

UNIT 41: ESTABLISHING THE COMPETITIVE RANGE

October 2003

Duty	Select offerors/quoters for discussions (i.e., establish the competitive range under FAR Part 15).
Conditions	Given acquisition planning, the solicitation, proposals or quotations, technical reports, and cost/price analysis.
Overall Standard	<p>When acquiring supplies and services through simplified acquisition procedures, negotiations (if any) need only be held with the number of vendors necessary for maximum practicable competition (normally at least three sources).</p> <p>When acquiring supplies and services in accordance with FAR 15.306, consideration is given only to all the most highly rated offers and may be further limited when such limitations would allow the Government to permit an efficient competition among the most highly rated proposals.</p>

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October 2003

Policies

<i>FAR</i>	<i>Agency Suppl.</i>	<i>Subject</i>
13.104(b)		Maximum practicable competition ordinarily can be obtained by soliciting quotes from at least three sources within the local trade area.
13.106-2(b)		Formal establishment of a competitive range not required for simplified acquisitions.
15.306(c)		Competitive range.
15.503(a)		Preaward notices of exclusion from the competitive range.

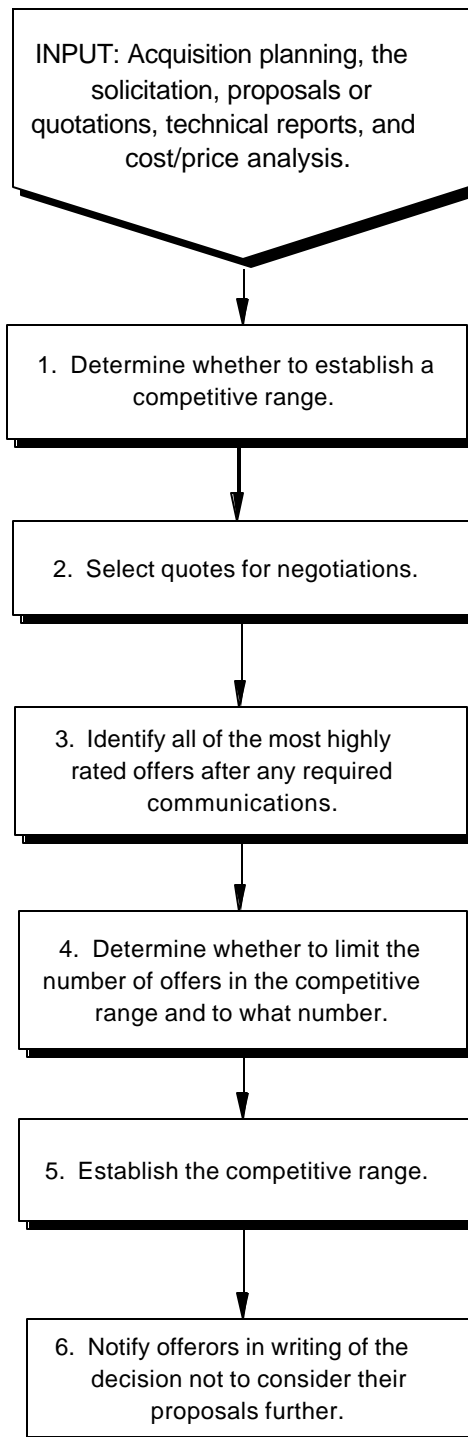
Other KSAs

1. Knowledge of relevant case law (e.g., Comptroller General decisions).
2. Knowledge of the requirement and available alternatives.
3. Ability to exercise the attention to detail required to identify factors affecting best value.
4. Ability to gather, organize, and retain information related to determining best value.
5. Ability to read and understand technical reports, audit reports, and related information.
6. Ability to use reasoning skills to evaluate offers considering established evaluation criteria and standards.
7. Ability to appropriately consider available information in making effective business decisions in determining the competitive range.
8. Ability to think creatively and recognize the value of offers that provide new and unique approaches to meeting Government requirements.
9. Ability to write clearly when preparing the various documentation required in establishing the competitive range and notifying offerors that were excluded.
10. Ability to maintain the honesty and integrity of the acquisition process.

Other Policies and References (Annotate As Necessary):

UNIT 41: ESTABLISHING THE COMPETITIVE RANGE

October 2003



UNIT 41: ESTABLISHING THE COMPETITIVE RANGE

October 2003

Tasks	Related Standards
1. Determine whether to establish a competitive range.	<p>A formal competitive range determination is not required when using simplified acquisition procedures (SAP).</p> <p>Establishment of a competitive range is required when using competitive negotiated acquisition procedures (FAR 15) other than simplified acquisition procedures. Even a decision to negotiate with all offerors is a competitive range decision.</p>
2. Select quotes for negotiations.	<p>For requirements exceeding the micro-purchase threshold but not exceeding \$25,000 soliciting three firms orally or in writing will normally provide the maximum practical competition.</p> <p>When quotes are received from more than three sources, the Contracting Officer has broad discretion in selecting vendors for negotiation. Normally, those selected should include the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quotation that currently appears to provide the best value, based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluation criteria in the solicitation; - Contracting Officer product knowledge; - Information provided by the offeror; and - Other reasonably available information; and • Quotation(s) most likely to provide greater value after negotiations based on the same criteria.
3. Identify all of the most highly rated offers after any required communications.	<p>For other than simplified acquisitions, identify all of the most highly rated proposals using the ratings of each proposal against all evaluation criteria established in the solicitation.</p>

UNIT 41: ESTABLISHING THE COMPETITIVE RANGE

October 2003

Tasks

Related Standards

<p>4. Determine whether to limit the number of offers in the competitive range and to what number.</p>	<p>When acquiring supplies or services using FAR Part 15 procedures, consider limiting the competitive range for purposes of efficiency only if the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solicitation notified offerors of that possibility; and • Number of most highly rated proposals that might otherwise be included in the competitive range exceeds the number at which an efficient competition can be conducted. <p>When limiting the competitive range, limit it to the greatest number of proposals that will permit an efficient competition among the most highly rated proposals.</p> <p>The factors to consider in identifying the greatest number of proposals that will permit an efficient competition include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expected dollar value of the award; • Total number of offers in the most highly rated listing; • Complexity of the acquisition and the variety and complexity of offered solutions, in terms of impact on the likely breadth and depth of the discussions; • Resources available to conduct discussions vs. the expected variable administrative costs of discussions; • Impact on lead-time for award vs. the need for timely delivery; and • The extent to which discussions with additional offerors would likely provide diminishing returns.
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UNIT 41: ESTABLISHING THE COMPETITIVE RANGE

October 2003

Tasks

Related Standards

5. Establish the competitive range.	<p>If the Contracting Officer is the Source Selection Authority (SSA), the Contracting Officer must make the determination. If the Contracting Officer is not the SSA, the Contracting Officer must make a recommendation to the SSA with final determination by the SSA.</p> <p>Document the decision as required to comply with the Source Selection Plan and any applicable agency or activity requirements.</p>
6. Notify offerors in writing of the decision not to consider their proposals further.	<p>Notify offerors promptly in writing when their proposals are excluded from the competitive range or otherwise eliminated from the competition.</p> <p>The notice to each offeror must state:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The basis for excluding/eliminating its offer; and• That a revision of its offer will not be considered.