

Procurement Advisory No. 60 B

Management of Qualification Requirements for USDA

1. SUMMARY

This Procurement Advisory supersedes Procurement Advisory 60 Revision 01 dated March 20, 2008. It updates information concerning establishment and posting of USDA qualification requirements (QRs).

2. BACKGROUND

USDA activities have a variety of needs for which it is critical that vendors provide products of the highest quality and reliability. These products must be capable of being used with products already in USDA's inventory, and with products supplied by other vendors. Accordingly, qualification requirements may be defined for USDA Activities including systems of application, testing and record keeping, to assure that products, vendors, or manufacturers are tested and qualified prior to contract award. The imposition of a QR can restrict competition and as a result is strictly managed. If a QR does not appear on this listing, the requirement has not been approved by USDA and may neither be used nor enforced for USDA actions.

3. REFERENCES

Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) 48 CFR, Subpart 9.2.

Qualification requirement (QR) means a Government requirement for testing or other quality assurance demonstration that must be completed before award of a contract. QRs include, but are not limited to, the submission requirements for a qualified products list (QPL), qualified bidders list (QBL), or qualified manufacturers list (QML).

4. ACTIONS

For each contracting activity, the information in FAR Subpart 9.2 is to be prepared and submitted to the Head of Contracting Activity Designee (HCAD) for approval to establish or change a QR.

For each contracting activity, the HCAD will maintain information on the QRs established by USDA. The HCAD may not redelegate the authority to establish QRs under FAR Subpart 9.2.

QRs that are applicable to requirements managed or directed by USDA activities (such as wildfire suppression programs) must be approved and posted to <http://www.dm.usda.gov/procurement/business/qualifications.htm>. QRs not posted will not be enforceable by a USDA activity for its acquisitions or the acquisitions of others.

The HCAD is responsible for maintaining data that supports the need for a QR, and for making this data available to the public. The HCAD must submit the data to complete the listing matrix in adequate time for the Office of Procurement and Property Management (OPPM) to update the matrix on the Acquisition Toolkit. All data necessary for the update must be submitted at one time to the Chief, Procurement Policy Division (PPD). The posting will require approximately 20 calendar days to accomplish. In the case of deficient data, the HCAD will be notified of the deficiencies and the QR will not be posted.

If only one vendor (other than a mandatory source) is qualified to provide a product or service under a QR, the agency shall publish a notice at least annually in FedBizOpps to seek additional sources.

5. EXCLUSIONS

None applicable to this advisory.

6. CONTACTS

If you have questions or comments regarding this advisory please contact the OPPM Procurement Policy Division at procurement.policy@dm.usda.gov.

Procurement Advisories are issued by the Procurement Policy Division of the Office of Procurement and Property Management, Departmental Management, USDA, Dorothy Lilly, Chief, and posted on the USDA World Wide Web site at the following URL: <http://www.dm.usda.gov/procurement/policy/advisories.html>.

EXPIRATION DATE: This Advisory will not expire until canceled.

[END]