



**The Comptroller General
of the United States**

Washington, D.C. 20548

Decision

Matter of: Snyder Corporation

File: B-233939

Date: March 16, 1989

DIGEST

Protest that packaging specification in solicitation is unspecific and overly complex is denied where the solicitation, read as a whole, reasonably describes the packaging requirements necessary to meet the agency's minimum needs.

DECISION

Snyder Corporation protests the packaging specification contained in request for proposals (RFP) No. F41608-89-R-0474, issued by the Air Force for 76 lubrication and servicing units for use with aircraft. Snyder contends that the military specification referenced in the RFP, MIL-STD-2073-1A, which sets out general standards for preservation, packaging and packing requirements, is unspecific and overly complex, and needs to be tailored to the precise requirements for the end item.

We deny the protest.

The RFP, a small business set-aside, was issued on November 28, 1988, with a closing date of December 27. Clause D-4 of the RFP, "Preservation, Packaging, and Packing Requirements," not only states that the items are to be packaged in accordance with MIL-STD-2073-1A, but also provides that the items are to be preserved (and packaged)

0-44899/138196

at "Level A," and packed at "Level B or C," as specified.^{1/} Snyder's principal contention is that the military packaging specification is a lengthy document filled with only generalized requirements which need to be tailored to the particular needs of this procurement. Snyder complains that the bidder must consult charts, narratives and formulas provided in various military specifications (incorporated by reference in MIL-STD-2073-1A) in order to identify the "most promising" containers that represent the minimum packing requirements.

A solicitation must contain sufficient information to allow offerors to compete intelligently and on an equal basis. University Research Corp., B-216461, Feb, 19, 1985, 85-1 CPD ¶ 210. The mere allegation that a solicitation is ambiguous does not, however, make it so. See Petchem, Inc., B-233006, Feb. 8, 1989, 89-1 CPD ¶ ____.

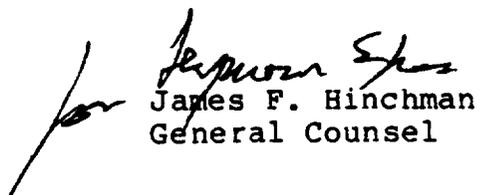
The record shows, as the protester alleges, that the section of the RFP entitled, "Preservation, Packaging, and Packing Requirements," does not set forth specific information concerning packaging of the end item. However, the RFP also contains MIL-L-4541C, which is the principal specification governing the end item. As the protester acknowledges, MIL-L-4541C contains detailed and precise packing and packaging requirements for the end item. For example, that specification provides that the end item (at Level A) shall be packed in "a wood cleated-plywood shipping container conforming to PPP-B-601." Further, the specification also provides precise packaging and packing requirements for each level required. While Snyder admits that this information is sufficiently "precise," it contends that such information should have been restated in clause D-4, the general packaging specification.

We think that the protester's contention that the solicitation is defective simply because these requirements were set forth in the end item specification, rather than the military packaging specification, is without merit. A contractor must meet each of the solicitation's requirements, regardless of its location in the RFP, since a solicitation must be read as a whole. See generally Collington Assocs., B-231788, Oct. 18, 1988, 88-2 CPD ¶ 363.

^{1/} The various levels of packing and packaging are stated in terms of performance in MIL-STD-2073-1A. For example, Level A provides for "maximum protection" designed to protect against "direct exposure to extremes of climate." These levels do not specify the types of containers or any other specific details concerning packaging.

In our view, prospective offerors can reasonably and easily understand the solicitation's preservation and packaging requirements simply by reading the solicitation as a whole, including the end item specification, MIL-L-4541C.

The protest is denied.


James F. Hinchman
General Counsel