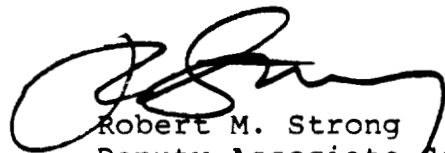


DLA reports that the RFP clearly listed the radioimmunoassay requirement as a salient characteristic of this brand name or equal procurement. We have held that salient characteristics must be met in order for a bid to be responsive and that a nonresponsive bid is not cured by the fact that the items offered function as well as items which meet the salient characteristics even where the nonresponsive items satisfy the intent of the specifications. Paul F. Pugh & Associated Professional Engineers, B-199920, Nov. 12, 1980, 80-2 C.P.D. ¶ 358. We therefore think that Syva should have known that the presence of the radioimmunoassay salient characteristic in the RFP would preclude consideration of its proposal offering an enzyme immunoassay test method instead. DLA further reports that the initial closing date was May 24, 1984, and that Syva first protested the restrictive nature of specifications to DLA on June 27, 1984, well after the closing date. Although DLA subsequently further clarified its need for the radioimmunoassay requirement by amendment No. 4 issued February 28, 1985, we do not think that DLA's action relieves Syva of the duty of protesting the requirement prior to the initial closing date where it is, as here, an apparent salient characteristic of the brand name or equal RFP.



Robert M. Strong  
Deputy Associate General Counsel