008-A001 Section J addresses this

Question: Are all lift vans required to be constructed to the specifications of the containers tested in accordance with MIL-STD 1489, Performance Testing of Commercially Owned Household Effects Containers and conform to the approved material and structure requirements for MTMC container number 186-A (as modified by MTMC Approval Code 186-1) and MTMC container number 152-A-1 (Mod) as specified in MTMC Pamphlet 55-12?

Answer: See Section J on Amendment SIZ10012R1008

Question 27: BANDING

Are all UAB shipments required to have a minimum of three (3) straps to each piece, one (1) lengthwise and two (2) around the girth?

Answer: SIZ10012R1008-A001 Section J addresses this.

Is steel tension banding required for all lift vans over forty-eight (48) cubic feet in the following manner?

Minimum size of 3.149 centimeters (1 1/4 inch) in width by .0889 centimeters thick (.035 inch)
Two bands of steel tension strapping secured perpendicular to the base, positioned so they pass through the openings in the base left for the entry of handling equipment. Two additional tension bands applied girth-wise, parallel to the base, around the four sides of the container, one band positioned approximately one-fourth (1/4) the distance from the top. Wood cleats, tie blocks, or braces are to be used under tension banding when necessary to insure stability or to bridge unsupported spans.

Answer: SIZ10012R1008-A001 Section J addresses this.

Question # 28: When we fill out the bid, can our company put N\A in the items that our company is unable to implement or quote on?

Answer: Yes, see L.1.2.1 and M.1.2

Question 29: About the registration procedures of the armored vehicles, Is the contractor required to do this with the Iraqi government, or is the US embassy going to handle the registration.

Answer: The U.S. Embassy will do the registration of armored vehicles.

Does the contractor have to conduct the customs clearance & transportation from the borders to destination only?

Answer: See Section C.5.2

Question 30: C.24.2 “Contractor will provide transportation of outgoing mail from the Embassy’s mail facilities to the airline Contractor at Baghdad International Airport.” Who is the airline Contractor at Baghdad International Airport?

Answer: Etihad

Question 31: C.24.3 “Contractor will also make deliveries to non-U.S. Government addressees on an as needed basis. Pricing for these deliveries will be determined by the size of the vehicle and additional equipment necessary to fulfil the commitment.” How do we Price, does this have a CLIN?

Answer: Definitive information will be provided as soon as obtained?

Question 32: C.25.4 “Provide intake services and prepare diplomatic pouches for dispatch in accordance with Applicable Department of State regulations. Liaise with airlines to secure space on outbound carriers.” Do we book these Flights or Does the USG?

Answer: USG books the flights and does the coordination

Question 33: C.25.6 “Administration of the diplomatic pouch and mail program will follow guidance promulgated in 14 FAM and other official Department of State publications on <http://www.state.gov/m/a/dir/regs/fam/>” Do we need Secret Clearance or US Citizens Only to Handle Mail/Pouches & USPS Mail?

Answer: No.

Question 34: C.27.2 “The representative will pay particular attention to food and fuel shipments entering at the Safwan and Zakhu border crossings to ensure their quick expedition through the border crossing. Food shipments will meet with armed security personnel, provided by others, on the Iraqi side and it is important that they gain rapid entrance into the country and remain together as a convoy.” In this Instance, We Meet the PSD provided by USG at Borders, in other case is it the responsibility of the contractor to provide its own PSD when required to perform the obligations of this contract/SOW in the execution of task missions?

Answer: No, PSD’s are not required.