

VIRGIN ISLANDS HOUSING AUTHORITY

ADDENDUM #4

RFP #2025-006 –Digital Modernization Project

ISSUE DATE: July 10, 2025

NOTICE TO ALL RESPONDENTS

This Addendum, including all articles and corrections listed below, shall become a part of the original Request for Proposals package and shall be considered in preparing your proposal's response.

The above-numbered RFP is amended as set forth below. Respondents must acknowledge receipt of this addendum in the proposal package, by completing Exhibit I.

To ensure that all firms are given an equal opportunity to submit a competitive response, the following are responses to questions and/or requests for clarification concerning this solicitation.

1. Current State of Your Document Management Protocols: What is the current state of your document management protocols? Are they entirely paper-based, or is there a mix of paper and existing digital solutions? What are the main problems you see in your current document flow that you believe should be addressed first?

RESPONSE: At present, our document management practices consist of a hybrid approach that includes both paper-based records and digital systems. While we have started integrating digital tools—such as shared network drives and email—for storing and distributing documents, many departments still heavily depend on physical files.

This blended system has led to several operational challenges, including limited centralized access, difficulties in version control, delays in workflow, security and compliance vulnerabilities, and inefficiencies in locating archived materials.

We view this as a critical opportunity to modernize and enhance our agency's productivity by transitioning to a more streamlined and fully integrated digital document management solution. Such an approach would significantly improve efficiency, strengthen collaboration across departments, and bolster our ability to meet compliance and security standards.

2. Existing Current-State ("As-Is") Process Maps or Documentation: Have any current-state ("as-is") process maps or documentation already been created?

Question: If such documentation exists, how up-to-date and detailed is it, and which stakeholders can help us verify it? Can you share the documentation with us?

RESPONSE: There is no need to redo our current processing maps and documentation.

3. Known Pain Points or Bottlenecks: Are there any known pain points or bottlenecks in the existing workflows that should be prioritized in the redesign?

Question: Which pain points have the greatest negative impact on your operational efficiency and employee/customer satisfaction?

RESPONSE: Several pain points continue to significantly hinder operational efficiency and negatively affect both employee productivity and customer satisfaction across the agency. One of the most critical challenges is the overwhelming volume of paperwork required, when combined with the absence of a

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centralized access system, creates considerable delays in case management and service delivery. This fragmented approach not only slows internal workflows but also impacts on the timely and effective support provided to clients and stakeholders.

Document & Data Management

4. Document Types and Estimated Volume:

Question: What types of documents do you have that need to be digitized? Please select all that apply or add any not listed:

- Contracts
- Invoices
- HR Records (e.g., employee files, applications)
- Financial Statements
- Meeting Minutes
- Maps
- Drawings
- Policies and Procedures
- Legal Documents
- Technical Drawings/Blueprints
- Correspondence
- Permits/Licenses
- Other (Please specify): _____

RESPONSE: The list above encompasses a wide range of documents, including certification packages and forms originating from multiple departments. Currently, it is difficult to accurately determine the total volume of documents due to the decentralized nature of our current filing and tracking processes.

5. Current Scanning and Uploading Methods

Question: What is your current scanning throughput for paper documents, and what factors limit it or make the process labor-intensive? For documents received digitally from external parties (e.g., PDFs from vendors, emails), how are these currently handled, stored, and integrated into your workflows?

RESPONSE: Currently, all scanning is done through our Xerox scanner.

6. Scanning Resources and Equipment:

Question: Do you have the internal capacity and equipment to manage the bulk scanning of your historical paper records, or are you open to considering options such as leasing scanning equipment or engaging an external scanning vendor to accelerate this process?

RESPONSE: At this time, the agency has not fully assessed its internal capacity or equipment to manage the bulk scanning of historical paper records. While some limited scanning capabilities exist, a comprehensive evaluation will be conducted to determine whether existing resources are sufficient or if

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supplemental options are necessary. Should it be deemed more efficient or cost-effective, the agency is open to exploring alternatives such as leasing high-capacity scanning equipment or engaging an external scanning vendor to accelerate the digitization process and ensure timely, secure conversion of legacy records.

7. **Expected Growth Rate of Digital Documents:**

Question: What business initiatives or development plans might affect the volume of digital documents created and stored in the coming years?

RESPONSE: At this time, there are no specific business initiatives or development plans in place that would directly impact on the volume of digital documents created or stored. However, as the agency continues to modernize its operations and adopt more digital solutions, it is anticipated that future initiatives—such as expanded electronic workflows, digital tenant files, procurement automation, and increased use of online applications—could gradually contribute to a higher volume of digital documentation. Proactive planning for scalable document management solutions will be essential to support potential growth and ensure efficient access, storage, and compliance moving forward.

8. **Existing Document Structure or Classification System**

Question: If a classification system exists, how consistent and uniformly applied is it across all departments?

RESPONSE: Currently, there is no consistently applied classification system in place across all departments. While some areas may use informal or department-specific methods to organize documents, the lack of a standardized approach has resulted in inconsistencies in how records are labeled, stored, and retrieved. Recognizing this gap, a new, agency-wide classification system will be developed to establish uniform standards for document organization. This initiative will enhance consistency, improve searchability, and support better compliance and information governance across all departments.

9. **Document Retention (Shelf Life) Requirements:**

Question: Do these retention periods vary significantly by document type, and are there any specific regulatory or legal requirements that dictate these timelines for certain document categories?

RESPONSE: The agency currently has a defined document retention policy in place. Retention periods do vary significantly based on document type, reflecting the specific operational, regulatory, and legal requirements associated with each category. For example, financial records, procurement documents, tenant files, and compliance-related materials often have distinct timelines governed by federal regulations, HUD guidelines, and local laws. These requirements ensure proper accountability, audit readiness, and legal compliance. As such, adherence to these retention periods is critical, and the agency periodically reviews and updates its policy to remain aligned with evolving statutory obligations and best practices.

10. **Document Classification and Tagging Strategy:**

Question: What are the key business drivers behind these different levels of classification – for instance, compliance, operational efficiency, or analytical insights – for various document types?

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RESPONSE: A tiered approach would be the most suitable option for the agency. This structure allows for greater flexibility and scalability, enabling us to align service levels with our operational needs and available resources. We believe this approach will support a more efficient and manageable implementation process.

11. **Question:** Besides basic metadata (e.g., date, author, document type), are there any attributes unique to your organization that will need to be captured and indexed?

RESPONSE: The basic requirements outlined would be sufficient for our immediate needs; however, we welcome any additional suggestions or enhancements you may recommend based on your expertise. Your input could help us identify potential efficiencies or improvements we may not have considered, and we appreciate any guidance you can provide.

12. **Document Destruction Processes and Procedures:**

Question: Do your destruction protocols vary significantly by document type or sensitivity, and are there specific stakeholders who must approve or oversee the final disposition of records?

RESPONSE: The agency currently has a defined document retention policy in place. Retention periods do vary significantly based on document type, reflecting the specific operational, regulatory, and legal requirements associated with each category. For example, financial records, procurement documents, tenant files, and compliance-related materials often have distinct timelines governed by federal regulations, HUD guidelines, and local laws. These requirements ensure proper accountability, audit readiness, and legal compliance. As such, adherence to these retention periods is critical, and the agency periodically reviews and updates its policy to remain aligned with evolving statutory obligations and best practices.

Transfer to Archival Authorities:

13. **Question:** What are the specific criteria (e.g., age, content, historical value) that trigger such transfers, and what are the required formats or metadata standards for documents designated for external archival submission?

RESPONSE: Currently, the agency does not have established criteria or formal procedures in place for the transfer of documents to external archival storage. There are no defined triggers—such as document age, content significance, or historical value—that guide such decisions at this time. Likewise, specific requirements regarding file formats or metadata standards for documents designated for archival submission have not yet been developed. As part of future planning, the agency intends to explore and implement clear guidelines to ensure consistency, compliance, and preservation of critical records.

Electronic Forms & Signatures

14. **Question:** Which forms require the most complex validation rules, conditional logic, or integration with external data sources?

RESPONSE: The identification of forms requiring the most complex validation rules, conditional logic, or integration with external data sources will ultimately be determined by each department. As workflows and data requirements vary across functional areas, departmental input will be essential to accurately

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assess which forms demand advanced processing logic or system integrations. This evaluation will help ensure that any future digital solutions are aligned with operational needs and technical requirements.

E-Signature Solutions – Platform Preference

15. **Question:** Are there any specific requirements for the type of electronic signature (simple, advanced, qualified) for different document types or transactions?

RESPONSE: Currently, some users within the agency have access to electronic signature capabilities; however, there are no formally defined requirements specifying the type of electronic signature—such as simple, advanced, or qualified—based on document type or transaction. As the agency expands its use of digital workflows, a comprehensive review will be necessary to determine appropriate signature standards aligned with legal, regulatory, and operational needs. Establishing clear guidelines will help ensure consistency, compliance, and the integrity of electronically signed documents across all departments.

Multi-Step Approval Hierarchies:

16. **Question:** What is the typical depth of the approval hierarchy for the most complex documents, and are there specific requirements for parallel or conditional approvals?

RESPONSE: All departments require some level of approval for document processing; however, the depth of the approval hierarchy can vary depending on the complexity and type of document. For more complex documents—such as contracts, procurement requests, or compliance-related forms, the approval process often involves multiple tiers, typically ranging from initial preparers to department heads, and in some cases, executive-level authorization.

Back-Office System Integrations:

17. **Question:** Building on this information, we'd like to understand more about your integration needs for HMS HAB.Inc and other systems:

- Could you please confirm the exact name and specific version of the HMS HAB.Inc software you are currently using (e.g., "HMS HAB.Inc v.X.Y" or "MRI Software Property Management v.Z")?
- Beyond HMS HAB.Inc, are there any other software systems currently used by your Human Resources, Finance, Procurement, or Maintenance departments that would require integration with the new electronic solutions and DMS? If so, please specify their names, current versions, and general functionalities.
- Regarding integration capabilities, are you able to obtain API documentation from the representatives of your current HMS HAB.Inc (MRI Software) or any other systems requiring integration? If so, access to such documentation would significantly streamline our analysis and integration planning.
- Are there any overarching limitations or preferences regarding integration methods (e.g., REST API, SOAP, file exchange, direct DB access) that apply across your various systems?

RESPONSE: Comprehensive information regarding the system will be provided at the time of the

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contract award, to ensure clarity and alignment with implementation or integration requirements.

Data Privacy Standards and Records Retention Protocols:

18. **Question:** Are there internal policies or regional regulations that impose additional restrictions on data storage, processing, or transfer?

RESPONSE: Yes, we do have internal policies on restrictions and data storage.

Content-Based Access Restrictions and Redaction:

19. **Question:** For which types of documents or information categories are these content-level restrictions most critical, and how are such masking or redaction rules currently managed or applied?

RESPONSE: Content-level restrictions, such as data masking and redaction, will be determined upon contract award and will be guided by the specific requirements of each department. The sensitivity and regulatory relevance of various document types—such as tenant records, personally identifiable information (PII), financial data, and compliance-related documentation—will influence how these controls are applied. Departmental input will be essential to ensure that appropriate security measures are implemented to protect confidential information while maintaining operational functionality.

Audit Logging Requirements: Will the new system require audit logging (e.g., who accessed, modified, or approved a document)?

20. **Question:** Which specific user actions or document changes are most critical for auditing, and how often should these audit records be available for review?

RESPONSE: The specific requirements will be determined once the contract is awarded. However, the inclusion of audit logging is strongly encouraged and would be considered a valuable enhancement. Implementing detailed audit trails will support accountability, improve security, and assist with compliance monitoring across all departments.

Storage of Sensitive Information: Will any Personally Identifiable Information (PII), financial data, or health data (PHI) be stored in the system?

21. **Question:** What are your current procedures for handling and protecting these types of data, and what additional security measures do you expect from the new system?

RESPONSE: Currently, the agency manages data protection by assigning user security levels based on job descriptions and roles. This ensures that individuals only have access to the information necessary to perform their duties, supporting both operational efficiency and data confidentiality. Additional measures include network security controls, password protection, and limited access to sensitive files.

Exportability of Audit Trails and Process Histories:

22. **Question:** In what format is it preferable to export this data, and what are the typical reporting

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requirements for external regulators or internal auditors?

RESPONSE: Preferred data export formats typically include Excel (XLSX), CSV, and PDF, as these are widely compatible with both internal analysis tools and external reporting systems.

Users, Access & Infrastructure

Expected Total Number of Users

23. **Question:** Are there different user groups with significantly different patterns of system usage (e.g., frequent/rare access, view-only/full editing)?

RESPONSE: Yes, user access is primarily determined by job position. Which varies based on varying levels of system interaction, for example, some roles require frequent access with full editing capabilities, while others may only need occasional, view-only access. Access rights are assigned based on operational responsibilities to ensure appropriate data security, system integrity, and workflow efficiency.

Current User Roles and Access Permissions:

24. **Question:** Are there any specific requirements for segregation of duties or conflict of interest that need to be considered in the access model?

RESPONSE: The agency's position on segregation of duties and conflict of interest is well established and consistently enforced. While there are no additional or specialized requirements beyond existing policy, any access model must fully support and align with these principles to ensure proper internal controls, accountability, and compliance with regulatory standards.

Data Backup and Recovery Approach:

25. **Question:** Which business processes would be most at risk in the event of a system failure, and what is the maximum acceptable downtime for them?

RESPONSE: In the event of a system failure, all core business processes would be at risk, as they are heavily reliant on access to digital systems and real-time data. This includes housing operations, tenant services, work order management, financial transactions, compliance reporting, and the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program. Given the critical nature of these functions, the maximum acceptable downtime for most systems would be no more than a few hours, with certain high-priority processes—such as rent processing, maintenance response, and HUD reporting—requiring near-immediate restoration. Ensuring business continuity through robust disaster recovery planning and system redundancy is essential to minimize operational disruptions and maintain service delivery.

Existing Microsoft Licenses:

26. **Question:** Are there any planned updates or expansions of existing Microsoft licenses in the near future that might impact the architecture of the new solution?

RESPONSE: No, there is no plan to expand on our existing Microsoft license.

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Accessibility Requirements:

27. **Question:** Which WCAG compliance levels (A, AA, AAA) are mandatory for your digital forms, and have any accessibility audits been conducted previously?

RESPONSE: Yes, accessibility is an important consideration for the agency. While we have not formally mandated a specific Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) compliance level, WCAG 2.1 Level AA is generally regarded as the minimum standard to ensure digital forms are accessible to individuals with disabilities and compliant with federal accessibility requirements.

Mobile Device Access:

28. **Question:** What specific tasks will users need to perform from mobile devices, and is there a preference for native mobile applications or a web-based interface?

RESPONSE: At this time, there are no specific tasks that have been formally identified for mobile device use.

Training & Implementation

Preferred Approach for User Training:

29. **Question:** Do you have preferences regarding the duration and format of training materials to ensure maximum information retention by users, or can we give you, our recommendations?

RESPONSE: At this time, we do not have specific preferences regarding the duration or format of training materials. We welcome your recommendations on the most effective approaches to ensure user engagement and information retention. Your expertise in delivering training solutions that align with best practices will be greatly appreciated as we aim to ensure a smooth adoption process for all users.

Data Volume & Quality

Questions:

1. How many new work orders (approx.) are created on a daily and weekly basis?

RESPONSE: On average, over 100 work orders are either created or closed each day across the agency. This volume reflects the high level of ongoing maintenance activity and service requests managed daily. Weekly totals typically exceed 500 transactions, highlighting the critical role of an efficient work order management system in supporting property operations and resident satisfaction.

2. What is the daily volume (approx.) of key transactions? (for example, new tenant applications, procurement requests)

RESPONSE: Over 200.

3. How many vendor invoices (approx.) are processed per month?

RESPONSE: Over 200.

4. Are there any known key issues with data accuracy or completeness in your existing systems that we should be aware of?

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RESPONSE: None, that I am aware of.

5. Who will be responsible for data quality and integrity within the new system? Will there be designated data stewards within each department (Finance, Maintenance, etc.) responsible for validating the information their department provides?

RESPONSE: Our IT Department will be responsible for validating the information with the other departments.

6. You mentioned HR, Finance, Procurement, and Maintenance systems. Could you provide a complete list of all the Software and Data sources we need to connect with to create a complete integrated solution?

RESPONSE: HMS is the only data source currently.

7. Have you started categorizing or prioritizing the most important or frequently accessed files for digitization? If so, can you please share categorization parameters with us and how many paper-based file categories in total do you currently manage?

RESPONSE: At this time, the agency has not yet begun categorizing or prioritizing the most important or frequently accessed files for digitization. Consequently, there are no established categorization parameters or an official count of paper-based file categories currently in use. As we move forward with our digital transformation efforts, developing a structured approach to file categorization and prioritization will be a critical step to ensure an efficient and strategic digitization process.

8. How many different paper forms are currently in use that need to be converted to digital forms?

RESPONSE: At this time, it is difficult to determine the exact number of paper forms currently in use, given the number of departments and the decentralized nature of form creation and usage. However, it is acknowledged that a wide range of forms exists across various operational areas, and a comprehensive inventory would need to be conducted as part of any digital conversion initiative.

Analytics & Dashboards

Questions:

- 1) What would be the desired update frequency of data/dashboards sufficient enough for tracking operational status? Would an update per 15 minutes / 1 hour / 3 hours / 1 day / 1 week be enough?

RESPONSE: Daily and weekly but the frequency can change depending on management requirements.

- 2) Based on examples of your current reports (e.g., daily reports, invoices paid), can you please provide key entities, attributes and properties associated with files stored? This would immensely help us while designing ER diagrams and a future data model along with a dashboard / reporting layer.

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(Example: entity: work order, attributes: workOrderID, DateCreated, DateCompleted, Category, Description, Status, ActualCost)

RESPONSE: The items listed above are included within the Housing Management System; however, they consist of numerous variables and detailed configurations. Comprehensive information regarding these data elements can be provided at the time of contract award, to ensure clarity and alignment with implementation or integration requirements.

- 3) Housing Management System (HMS) seems central to your operations. What kind of data does the HMS manage? (e.g., tenant information, property details, work order history)

RESPONSE: Yes, the Housing Management System (HMS) is a core component of VIHA's operations and is used to manage a wide range of critical data across multiple functional areas. The system manages our tenant information, property management, work order, financial data, etc.

- 4) Is the HMS a commercial product or a custom in-house solution?

RESPONSE: No, it's not a custom in-house solution.

- 5) Who is the vendor/developer of HMS?

RESPONSE: MRI Software is the vendor/developer.

- 6) What is HMS technical capabilities for data export or integration with other solutions?

RESPONSE: The IT Department has capabilities of extracting data from the software through a secured connection.

Infrastructure & Planning

Questions:

- 1) Where do you plan to store digital files to ensure security and accessibility? If on cloud - any preferences: Google, AWS, Azure, etc.?

RESPONSE: The agency is open to adopting a hybrid approach for storing digital files, combining both on-premises and cloud-based solutions to balance security, accessibility, and compliance requirements. This approach allows for greater flexibility in managing sensitive data while supporting remote access and scalability.

While we have not yet finalized a preferred cloud provider, we are open to exploring options such as Microsoft Azure, Amazon Web Services (AWS), or Google Cloud Platform—depending on factors such as integration capabilities, cost-effectiveness, security standards, and alignment with existing IT infrastructure. The final decision will be guided by the agency's operational needs and long-term digital strategy.

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- 2) Does VIHA have existing licenses or in-house expertise with Microsoft Power BI or Salesforce Tableau?

RESPONSE: Currently, the Virgin Islands Housing Authority (VIHA) does not have existing licenses or in-house expertise with Microsoft Power BI or Salesforce Tableau. As we continue to explore data visualization and reporting solutions, we remain open to evaluating these platforms—or comparable alternatives—based on ease of use, integration capabilities, and overall value to the organization.

- 3) If there is a transition plan from paper-based processes to digital, can you please share it?

RESPONSE: No, one will have to be developed.