



Comptroller General
of the United States

Washington, D.C. 20548

Decision

Matter of: RMS Industries

File: B-246240

Date: January 14, 1992

Richard Snyder for the protester.
Phillip Eckert, Jr., Esq., Defense Logistics Agency, for the agency.
James M. Cunningham, Esq., and Paul Lieberman, Esq., Office of the General Counsel, GAO, participated in the preparation of the decision.

DIGEST

Protest that request for quotations (RFQ) did not properly specify requirement for plate-mounting in connection with description of requirement for abrasive wheels is denied where RFQ expressly set forth the term "plate-mounted" in an applicable standard for the wheels, and contained sufficient technical data to describe the requirement.

DECISION

RMS Industries protests the specifications of request for quotations (RFQ) No. DLA400-91-T-R883, issued under small purchase procedures, by the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) on September 20, 1991, for plate-mounted abrasive wheels. RMS contends that the RFQ's item description is erroneous because it does not contain the term "plate-mounted" and does not provide sufficient data concerning the required plates.

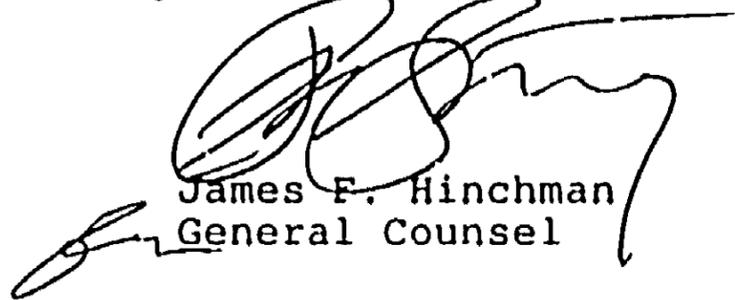
We deny the protest.

The "Description of Supplies" section of the RFQ contains 14 lines of indented text which does not expressly reference the wheels as "plate-mounted." However, immediately following the indented text, the RFQ requires that the wheels be "in accordance with" American National Standards Institute (ANSI) B5.35 ("machine mounting specifications for abrasive discs and plate mounted wheels"), and references the wheels as "plate-mounted."

RMS contends that if DLA "really wants the mounting plate" along with the abrasive wheels it should "add the plate to the item description" and provide all pertinent data so the correct plate can be produced. DLA asserts that the RFQ clearly requires mounting plates for the wheels and that it has provided all pertinent data on the mounting plates and wheels by specifying ANSI B5.35 as well as other applicable specifications and standards.

Where a dispute exists as to the actual meaning of a solicitation requirement, we will resolve the issue by reading the solicitation as a whole. Romer Labs, Inc., B-243027, June 25, 1991, 91-1 CPD ¶ 602. To be reasonable, an interpretation must be consistent with the solicitation when read as a whole and in a reasonable manner. Id. In our view, the RFQ requirement that the wheels be in accordance with ANSI B5.35, along with the express use of the term "plate-mounted" in connection with that standard, reasonably conveys that the wheels must be plate-mounted. While RMS generally asserts that further data on the plates is needed for the company to submit a quote, RMS has not specified what additional data is needed. By contrast, ANSI B5.35 (along with other applicable ANSI standards and specifications incorporated in the RFQ) contain technical data detailing the requirement for plate-mounted wheels. Thus, it appears that the RFQ contained sufficient data for quoters to offer the required wheels.

The protest is denied.



James F. Hinchman
General Counsel