

**DECISION**

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

**FILE:** B-219460

**DATE:** September 10, 1985

**MATTER OF:** Tramont Corporation

**DIGEST:**

GAO will not disturb a procuring agency's technical evaluation of proposed equipment, or the agency's determination of its minimum requirements and the specifications necessary to fulfill them, absent a clear showing by the protester that the agency has acted unreasonably.

Tramont Corporation (Tramont) protests the rejection of its offer of a computer room air processor under request for quotations (RFQ) No. 6300 issued by the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service.

We deny the protest.

The Forest Service issued the RFQ under the small purchase procedures for a Liebert Challenger 2 Model or equal. The salient features included the requirement for a shunt trip switch. The Forest Service rejected the low Tramont offer after it reviewed Tramont's quote and the enclosed manufacturer's literature, plus other manufacturer's literature which the Forest Service had on file, and concluded that the unit being offered did not have a shunt trip switch, and it was not clear that the unit had three other required features. The Forest Service issued a purchase order to Colonna-Sandroni, Inc., which was next low and offered the brand name unit. Tramont alleges that its equipment, in fact, does provide the other three required features and that it has a manual shutdown, which Tramont contends is the equivalent of a shunt trip switch. Tramont also questions why it was not contacted by the Forest Service for clarification.

The Forest Service states that the required shunt trip switch automatically shuts down the equipment, in the absence of an operator, when it senses an abnormal situation such as fire, water, temperature, or panic shutdown from a remote switch. A manual switch does not provide this protection since it must be activated by an operator.

The procuring agency has the primary responsibility for determining its needs and for drafting requirements that reflect those needs, since it is the agency that is most familiar with how the supplies or services have been or will be used. Venram Inc., B-214657, July 2, 1984, 84-2 C.P.D. ¶ 7. The agency also is primarily responsible for evaluating an offer for a product and determining whether the equipment meets the agency's requirements. Protek Industries, Inc., B-209505, Sept. 22, 1983, 83-2 C.P.D. ¶ 359. Therefore, we will not disturb either an agency's decision as to the best method of accommodating its needs, or the agency's technical decision whether an offered item meets those needs, absent a clear showing by the protester that the decision was unreasonable. Elsco International, B-215664, Dec. 17, 1984, 84-2 C.P.D. ¶ 672.

Small purchase procedures are designed to minimize the administrative costs of acquisition and, consequently, a contracting officer need only solicit quotations from a reasonable number of potential sources, judge the advantages and disadvantages of each quotation in relation to the price quoted, and determine in good faith which quotation will best meet the needs of the government. R.E. White & Associate, Inc., 61 Comp. Gen. 321 (1982), 82-1 C.P.D. ¶ 294. Tramont does not contend that the decision to reject its quotation was made in other than good faith. The agency had no obligation to obtain further information from Tramont when the technical evaluation was negative. It is the quoter's responsibility to establish that its product complies with the characteristics of the brand name product. X-Rite Company, B-215694, Nov. 2, 1984, 84-2 C.P.D. ¶ 489. While Tramont now argues that its equipment provides many of the required features, it concedes that it is lacking at least one such feature and merely asserts that it offers a manual equivalent for an automatic switch requirement. Under these circumstances, we find that the Forest Service properly rejected Tramont's quote.

The protest is denied.

*for* *Seymour E. Jones*  
Harry R. Van Cleave  
General Counsel