



Decision

Matter of: Cashel Strategic, LLC--Reconsideration

File: B-424245.3

Date: October 9, 2026

Chris Kozlow, for the protester.

Sandeep N. Nandivada, Esq., Thomas Lee, Esq., and Jillian I. Stern, Esq., Morrison & Foerster LLP, for Centinel Public Partnerships, LLC, the intervenor

Erika L. Whelan Retta, Esq., Matney E. Rolfe, Esq., and LeDara Clark, Esq.,

Department of the Air Force, for the agency.

Todd C. Culliton, Esq., and Tania Calhoun, Esq., Office of the General Counsel, GAO, participated in the preparation of the decision.

DIGEST

Request for reconsideration is denied where a review of the record confirmed that the protester failed to demonstrate that it qualified as an interested party.

DECISION

Cashel Strategic, LLC, of Sheridan, Wyoming, requests reconsideration of our decision, *Cashel Strategic, LLC*, B-424245.2, July 24, 2026 (unpublished decision), dismissing its protest challenging the award of a contract to Centinel Public Partnerships, LLC, of Nashville, Tennessee, under request for proposals (RFP) No. AFCOBL-25-0001, issued by the Department of the Air Force for the leasing of on-base lodging facilities. Cashel argues that our decision erroneously determined that the firm was not an interested party.

We deny the request.

BACKGROUND

On August 6, 2025, the agency issued the RFP to establish a private-sector partner for a 50-year lease covering lodging facilities at multiple Air Force installations. Agency Report (AR), Tab 27, RFP at 5-6; Memorandum of Law (MOL) at 1. The evaluation would be conducted in two phases. In the first phase, the Air Force would evaluate offerors against minimum experience requirements on a pass or fail basis. RFP at 24. During the second phase, the agency would evaluate each offeror's statement of

qualifications against the following five factors: preliminary project concept; experience; fees, charges, and other financial returns; organizational capability; and financial capability. *Id.* at 27-40. Ultimately, award would be made to the offeror representing the best value to the agency. *Id.* at 47.

Eight offerors, including Cashel, submitted phase one proposals prior to the September 5, 2025, deadline. AR, Tab 87, Proposal Analysis Summary (PAS) at 1; AR, Tab 109, Phase One Source Selection Decision (SSD) at 1. The Air Force evaluated Cashel's proposal and multiple other proposals as meeting the minimum experience requirements and recommended that those offerors participate in phase two. AR, Tab 109, Phase One SSD at 2, 7.

Prior to the January 22, 2026, deadline for phase two proposals, five offerors, including Cashel, provided their statements of qualifications. AR, Tab 87, PAS at 10. The evaluation produced the following results:

	Centinel	Offeror #2	Offeror #3	Offeror #4	Cashel
Preliminary Project Concept	Outstanding	Excellent (-)	Acceptable (+)	Marginal	Unacceptable
Experience	Outstanding	Acceptable (+)	Excellent	Acceptable	Acceptable (-)
Fees	Excellent	Acceptable	Marginal	Marginal	Unacceptable
Organizational Capability	Outstanding	Acceptable (+)	Acceptable	Acceptable (-)	Unacceptable
Financial Capability	Excellent (-)	Acceptable	Acceptable (+)	Acceptable (-)	Unacceptable
Risk	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	High

Id.

After learning that Centinel's proposal was selected for award, Cashel filed the underlying protest with our Office. Cashel alleged that the procurement was tainted by various conflicts and improprieties. See Comments at 22-27. Principally, the protester asserted that the Air Force retained a third-party firm to provide advisory services as part of the procurement, and that this firm attempted to steer the award to Centinel. Protest at 50-57. Cashel also challenged the assignment of a weakness to its proposal under the preliminary project concept factor. *Id.* at 59.

Ultimately, our Office dismissed the protest because we concluded that Cashel failed to demonstrate a sufficient economic interest to be considered an interested party to raise its protest. *Cashel Strategic, LLC, supra* at 3-6. We explained that, even if our Office agreed with Cashel's allegations that the agency's evaluation process was biased in favor of Centinel, there were other offerors who would be in line for award ahead of the protester. *Id.* at 5. In this regard, we noted that Cashel's proposal was evaluated less favorably than three intervening offerors, and that Cashel did not raise any challenges to its own evaluation or the evaluations of the other offerors, which would realistically

make the firm's proposal next in line for award. *Id.* at 5-6. Thus, we dismissed the protest because Cashel did not qualify as an interested party.

DISCUSSION

Cashel argues that our decision contained legal error. Principally, Cashel argues that the decision improperly relied on the evaluation results to find that the firm was not an interested party. Req. for Recon. at 2-4, 6. Cashel argues that this was improper because the underlying protest demonstrated that those results were the product of a compromised "evaluation apparatus." *Id.* at 2. Cashel also argues that it did not need to demonstrate that it would have been "next-in-line" for award to be considered an interested party, so long as it demonstrated that the evaluation process was tainted. *Id.* at 5. Finally, Cashel argues that the underlying protest challenged the agency's evaluation of its proposal. *Id.* at 6.

Under our Bid Protest Regulations, to obtain reconsideration, the requesting party must set out the factual and legal grounds upon which reversal or modification of the decision is deemed warranted, specifying any errors of law made or information not previously considered. 4 C.F.R. § 21.14(c); *22nd Century Techs., Inc.--Recon.*, B-417478.5, Apr. 28, 2020, at 2.

We deny the request because the record confirms that Cashel was not an interested party. As noted in our decision, only an "interested party" may protest a federal procurement; that is, a protester must be an actual or prospective supplier whose direct economic interest would be affected by the award of a contract or failure to award a contract. 4 C.F.R. § 21.0. In order to be found an interested party, a protester must establish a reasonable possibility of competitive prejudice. *NCI Info. Sys., Inc.--Recon.*, B-419322.3, May 3, 2021, at 4; *Alascom, Inc.*, B-227074 *et al.*, Aug. 10, 1987, at 5 ("The protester bears the burden of showing that it suffered competitive prejudice[.]"). Competitive prejudice refers to a protester's duty to demonstrate that, but for the agency's action, it would have had a substantial chance of receiving award. *Science Applications Int'l Corp.*, B-423532, B-423532.2, July 28, 2025, at 7.

Cashel does not qualify as an interested party because the firm failed to demonstrate that it suffered any competitive prejudice resulting from the alleged improper agency actions. Most of Cashel's allegations attempt to prove an elaborate, byzantine conspiracy executed by a third-party advisory firm to steer the contract to Centinel. Protest at 50-58. While Cashel did challenge the assignment of a single weakness, the firm did not articulate that its proposal would have been evaluated favorably overall by neutral evaluators. See Comments at 58-64.

Significantly, Cashel never showed that its proposal satisfied most of the evaluation criteria under which its proposal was evaluated as "unacceptable." Absent such showing, we confirm that our Office has no basis to conclude that Cashel's proposal would have been competitive compared to the three intervening offerors, even if we recommended that the agency reevaluate proposals or exclude Centinel due to the

alleged conflicts.¹ See *TDF Corp.*, B-288392, B-288392.2, Oct. 23, 2001, at 9 (“Finally, even where a potential conflict of interest exists, we will not sustain a protest where the record demonstrates that there was no prejudice to the protester.”). Thus, we deny the request because our review confirms that Cashel failed to demonstrate that it qualified as an interested party.²

The request is denied.

Edda Emmanuelli Perez
General Counsel

¹ Moreover, the agency explains, and our review confirms, that the protester’s proposal was evaluated unfavorably because the proposal failed to provide critical details of its approach or contained confusing discrepancies. MOL at 11-12 (“This conspiracy is a distraction from the fundamental truth that this Offeror was just not competitive. The Protester was not chosen because the Agency found its proposal deficient in many aspects, which resulted in the Protester being ranked fifth out of five offerors. The Protester’s proposal can be summarized as a low-effort proposal that featured double the fees of its competitors and an AI-generated hotel floor plan[] which may or not have placed a toilet inside the kitchen.”).

² In its comments, Cashel stated the following:

Prejudice does not require [the firm] to show it would have won a fair competition. It requires a reasonable possibility that a fair competition would have produced a different result. A competition evaluated by personnel free from the documented conflicts, with decision documents authored by Government personnel, applying consistent standards to all offerors, could have produced a different result.

Comments at 5. This statement reflects a misunderstanding of the applicable standard. As noted above, a protester must demonstrate a *substantial chance* of receiving award (*i.e.*, show precisely how the proposal was misevaluated), not just infer that the result may have been different with neutral evaluators.