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## Decision

**Matter of:** XTec, Inc.

**File:** B-404495.2

**Date:** November 4, 2011

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Daniel S. Koch, Esq., and Kevin K. D'Anna, Esq., Paley, Rothman, Goldstein, Rosenberg Eig & Cooper, Chartered, for the protester.

John E Jensen, Esq., Daniel S. Herzfeld, Esq., Evan D. Wesser, Esq. and Nicole Y. Beeler, Esq., Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP, for Secure Mission Solutions LLC, the intervenor.

Reagan N. Clyne, Esq., Department of Homeland Security, for the agency.

Charles W. Morrow, Esq., and James A. Spangenberg, Esq., Office of the General Counsel, GAO, participated in the preparation of the decision.

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### DIGEST

Protest against evaluation of proposal is denied where the record reasonably supports the agency's evaluation of the protester's proposal based on a diagram included in the proposal that reflected that the protester's technical approach did not satisfy the solicitation's requirements.

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### DECISION

XTec, Inc., of Reston, Virginia, protests the award of a contract to Secure Mission Solutions LLC, of Washington, D.C., under request for proposals (RFP) No. HSS01-10-R-0046, issued by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), United States Secret Service (USSS), for an access control and visitor management system. XTec challenges USSS's evaluation of its proposal.

We deny the protest.

### BACKGROUND

The USSS issued the RFP for fixed-price proposals to modernize and integrate access control procedures and technologies for identification, physical access control, and logical access control at the White House and the Vice President's residence. The system was to be installed on the Government's site in the Washington, D.C. area. RFP amend. 1 at 4, 28.

The procurement was conducted using a two-phase process. In phase I, offerors were required to submit a preliminary response that the agency would utilize to pre-qualify offerors for participation in phase II. Award under phase II was to be made on a best-value basis, considering technical, lifecycle costs, past performance, and price. The technical factor consisted of three subfactors: experience (as evaluated under Phase I), design/technical approach, and program management approach. With regard to the design/technical approach subfactor, the RFP stated that the offeror's proposal shall effectively demonstrate a technical capability and appropriate solution path to perform and accomplish all requirements contained in the statement of work and specific system requirements documents. RFP amend 1 at 52.

Nineteen proposals were received by the phase I closing on September 1, 2010. Six proposals, including those of XTec and Secure Mission Solutions, were selected to proceed to phase II.<sup>1</sup> On December 17, the USSS amended the RFP and provided offerors with the statement of work and other sensitive and/or classified documents. The agency also provided offerors a site visit and an opportunity for questions and answers. On February 14, 2011, the USSS received four proposals in response to phase II. These proposals were evaluated by a technical evaluation committee (TEC). The results relevant here were as follows<sup>2</sup>:

<b>Offeror</b>	<b>Secure Mission Solutions</b>	<b>XTec</b>
<b>Technical</b>	Highly Satisfactory	Marginal
Experience	Highly Satisfactory	Highly Satisfactory
Design/Technical Approach	Highly Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Program Management Approach	Highly Satisfactory	Satisfactory
<b>Lifecycle Costs</b>	Low Risk	High Risk
<b>Past Performance</b>	Moderate Risk	Moderate Risk
<b>Price</b>	\$4,813,432	\$1,179,651

Agency Report (AR), Tab V, Source Selection Decision, at 4-5.

<sup>1</sup> XTec initially was not included among the phase I offerors selected to participate in phase II. After it protested to our Office, USSS determined that XTec was qualified to continue to phase II and the protest was withdrawn.

<sup>2</sup> The possible ratings for the technical factor were outstanding, highly satisfactory, satisfactory, marginal, and unsatisfactory. The possible risk assessment ratings for lifecycle costs factor were low, moderate, and high. The possible risk assessment ratings for past performance were low, moderate, high, and unknown.

Based on the evaluation results, the USSS made award, without discussions, to Secure Mission Solutions. In making the award to Secure Mission Solutions on July 13, the source selection authority (SSA) found with regard to XTec:

XTec's price is significantly lower than the other . . . proposals . . . XTec's lower pricing is a result of its proposed design/technical approach. Its design/technical approach proposes the leveraging of the [DHS] infrastructure and the [DELETED] thereby curtailing costs. The proposed design/technical approach does not satisfy the RFP requirements and stipulations.

AR, Tab V, Source Selection Decision at 6-7. After a debriefing, this protest followed.

## DISCUSSION

### Technical

XTec contends that the USSS erroneously and unreasonably evaluated its proposal under the design/technical approach and lifecycle cost factors.

In considering a protest of an agency's proposal evaluation, our review is confined to determining whether the evaluation was reasonable and consistent with the terms of the solicitation and applicable statutes and regulations. The Mangi Envtl. Group, Inc., B 299721.4, Jan. 24, 2008, 2008 CPD ¶ 37 at 4. Where, as here, a solicitation requires offerors to furnish information necessary to establish compliance with the specifications, an agency may reasonably find a proposal that fails to include such information technically unacceptable. Douglass Colony/Kenny Solar, JV, B-402649, June 17, 2010, 2010 CPD ¶ 142 at 3. A protester's mere disagreement with the agency's judgment is not sufficient to establish that the agency acted unreasonably. HDL Research Lab, Inc., B-294959, Dec. 21, 2004, 2005 CPD ¶ 8 at 2.

Based on a detailed diagram and accompanying narrative language in XTec's proposal, the TEC concluded that XTec's design/technical approach was unsatisfactory because it indicated that XTec would house major new segments of the system (to include the current DHS infrastructure) in geographic regions outside the Washington, D.C. area in violation of the RFP's requirements. See AR, Tab N, Consensus Evaluation Report at 2-5; RFP amend. 1 at 4, 28.

XTec does not dispute that the RFP required installation of the required system at USSS controlled premises, and that all performance was to be within the metropolitan Washington, D.C. area. Protester's Comments at 2. However, XTec asserts that USSS "misapprehended XTec's design approach," which "clearly and unambiguously presented a solution that housed the servers and other components of the system at the USSS . . . sites, and not outside the metropolitan Washington,

D.C., area.” Protest at 6. XTec explains that the purpose of this portion of its proposal was to show that it would provide new systems identical to those it was operating at [DELETED] and [DELETED]. Protester’s Comments at 2-3. XTec explains that the diagram was intended to advise USSS that the system it would provide would be identical to the identity management system (IDMS) already in use at DHS with a line indicating the capability to access DHS’s infrastructure through OneNet if desired.<sup>3</sup> Id. at 5.

We have reviewed XTec’s proposal, and in our opinion, USSS did not act unreasonably in concluding that XTec’s design/technical approach was based on using equipment located in areas outside Washington. In fact, the diagram in the proposal includes two boxes identifying specific equipment; labels applicable to the entirety of each box read “[DELETED]” and “[DELETED],” respectively. In addition, the identifying narrative explaining the diagram specifically states that the XTec design and technical approach “fully uses the substantial base already in place at USSS and DHS” and that its “solution blends DHS’ current identity management and access control infrastructure with additional components to fully implement the” system being acquired here. AR, Tab M, XTec Proposal, at C-3. Further, as illustrated in the diagram, the box encompassing the protester’s system has a line connecting the system to DHS infrastructure located in [DELETED] and [DELETED], along with other various and sundry connections to other equipment through OneNet.<sup>4</sup> No other supporting equipment is depicted, except access to the additional equipment and operations located at [DELETED] and [DELETED].

XTec argues, however, that a reasonable review of the rest of its proposal shows that USSS’s interpretation was unreasonable. For example, XTec points out that the proposal in two places specifically stated “[t]he XTec Team . . . is pleased to propose a solution that fully supports the [USSS] White House Access Control Project: system design, installation and migration at protective facilities in the Washington, D.C. area as specified in [the] solicitation.” See AR, Tab M, XTec Proposal at A-1, C-1. To the extent these statements suggest that XTec’s system will be located in Washington, D.C. (which is not clear), these blanket statements do not demonstrate that XTec’s design/technical approach met the requirements. See Douglass Colony/Kenny Solar, JV, supra, at 4.

XTec also points out that the proposal also stated:

[DELETED]

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<sup>3</sup> The protester argues that this could be a desirable feature, even though not required by the RFP.

<sup>4</sup> The box on the diagram depicting XTec’s system only contains a picture of a desk top computer terminal.

Id. at C-11. Finally, XTec points to another diagram in its proposal, which it argues shows separate servers, and argues that its proposal did not otherwise include any features that would accompany a technical approach based on remote hosting. See AR, Tab M, XTec Proposal, at C-4. While we believe these portions of the proposal indicate that XTec's system includes a dedicated on-site server, none of the other sections of the proposal referenced by XTec clearly shows that XTec's entire system, including ancillary equipment, would be located, and operate in USSS facilities in the Washington, D.C. area.<sup>5</sup>

In sum, we find that the record reasonably supports the agency's evaluation of XTec's proposal.

The protest is denied.

Lynn H. Gibson  
general Counsel

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<sup>5</sup> XTec also challenges the high risk rating it received under the lifecycle costs evaluation factor. XTec asserts that this rating was unreasonable because it was based upon USSS's unreasonable interpretation of XTec's technical approach. Because we found the USSS reasonably evaluated XTec's technical approach, we need not consider XTec's arguments concerning its evaluation under the lifecycle costs factor.