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DECISION



**THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL
OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20548**

FILE: B-205064

DATE: June 28, 1982

MATTER OF: Casper Systems Corporation

DIGEST:

An agency properly rejected a protester's second quotation to furnish mobile shelving from its Federal Supply Service contract where the protester clearly knew the agency's needs when it initially chose to quote a more expensive shelving system and the second quotation was submitted only after the protester learned of the issuance of a purchase order to a firm whose quotation was lower.

Casper Systems Corporation (Casper) protests the Veterans Administration's (VA) placement of an order for mobile shelving with Information Retrieval Systems, Inc. (IRSI), an authorized dealer for White Power Files, Inc. (White). The VA placed the order under a mandatory Federal Supply Service (FSS) schedule. Casper argues that the VA improperly rejected Casper's lower quotation.

We deny the protest.

The VA requested a quotation from Casper for FSS schedule mobile shelving after Casper had assisted the VA in determining which shelving would best suit the agency's needs. Casper quoted a price of \$55,271.18 on its E-2 model. Thereafter, the VA contacted IRSI and requested that it submit a quotation on any White model comparable to Casper's E-2. IRSI's quotation under White's FSS contract was \$17,794.06. The VA evaluated both Casper's and IRSI's quotations and determined that White's model met the agency's minimum needs at the lower price. After the VA placed an order with IRSI, Casper, now aware of IRSI's lower quotation, submitted a quotation for its

E-1 model, stating that that model also met the VA's needs and did so at a price lower than that quoted for White's model. The VA, however, summarily dismissed the E-1 as inadequate. Casper protested to our Office, and the VA then studied the E-1 model and detailed its objections, stating its view that the model would be more expensive than White's model if it were upgraded as necessary.

Casper contends that its E-1 model meets the VA's minimum needs, and that the VA inaccurately calculated the extent to which that model would require upgrading. Thus, Casper believes that the VA acted improperly in rejecting the firm's quotation on that model. We believe, however, that Casper's assertions are academic.

In our view, the threshold question is not whether the E-1 model could have met the VA's needs but rather whether the VA had to consider Casper's second quotation, submitted after the VA had issued a purchase order to IRSI, at all. We believe that the VA's initial summary rejection of the second quotation was proper.

The record is clear that Casper submitted its quotation on the firm's E-2 model with a full understanding of the VA's needs. The firm attempted to have an allegedly acceptable and less expensive model considered only after it learned that the VA had issued a purchase order to IRSI for \$47,794.06, and thus that its E-2 model was more expensive than IRSI's comparable one. Either Casper initially chose to quote a model that exceeded what it knew to be the VA's needs in lieu of one that simply would meet them at a lower price, or to quote the more expensive of two acceptable models that it could offer. In either case, we believe that the integrity of the competitive procurement system would not be served by permitting Casper in effect to create an auction atmosphere and compel the VA to consider its second quotation under these circumstances. If Casper believed that its E-1 model adequately could have served the VA's needs, Casper should have submitted a quotation on that model in the first instance.

We deny the protest.

Nancy K. Cain Colver
for Comptroller General