



United States  
General Accounting Office  
Washington, D.C. 20548

Office of the General Counsel

**Matter of:** Nicolet Instrument Corporation

**File:** B-270332

**Date:** January 2, 1996

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**DECISION**

Nicolet Instrument Corporation protests the award of a contract for an automated used oil analysis system to Bio-Rad Laboratories/Digilab Division under request for proposals No. F34650-95-R-0272, issued by the Department of the Air Force. Nicolet contends that it offered a system equivalent to Bio-Rad's at a price lower than the awardee's, and that it should therefore have received the award.

We dismiss the protest because the protester failed to file its comments on the agency report within 14 calendar days after the report due date, as required by our Bid Protest Regulations, Section 21.3(h), 60 Fed. Reg. 40,737, 40,741 (Aug. 10, 1995) (to be codified at 4 C.F.R. § 21.3(h)).

The filing deadlines in our Regulations are prescribed under the authority of the Competition in Contracting Act of 1984; their purpose is to enable us to comply with the statute's mandate that we resolve protests expeditiously. See 31 U.S.C. § 3554(a); Green Mgmt. Corp.-Recon., B-233598.2, Feb. 27, 1989, 89-1 CPD ¶ 208. To avoid delay in the resolution of protests, our Regulations provide that a protester's failure to file comments within 14 calendar days, or to file a request that the protest be decided on the existing record, or to request an extension of the time for submitting comments, will result in dismissal of the protest. Section 21.3(h), 60 Fed. Reg. supra; Prio-Leau Culinary Servs., Inc.-Recon., B-236373.6, Jan. 23, 1990, 90-1 CPD ¶ 90. But for this provision, a protester could idly await receipt of the report for an indefinite time, to the detriment of the protest system and our ability to resolve the protest expeditiously. Id.

The protest is dismissed.

Comptroller General  
of the United States

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