



The Comptroller General
of the United States

Washington, D.C. 20548

Decision

Matter of: Brennan Associates, Inc.

File: B-231859

Date: September 28, 1988

DIGEST

Small purchase procurement must be conducted consistent with the concern for fair and equitable competition inherent in any competition. Protester has the burden, however, of showing that the evaluation was unreasonable; burden is not met where protester merely disagrees with the procuring agency and fails to show that the agency's evaluation of quotations was unreasonable.

DECISION

Brennan Associates, Inc., protests the award of purchase orders to Data ED and Wordpro, Inc. following the Department of State's issuance of a small purchase letter solicitation for word processing training courses. Brennan notes that it submitted the lowest quote and, on this basis, concludes that the evaluation process must have been flawed.

We deny the protest.

The Department of State's letter solicitation to Brennan and other prospective offerors requested quotations for word processing training, stating that the contract award would be based on cost, technical expertise in the area of Wang training, and work references for the particular type of training being sought. When the agency evaluated the four quotes it received, it applied the following components of these factors: corporate experience, instructor specific experience, Foreign Service Institute/State Department previous experience, references, dedicated instructor, and cost. Wordpro and Data ED received higher evaluation scores for their quotes although Brennan had quoted the lowest cost. WordPro and Data ED received award of the purchase orders. This protest followed.

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Brennan argues that it has competed against the two awardees for similar contracts in the past and in each instance cost was the determining factor because the three firms always received similar technical scores. The protester contends that because the award decision in this instance is inconsistent with the outcome of previous competitions, the evaluation method must have been flawed. Brennan insists that its instructors' experience in the specific areas at issue here is strong, and that the firm's references should have been excellent because it has consistently received excellent evaluations from contracting agencies, including the Department of State.^{1/}


Small purchase procedures are designed to minimize the administrative costs of acquiring relatively inexpensive items. Therefore, 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 prices quoted, and determine in good faith which quotation will best meet the needs of the government. LePrix Electrical Distributors, Ltd., B-213303, June 18, 1984, 84-1 CPD ¶ 634; see also Dianne Cooper, B-229618, Feb. 8, 1988, 88-1 CPD ¶ 123. After quotations are solicited and the field of competition thus is defined, the procurement still must be conducted consistent with the small purchase selection procedures and the concern for fair and equitable competition that is inherent in any procurement.

Here, Brennan has not demonstrated that the agency's award decision was unreasonable. Brennan supports its protest only with its own view that its technical qualifications are equal to those of the awardees, and the fact that its price was low. However, the record indicates that quotations were evaluated on the basis set forth in the solicitation, and that WordPro and Data ED received higher total scores than did Brennan. The record further shows that Brennan in fact was given unsatisfactory performance ratings from references within the Department of State. In addition, Brennan's quote showed less experience in instructor specific

^{1/} Brennan also states that one of the Department of State's evaluators had a negative experience with one of the protester's former account managers, and that the evaluator may have been biased against selecting Brennan for the award. We will not attribute improper motives to contracting officials based on inference or supposition. Complere, Inc., B-227832, Sept. 15, 1987, 87-2 CPD ¶ 254. We simply note that there is no evidence in the record to support the protester's allegation.

experience (1-4 years) than was shown by Brennan's competitors, which submitted instructors' resumes indicating experience of at least 5-8 years. In these circumstances, we simply cannot conclude that Brennan has shown the agency's evaluation of quotations was unreasonable.

The protest is denied.

 *Seymour Efron*
James F. Hinchman
General Counsel