

22 May 2026

[REDACTED]

Mr. Klaas van Dijken, director

**Lighthouse Reports**

[REDACTED]

By email.

Your reference

Our reference

Dear Mr. van Dijken,

Re: Your correspondence of 15 May 2026 to VFS Global

Thank you for your letter of 15 May 2026 and for raising the matters contained therein. We appreciate your engagement and take the questions you have posed seriously.

We have been instructed by VFS Global to respond to your correspondence on its behalf.

**Response**

VFS Global is a world leading, trusted technology and services provider, empowering secure mobility for governments and citizens. It operates across more than 160 countries as a trusted partner for 71 client governments and has processed in excess of half a billion visa applications since 2001. Its clients include governments with some of the world's most stringent compliance, regulatory and security requirements, including all members of the Five Eyes alliance and nearly all Schengen Area governments.

VFS Global manages exclusively non-judgmental and administrative tasks related to applications for visa, passport and consular services. It plays no role in the decision-making of visa applications. Contracts it holds have been awarded through competitive international or regional tenders, rigorously assessed over 12–18 months against criteria including compliance standards, data security, operational resilience, and financial strength.

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We wish to address the overarching premise of your questions directly: the picture they seek to construct is a distorted one, and publication of such a narrative is likely to mislead readers.

We also note that VFS Global has engaged with Lighthouse Reports throughout its enquiries in an open and transparent manner. This includes a face-to-face meeting between May Bulman and Jiten Vyas in London in December 2025, as well as Ms Bulman's visit to VFS Global's premises in Dubai in February 2026. VFS Global's willingness to facilitate such direct engagement reflects its commitment to transparency and its confidence in the integrity of its operations.

**Operational oversight and accountability.** VFS Global's operations are subject to rigorous and continuous government oversight. Contracts with sovereign governments define clear service levels, performance benchmarks, and audit requirements, while governments retain full control over procurement, pricing, and renewals. Across its global network, VFS Global undergoes more than 10,000 audits and assessments annually, conducted by internal and external auditors, including those assigned by client governments. Where issues arise, structured remediation plans are implemented, and VFS Global's long-term relationships with its client governments are underpinned by its commitment to continuous improvement.

**Value-added services.** VFS Global offers optional value-added services designed to enhance applicant convenience. These services are developed in consultation with, and approved by, client governments. Applicants are clearly informed across multiple touchpoints — both online and at visa application centres — that these services are optional, do not influence visa decisions or processing times, and are priced transparently. The pricing is government-approved and benchmarked. VFS Global maintains a zero-tolerance approach to any coercion or misrepresentation. Moreover, it is false and baseless to claim that there was an increased focus on VAS sales after Blackstone's investment: there has been no material change to VAS revenue per application since their investment. Any suggestion to the contrary would be false and misleading.

**Appointment systems.** VFS Global actively deploys robust multi-layered security measures to protect its appointment booking systems, ensuring fair access for all applicants. Their security controls, including OTP authentication and CAPTCHA, are part of an overall suite of tools and are designed to prevent unauthorised system access, even in high-demand markets. Such controls are essential, but they may occasionally affect genuine users, for example if there are repeated login attempts, restrictive network, firewalls or the use of VPNs when booking an appointment, VFS Global also actively raises awareness through initiatives such as its #DoNotFallForFraud campaign, encouraging applicants to avoid scams and access only official channels. Where instances of suspected fraud are identified, VFS Global works closely with local law enforcement authorities and ensures transparent reporting with its client governments. It is also important to note that appointment availability, processing times, documentation requirements and visa decisions are entirely determined by client governments. There is no such thing as a premium appointment.

**Integrity.** VFS Global maintains a zero-tolerance approach to misconduct and fraud, collaborating with local law enforcement wherever credible evidence exists and ensuring transparent reporting to client governments. All employees undergo comprehensive background screening prior to hiring. With a workforce of over 17,000 employees across 168 countries, instances of misconduct are extremely rare relative to its scale; however, any allegations are taken seriously, thoroughly investigated, and addressed through appropriate disciplinary measures, including keeping our client governments informed. With respect to your direct accusations of bribery, VFS Global is certified for Anti-Bribery Management systems, and operates a whistleblower hotline to ensure that appropriate and corrective or investigative actions are taken on any such matters.

**Financial performance.** Any suggestion that VFS Global's financial growth has been generated through improper conduct is false. VFS Global's financial performance reflects a legitimate structural shift in its

business model, underpinned by targeted acquisitions, geographic expansion, enhanced operational efficiency, and the deepening of long-term government partnerships. VFS Global operates a lawful and transparent commercial model, awarded and overseen by sovereign governments. Its revenue growth is the natural consequence of increasing global demand for visa services and the trust that 71 client governments place in VFS Global to deliver them. The company runs a successful business within the parameters set and approved by those governments.

**Data protection.** Data protection is a core priority. VFS Global operates within a robust governance framework aligned with GDPR and local regulations, implementing strong technical and organisational controls. Data retention and deletion are contractually defined by client governments and executed through jurisdiction-specific protocols, with regular audits to ensure compliance.

**Request regarding publication**

We note that your questions rely heavily on selective excerpts from documents obtained through FOI requests, anonymous and unverified testimony from unnamed former employees, and individual anecdotal accounts. The cumulative framing of your correspondence presents a materially incomplete and misleading picture of a company that is subject to unprecedented levels of independent government oversight and audit.

Should you proceed to publication, we request that this response be published in full. Selective quotation risks stripping our client's position of essential context, which would itself be misleading to readers.

We also place you on notice that the questions as framed give the strong impression that your investigation is proceeding on the basis of inaccurate or incomplete information. VFS Global expects that a responsible media outlet of your standing will adhere to the highest journalistic standards and refrain from publishing anything that is untrue, inaccurate, or misleading. Any such publication could cause serious damage to VFS Global's reputation and to other parties involved. VFS Global reserves all its rights and will hold accountable any party responsible for the publication of defamatory or materially misleading content.

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