Request For Proposals: SOLOMON ISLANDS LABOUR SUPPORT SERVICES (SILSS)

Questions and Answers

Please find outlined below questions received relating to the SILSS RFP from interested parties, both via email and resulting from the two Market Briefings held in Honiara, Solomon Islands. The responses are noted here to ensure all potential bidders have equal access to any additional information provided. Questions closed on the 22nd August 2025.

Q1: What are the basic steps in the Screening & Recruitment process? And who are the Stakeholders involved and how does the Work Ready Pool work?

A1: Please see both the PALM Employer Recruitment Process and PALM Worker Recruitment Process charts attached in Annex 1 to this document.

Please note:

- SILSS may be required to communicate changes in policy made by SIG to the workers in the Work Ready Pool
- LM Policy states that after 3 failed interviews, a worker is no longer eligible to be part of the current Work Ready Pool
- SIG sets the LM Policy, not the SILSS provider
- SILSS has no direct influence on which workers get employed.
- Visas are arranged by the approved Australian Employer

Q2: How many workers are participating in the program

A2: There are currently 6427 in the Work Ready Pool. SIG have a target of 16000 workers to be mobilised by 2028. More than 10,000 Solomon Islanders have participated in the PALM scheme since 2017. Currently an average of approximately160 workers are mobilised each month.

Q3: How many approved Australian employers are there for Solomon Islands

A3: There are currently 68 Approved Employers who recruit from Solomon Islands. All current PALM scheme Approved Employers are listed on the PALM website (www.palmscheme.gov.au)

Q4: What is the difference in the responsibilities of the Labor Mobility Unit (LMU) and the SILSS?

A4: The scope of the SILSS program is outlined in detail at the Scope of Services section of the RFP (page 5).

Additionally, a detailed breakdown of the functions and responsibilities between the LMU, PLMSP and SILSS is included in the RFP (Annex One). SILSS objectives are to support the LMU to deliver on the labour mobility policy, plans and targets established by the SIG.

Q5: Does the provider need to be involved in Welfare issues?

A5: Welfare issues are not included in the Scope of Services for this RFP.

Q6: How many contracts will be awarded from this procurement?

A6: There will be a single contract awarded to the selected supplier for the full term (Up to September 2028). If there are small changes to the scope of work, this may result in amendments to the contract during the contract period. Significant changes to the scope, as requested by DFAT may result in the need to go back out to market. Included at Annex Two of the RFP are the standard contract terms and conditions, including Termination.

Through this RFP process, should there be unique and beneficial Value Add offerings suggested by a tenderer who is not selected for this program, there may be opportunities for future engagement, following a fair procurement process.

Q7: How should the financial proposal be structured.

A7: Please breakdown the financial proposal into separate categories clearly showing the staffing costs, operational costs, activity costs and milestone/management fee costs under separate categories. Please include your Value Adds Proposition as a separate line item. Submission criteria on page 11 outline requirements.

Q8: Can the Program Manager and the Contractor Representative be the same person?

A8: It is at the bidder's discretion of how they would like to structure this requirement.

Q9: What will happen in the 2-month handover period?

A9: During the handover period the selected supplier will be allowed to observe the operations and activities of the current services. This handover period is in place to ensure there is continuity of service delivery when the new provider takes over the running of the operations and activities from the 1st January 2026. During this period, the successful supplier will have the opportunity to offer existing staff employment opportunities, should the new provider wish to do so.

Q10: Do we need to stick to the same staffing structure as is currently in place?

A10: The current staffing structure is explained in the RFP; however, it is up to the bidder if they would like to maintain the same structure or propose changes. This should be explained in the proposal.

Q11: There are fluctuations in the cohort size being mobilised. How do the SILSS staff cope with the fluctuating demands?

A11: Currently, temporary staff are engaged to assist the staff when large numbers of workers need to be screened and mobilised. However, it is up to the bidder to decide how they would like to approach this in their proposal.

Q12: What are the payment timeframes for reimbursable costs?

A12: The payment terms are detailed at Schedule B – of Annex Two – Contract Terms and Conditions (page 38).

Annex 1

PALM
Pacific Australia Labour Mobility

EMPLOYER RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Implemented by the Solomon Islands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade

Joining the program is FREE. No fees need to be paid to agents or others.

Solomon Islanders are here to work!

The Solomon Islands Labour Mobility Unit (LMU) encourages employers to travel to Solomon Islands to recruit.

When in country, support is provided by the Solomon Islands Support Service (SISS) and the Pacific Labour Mobility Support Program (PLMSP).

1 PALM scheme employers submits a recruitment plan

- The employer submits a recruitment plan (RP) through PALMIS.
- After the RP is endorsed, the employer contacts the LMU to facilitate mobilisation.
- The RP is endorsed by the Director of Labour Mobility and approved by DEWR.
- Please note, the LMU requires a minimum of 5-6 weeks from the approval of a RP to mobilise workers.

2 Worker selection

- Employers provide the selection criteria and job specifications to the LMU.
- The LMU shortlists candidates from the work-ready pool and sends to employers for selection.
- Only candidates registered as 'work ready' from the work-ready pool will be shortlisted, provided they also meet employer's criteria.
- Employers are encouraged to travel in-country to do recruitments and may wish to undertake additional screening procedures to meat sector requirements.
- Employers also have the option of conducting interviews online should they wish to.

3 General medical screening IME & HAP ID

PART 1

- Selected candidates undergo medical screening. This includes blood examination, x-ray and serum creatinine, conducted at an endorsed panel clinic. The cost for workers is $450 SBD.

PART 2

- Panel doctors upload worker results to IME account and report back to LMU. The cost is for workers is $550 SBD.
- The LMU provides an update of results to the employer and requests HAP IDs.
- AEs provide HAP IDs to LMU.
- LMU sends HAP IDs to panel clinic for final payment of medicals by workers.
- The medical process may take up to 2 weeks to complete as additional tests may be required.

4 Job offer

Workers who successfully passed the medical tests will proceed to sign an offer of employment (OOE). The employer is responsible for explaining the OOE to workers, however the LMU can assist.

5 Documentation

- The LMU collects all worker documents for the visa application and sends to the employer.
- Workers are also required to fill in visa application forms and the DFAT privacy and consent forms.

6 Visa application

Employers are responsible for all visa applications as well as booking flights and other travel arrangements

7 Pre-departure briefing (PDB)

Workers must complete mandatory PDB before leaving Solomon Islands.

8 Travel to Australia

The employer sends visas, itinerary and tickets to the LMU. The LMU prints these for workers.

9 On-arrival briefing

- The employer will make appropriate arrangements to meet workers at the airport.
- The employer will also arrange for an on-arrival briefing/orientation for workers once they arrive in their worksites.

For further information contact the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade, Labour Mobility Unit. Phone: +677 212 50 / 20251 / 21252 Email: lmu@mfaet.gov.sb
Website: www.mfaet.gov.sb Facebook: www.facebook.com/MFAETSI

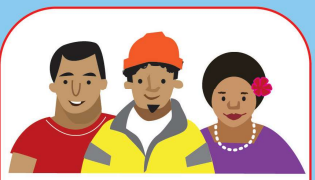
The only recruitment pathway for the PALM scheme is through the work-ready pool. Joining the program is free but workers are required to pay fees for the police clearance, birth certificate, getting a passport and the medical tests.

PALM
Pacific Australia Labour Mobility

WORKER RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Implemented by the Solomon Islands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade

Joining the program is FREE. No fees need to be paid to agents or others.



Success depends on worker performance

Workers are encouraged to:

- maximise their opportunities under the PALM scheme.
- work hard and be disciplined to achieve their goals.
- remember they are ambassadors for Solomon Islands.

The PALM scheme is a life-changing program.

Candidates must be:

- ☑ Between 21-50 years old
- ☑ Hold a valid passport
- ☑ Physically fit and healthy
- ☑ Of good character

1 Register

The Labour Mobility Unit (LMU) only accepts applications at set times. This will be advertised through: Island Sun Printing, Solomon Star, SIBC and the MFAET Facebook page. Applications are online only.

2 Fitness testing

The work in Australia can be physically hard. We test your physical fitness, strength and endurance. This includes blood pressure and colour blindness testing.

Applicants may be required to do push ups, planks, squats, weight lifting and a grip test.

3 LMU interview

During the interview we check the candidate's English comprehension, as well as their attitude and motivation to work in Australia.

If you have a police record you cannot join the program.

4 Work Ready Pool

Applicants who pass steps 1-3 join the Work Ready Pool (WRP) and their details are listed on the LMU database.

5 Worker selection

The LMU sends the employer a selection of worker profiles to choose from. The LMU will notify successful candidates. Additional testing may be required.

6 Medical screening

Candidates are required to have x-rays and blood tests at an approved clinic. This process may take up to 2 weeks and requires payment.

7 Police check

Pay a fee at the Ministry of Finance and Treasury's (MoFT) Revenue Cashier. Submit the form to Rove Police Headquarters and pick up when processed.

8 Offer of employment

If selected by the employer, candidates will be given a contract. This is called an offer of employment (OOE).

9 Submit documents

Candidates submit documents to the LSU:

- police clearance certificate
- driver's licence (if required)
- passport bio-page
- privacy & consent form
- vaccination card
- birth certificate
- visa form 956a
- visa form 1403

10 Visa

The employer will apply for the worker's Australian visa. Note: workers must have a PALM scheme visa (subclass 403) to work on the PALM scheme.

11 Pre-departure briefing

Pre-departure briefing (PDB) is held over 2 days in Honiara. Topics covered include: contracts, Australian law, employer and worker roles and responsibilities and living in Australia. Attendance is compulsory.

12 Travel to Australia

Workers should be at the airport 3 hours before departure and have the following documents with them:

- passport
- tickets
- visa grant
- contract/OOE

13 In Australia

The employer will meet workers at the airport when they first arrive in Australia. They will also arrange an arrival briefing to help workers settle into their new home and workplace.

There are no fees to join the program, however workers are required to pay for:

- police clearance certificate
- passport (new and renew)
- birth certificate
- medical tests

For further information contact the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade, Labour Mobility Unit.
Phone: +677 212 50 / 20251 / 21252 Email: lmu@mfaet.gov.sb Website: www.mfaet.gov.sb

SOLOMON ISLANDS WORKFORCE