

SARS REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

SARS RFI 07/2025

BULK DOCUMENTS E-SIGNATURE SOLUTION

BUSINESS REQUIREMENTS SPECIFICATION

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	USAGE OF TERMS IN THIS DOCUMENT	3
1.1	References to Other Documents in the RFI pack.....	3
1.2	Glossary Table.....	3
2.	BACKGROUND.....	4
3.	SCOPE	5
4.	BENEFITS	6
5.	ASSUMPTIONS/ CONSTRAINTS/DEPENDENCIES.....	7
6.	SYSTEM/ CHANNEL REQUIREMENTS	8

Bulk Documents E-Signature Solution

This RFI document sets out the business requirements that SARS has to gather information from interested industry players on market for Bulk Documents E-Signature Solution.

1. USAGE OF TERMS IN THIS DOCUMENT

1.1 References to Other Documents in the RFI pack

- *RFI Main Document*

1.2 Glossary Table

The capitalised terms in this document appearing in the glossary table below will have their corresponding meanings. The Vendor/Supplier is referred to the *RFI Main Document* for the use and meaning of capitalised terms generally in the RFI pack.

Term	Meaning
SARS	South African Revenue Services
BRS	Business Requirement Specification. Business Requirements Specification – a document outlining the functional and non-functional requirements of the proposed system.
ECTA	Electronic Communications and Transactions Act.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

The organization is actively seeking a solution capable of efficiently handling the bulk signing and initialing of documents. Frequently, the organization experiences surges in document processing requirements particularly during periods of high-volume recruitment or large-scale onboarding—when a significant number of employment-related documents, such as offer letters and contracts, must be signed and initialed in a short timeframe.

Currently, hiring managers are required to manually sign and initial each document, a process that is both time-consuming and inefficient when faced with large quantities. There is a clear business imperative to implement a digital solution that can automate the bulk signing and initialing process, ensuring speed, accuracy, and compliance with legal and regulatory standards.

By adopting such a system, the organization will alleviate administrative bottlenecks, streamline onboarding workflows, and reduce manual intervention, ultimately improving turnaround times and supporting the needs of a dynamic, growing workforce.

2.2 Business Problem Statement

The current process for signing employment-related documents specifically offer letters and employment contracts is **manual, time-consuming, and inefficient**, particularly in the context of **high-volume recruitment**. Hiring managers are required to physically or digitally sign each document individually, which becomes increasingly burdensome when onboarding hundreds of new employees monthly.

Key Challenges:

- **Volume Pressure:** Recent recruitment drives have resulted in hundreds of appointments (e.g., 500 graduates, 450 debt collectors), each requiring multiple signed documents.
- **Time Constraints:** Managers must sign 15-page contracts and 3-page offer letters for each new hire, leading to significant delays in onboarding.
- **Operational Bottlenecks:** The manual signature process creates a bottleneck in the HR workflow, affecting downstream activities like payroll setup, system access provisioning, and training schedules.

- **Legal and Compliance Risks:** Without a standardized and auditable electronic signature process, there is a risk of non-compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.
- **Lack of Automation:** The absence of a workflow-driven system means signatures cannot be efficiently tracked, routed, or verified, resulting in administrative overhead and potential errors.

Impact on Business:

- Slower onboarding timelines.
- Increased workload for hiring managers and HR personnel.
- Reduced operational efficiency and employee experience.
- Potential legal exposure due to inconsistent signature practices.

3. SCOPE

In Scope

The following functionalities and components are included in the scope of this project:

3.1. Bulk Document Upload

- HR/Admin users can upload multiple offer letters and employment contracts at once.

3.2. Workflow-Based Signature Routing

- Automated routing of documents to hiring managers and employees for sequential signing.

3.3. Electronic Signature Integration

- Secure application of legally compliant electronic signatures by both parties.

3.4. Notification System

- Email or system notifications to alert users at each stage of the workflow.

3.5. Audit Trail and Logging

- Full traceability of actions taken on each document for compliance and reporting.

3.6. Document Storage and Retrieval

- Secure storage of signed documents with search and retrieval capabilities.

3.7. Legal Compliance Validation

- Legal review and approval of the electronic signature process to ensure enforceability.

3.8. User Access Management

- Role-based access control to ensure only authorized users can view or sign documents.

Out of Scope

The following items are not included in the current phase of the project:

- Integration with third-party HR or payroll systems.
- Mobile application support (web-based access only in this phase).
- Custom document generation or templating.
- Signature delegation or proxy signing.
- Multi-language document support.

4. BENEFITS

Implementing the ***Automatic Signing of Documents*** will deliver significant operational, compliance, and user experience improvements across the organization.

4.1. Operational Efficiency

- **Time Savings:** Automates the signing process for hundreds of documents, drastically reducing manual effort.
- **Faster Onboarding:** Speeds up the turnaround time for employment documentation, enabling quicker integration of new hires.
- **Reduced Administrative Burden:** Frees up HR and hiring managers to focus on strategic tasks rather than repetitive signing.

4.2. Compliance and Security

- **Legal Validity:** Ensures signatures are compliant with electronic signature laws (e.g., ECTA in South Africa).
- **Auditability:** Maintains a secure and traceable log of all signature actions for internal and external audits.
- **Data Protection:** Secure storage and controlled access to sensitive employment documents.

4.3. Scalability

- **Supports High-Volume Recruitment:** Designed to handle bulk uploads and workflows for thousands of documents monthly.
- **Future - proofing:** Can be extended to other document types and departments as needed.

4.4. Improved User Experience

- **Convenience:** Managers and employees can sign documents from anywhere, at any time.
- **Transparency:** Real-time notifications and tracking improve visibility into the signing process.
- **Professionalism:** Digitally signed documents enhance the organization's image and modernize HR operations.

5. ASSUMPTIONS/ CONSTRAINTS/DEPENDENCIES

Category	Description	Impact
Assumption	All users have access to the internet and the signature platform.	Ensures smooth operation and accessibility.
Assumption	Legal validation will be completed before go-live.	Guarantees enforceability of signed documents.
Assumption	Employees will be trained in how to use the system.	Reduces user errors and support requests.
Constraint	The system must comply with ECTA and other relevant laws.	Limits design choices to legally acceptable methods.
Constraint	Only employment-related documents are supported in Phase 1.	Restricts initial scope and functionality.
Constraint	Web-based access only; no mobile app support in Phase 1.	Limits accessibility for mobile users.
Dependency	The legal team must provide opinion on electronic signature validity.	Delays implementation if legal review is pending.
Dependency	The IT department must configure secure access and storage.	System cannot go live without infrastructure setup.
Dependency	HR must prepare and upload documents correctly.	Workflow initiation depends on accurate document preparation.

6. SYSTEM/ CHANNEL REQUIREMENTS

The following Systems will be utilised:

- The system to be used will be finalised after the tender process is completed
- Research in the market for available systems that address this requirement will be done in this exercise (system decision will be made at a later stage after this research)
- The system to be used will be finalised after the market research

Functional Requirements

ID	Requirement Description
FR1	Ability to upload bulk employment documents (offer letters, contracts).
FR2	Tagging of signature fields for each document.
FR3	Workflow routing to hiring managers for signature.
FR4	Sequential routing to employees after manager signs.
FR5	Secure electronic signature capability for both parties.
FR6	Notification system for workflow steps (e.g., pending signature).
FR7	Audit trail generation for each document.
FR8	Secure storage and retrieval of signed documents.
FR9	Role-based access control for HR, managers, and employees.
FR10	Dashboard for tracking document status and workflow progress.

Non-Functional Requirements

ID	Requirement Description
NFR1	System must be accessible via secure web interface.
NFR2	Must support high-volume processing (e.g., 1000+ documents/month).

ID	Requirement Description
NFR3	Must comply with ECTA and other relevant legal standards.
NFR4	System must be scalable to support future expansion.
NFR5	Must provide high availability and uptime (e.g., 99.9%).
NFR6	Data must be encrypted in transit and at rest.
NFR7	System must log all user actions for audit and compliance.
NFR8	Response time for user actions should be under 2 seconds.

Technical Requirements

ID	Requirement Description
TR1	Integration with existing HR systems (optional/future phase).
TR2	Support for PDF and DOCX document formats.
TR3	Use of secure authentication (e.g., SSO, MFA).
TR4	Hosting on secure cloud infrastructure or internal servers.
TR5	Compatibility with major browsers (Chrome, Edge, Firefox).
TR6	Logging and monitoring tools for system health and usage.
TR7	API support for future integrations.

6.1. High-Level Business Process

Automatic Signing of Documents (Bulk) – Process

Automatic Signing of Documents – Process

