



Legal Aid
Agency

Procurement Process for Criminal Defence Contracts from 4 May 2026 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Many questions will be answered by the information given in the Invitation to Tender documents (ITTs), which are available on the Tenders page of our website:

The deadline for questions about the ITT or the tender was **17:00 30 July 2025** (note this is referred to as the “End date for supplier clarification messages” on the e-Tendering system). We are therefore unable to answer questions received after that deadline.

Questions that we consider to be of interest have been collated and answered centrally in writing to ensure that all interested parties have equal access to information in the answers. These questions and answers have been published in this FAQ document.

Where not defined in this FAQ document, capitalised terms are either defined in the relevant ITT or in the 2026 CDD Contract (the “Contract”)

Technical Questions on how to use the e-Tendering system

There is a Helpdesk to provide technical support to Applicant Organisations using the e-Tendering system. However, the Helpdesk is **unable** to assist you with problems with your own computer hardware or systems. For these types of issues, you should contact your usual IT support.

Questions for the helpdesk should be emailed to: help@bravosolution.co.uk. Alternatively, the telephone number for the helpdesk is 0800 069 8630 and lines are open from 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday.

The Helpdesk remains open until the tender closes. However, we recommend that you start to complete your tender early so that you identify any areas where you might need technical help as soon as possible, as the Helpdesk is likely to be very busy in the days leading up to the tender deadline and cannot guarantee that queries received close to the tender deadline will be dealt with in time.

The Tender Deadline is 17:00 on 28 August 2025

General

1. What are the primary drivers for this change? (e.g., cost, performance, flexibility, compliance)

A The current CDD contract ends on 31 May 2026. This procurement ensures continuity of the CDD Service and introduces improvements to reduce barriers to entry and increase flexibility, including:

- No contractual Office Requirement – It is up to bidders to consider the most effective way for them to set up and deliver the service, in line with the contract.
- Flexible Supervision – We have removed supervision ratio limits for the CDD service.

2. Is the LAA open to having a bidder just supply the communications platform only?

A No. The LAA is procuring the full CDD Service as a complete solution. Partial bids, such as those offering only the communications platform, will not be considered.

3. What is the current high-level technical and operational architecture of the contact centre solution? What are the SLAs/XLAs for the services in scope? Is there a service credit regime associated with these?

A The current technical and operational architecture of the existing contact centre service is not relevant to this procurement beyond the requirements set out in Annex 4 of the Contract: [Criminal Defence Direct Contract 2026 Annex 4 IT Requirements](#)

Details of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and the associated service credit regime can be found in Annex 3 of the Contract: [Criminal Defence Direct Contract 2026 Annex 3 KPIs](#)

4. Can you describe the typical user journey and/or business process for an LAA agent? What are the steps an agent undertakes when dealing with a new case and call?

A At present, there is no defined user journey or documented business process specifically for CDD Advisers. All necessary details required to deliver the CDD Service are outlined in the Contract, particularly in [Criminal Defence Direct Contract 2026 Annex 1 Specification](#) and [Criminal Defence Direct Contract 2026 Annex 4 IT Requirements](#)

5. Why is the service split into two separate areas of 27,000 cases each? Is this for competitive tension, resilience, or due to a legal/regulatory requirement?

A The service has been split into two equal areas of 27,000 Cases to enable a balanced and sustainable distribution of volume. This approach supports effective service delivery and operational manageability.

6. Can the Authority clarify the purpose of Section 1.22 – Key Personnel and Connected Entities? Does this imply that a non-incumbent bidder could be precluded from bidding if the incumbent's key personnel are subject to potential TUPE transfer?

- A Section 1.22 – Rules relevant to Key Personnel and Connected Entities are included to ensure transparency and accountability. They ensure any real or potential conflicts of interest or risks associated with individuals or entities closely linked to a bidder are identified and managed. A non-incumbent Applicant would not be excluded solely because TUPE may apply.

Agent information & Volumetrics

7. How many agents will be using the system? How many calls are handled per agent? What is the typical call duration? What is the approximate file size per call and retention requirements?

- A CDD staff are referred to as *Advisers*. “*Adviser*” means a person who is appropriately accredited and qualified to give advice and assistance to Clients in accordance with the requirements of this Contract. The number of Advisers varies between the two current providers. Any resource considerations for the future service are a commercial decision for each Applicant based on how they intend to deliver the service.

We do not hold call-handling data. Each provider uses their own telephony system and calls are not recorded by the incumbent providers. Call recording is not, however, proscribed under this Contract.

File retention requirements can be found at paragraphs 8.1 – 8.14 of [Criminal Defence Direct Contract 2026: Standard Terms](#).

8. Are all agents based in a specific location, or are there remote/hybrid workers? Do they all have machines/devices with secure access to a central contact centre system?

- A Under the Contract, it is up to providers to determine how they may deliver effective working arrangements — whether office-based, remote, or hybrid — based on their business model. It is the provider’s responsibility to ensure that all Advisers have secure access to the systems required to deliver the service, in line with the contractual and security requirements.

9. Is there a plan to scale the number of agents over time?

- A The number of Advisers delivering the service will need to be determined by each Applicant, based on their business model and operational approach.

Channels

10. Which communication channels are required? (Voice and WhatsApp confirmed — any others like email, chat, SMS, social media?)

- A As set out at paragraph 2.8 of Annex 1 (Specification) Providers may only provide advice under this Contract by telephone: [Criminal Defence Direct Contract 2026 Annex 1 Specification](#)

11. Is WhatsApp Business API already in use, or would setup be required?

- A Telephony requirements are set out at paragraphs 10 – 12 of the 2026 Criminal Defence Direct Contract: Annex 4 (IT Requirements): [Criminal Defence Direct Contract 2026 Annex 4 IT Requirements](#)

12. Do you require omnichannel capabilities with unified conversation history?

- A No. The service is delivered via an Electronic Case Management System (ECMS) which is used to record cases and case notes and telephony systems used to contact police stations. Clients do not contact the service in any other way. Every case comes through the DSCC and is allocated via the ECMS.

13. Does the buying authority have a legal requirement to retain existing phone numbers or can new numbers be used (this could significantly reduce costs and drive flexibility in potential solutions used)?

- A Calls made under this service are outbound calls only. There is no contractual requirement for providers to retain existing phone numbers. Providers may choose to use new numbers if it better suits their operational model.

Interaction Types & Use Cases

14. Are interactions inbound, outbound, or blended?

- A Only outbound calls are made by Advisers.

15. What are the primary use cases?

- A The primary use cases are Advice calls.

16. Are outbound calls primarily for follow-ups, reminders, or other purposes?

- A All calls are outbound.

IVR

17. Do you currently use an IVR? If yes, what is its structure and functionality?

Do you require a new IVR design or replication of the existing one?

Is speech recognition or natural language processing required in the IVR?

- A IVR is not currently used in the CDD Service.

Payments

18. Do agents take payments over the phone or via digital channels?

What payment systems are currently used?

Are there PCI-DSS or other compliance requirements for payment handling?

- A The CDD Service does not handle payments.

Integration & existing technologies

19. What CRM, ERP, WFM (Workforce Management) or case management systems are currently in use?

- A Any case management system an Applicant may opt to use to support their delivery of the CDD service is not within the scope of the Contract. It is up to providers to ensure their delivery model complies with the technical and security requirements in the Contract. The technical requirements to deliver the CDD Service are outlined in Annex 4 of the Contract: [Criminal Defence Direct Contract 2026 Annex 4 IT Requirements](#)

20. Are APIs or integration documentation available?

- A The technical requirements required to deliver the CDD Service are outlined in Annex 4 of the Contract: [Criminal Defence Direct Contract 2026 Annex 4 IT Requirements](#)

21. Are there any other platforms the CCaaS must integrate with (e.g., Microsoft Teams, Outlook)?

- A Full technical requirements are outlined in Annex 4 of the Contract: [Criminal Defence Direct Contract 2026 Annex 4 IT Requirements](#)

22. What service numbers are required?

- A Calls made under this service are outbound calls only. Cases are deployed via the ECMS.

23. Are there any existing licenses or contracts that must be considered?

- A Providers are responsible for their own delivery methods, including any licences or contracts related to their case management or telephony systems.

24. Is there a preference for cloud-native vs. hybrid deployment?

- A Cases are allocated to Providers by the DSCC via the ECMS.