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DECISION



**THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL
OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20548**

FILE: B-204812.2

DATE: February 22, 1982

MATTER OF: International Computer Resources, Inc.

DIGEST:

Agency properly denied request that closing date for receipt of proposals be extended, even though method for scoring price proposals in request for proposals contained a mistake, because method for scoring was clear since the mistake and intended method were obvious.

International Computer Resources, Inc. (International), protests the Department of Justice, Immigration and Naturalization Service's (Immigration), request for proposals (RFP) No. CO-6-81, for data conversion services. International contends that the method for scoring price proposals was ambiguous and defective.

Based on the following, we deny International's protest.

The RFP provided that technical approach, experience and capability, and cost would be evaluated for award. The first two areas were assigned 30 points each and cost was assigned 40 points. Amendment No. 1, among other things, added the following:

"SPECIAL NOTE - The price proposal has been assigned 40 points and will be scored in accordance with the following method:

"(a) The lowest price will be assigned the maximum points,

- "(b) Subtract the amount proposed by the lowest offeror from the amount proposed by the offeror being point scored,
- "(c) Divide the figure obtained in (b) by the amount proposed by the offeror being point scored,
- "(d) Multiply the resulting fraction by the maximum points, and
- "(e) Subtract the point total obtained in (d) from the maximum points.

Example: A proposed \$40,000 and B proposed \$50,000. 40 cost points are in the evaluation plan. A gets 40 points. [Step (a).] B gets $\$50,000 - \$40,000 = \$10,000$ [Step (b)]; divided by $\$50,000 = .20$ [Step (c)]; $.20 \times 100 = 20$ [Step (d)]; $100 - 20 = 80$ points [Step (e)]."

On the day proposals were due, International contacted Immigration and requested that the closing date be extended to correct the apparent error in the scoring method example. That is, the higher price would receive more points (80) than the lower price (40), due to the use of 100 points rather than 40 in steps (d) and (e) to compute the higher price score.

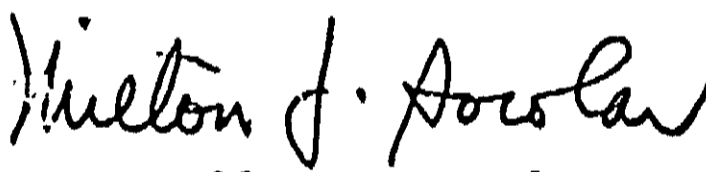
Since Immigration refused to grant an extension to correct this error by amendment, International protested before the proposal receipt time that it could not submit a proposal. International argues that the intended method of scoring the price proposals was ambiguous. In addition, International contends that price evaluation criteria actually "favor higher prices over lower prices."

Immigration admits that the example contained an error, but concludes that the error and intended hypothetical computation (steps (d) and (e) should have

used 40 rather than 100) were obvious, and no extension was necessary or practical for the following reasons: (1) the formula preceding the example was correct and represented a standard, acceptable scoring procedure; (2) the 40 points assigned to the pricing proposal for evaluation was stated numerous times in the RFP, including the example; (3) none of the 27 proposers questioned the error; (4) the "last minute" timing of the extension request; and (5) the urgency of the procurement.

We agree with Immigration's conclusion and supporting rationale that the intended method for scoring price proposals was clear and susceptible only to one reasonable interpretation, despite the error in the example. An ambiguity exists only if two or more reasonable interpretations of solicitation provisions are possible. See The BDM Corporation, B-195907, February 13, 1980, 80-1 CPD 128. While it is generally advisable to correct an obvious discrepancy before the closing date for receipt of proposals, where, as here, the solicitation clearly reflects the agency's evaluation scheme and the procurement is urgent, Immigration properly denied International's request to amend the RFP and extend the closing date for receipt of proposals.

We deny the protest.

for 
Comptroller General
of the United States