

Procurement Advisory No. 60 C

Management of Qualification Requirements for USDA

1. SUMMARY

This Procurement Advisory supersedes Procurement Advisory 60 B dated April 2, 2009. 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 Mission Area, the information in FAR Subpart 9.2 is to be prepared and submitted to the Under Secretary, who may re-delegate no lower than a subagency head (e.g. Chief of the FS, Administrator Farm Service Agency) for approval to establish or change a QR. Copies of the delegations must be provided to the Chief, Procurement Policy Division (PPD) as do any written justifications approved per FAR 9.202(a)(1).

For each Mission Area, the Under Secretary will maintain information on the QRs established by USDA. The Under Secretary or subagency head may not re-delegate 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.

Each Mission Area is responsible for maintaining data that supports the need for a QR, and for making this data available to the public. The Under Secretary must submit the data to complete the listing matrix in adequate time for the Office of Contracting and Procurement (OCP) 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. The posting

will require approximately 20 calendar days to accomplish. In the case of deficient data, the Under Secretary 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 OCP Procurement Policy Division at procurement.policy@dm.usda.gov.

Procurement Advisories are issued by the Procurement Policy Division of the Office of Contracting and Procurement, Departmental Administration, USDA and posted on the USDA World Wide Web site at the following URL: <https://www.dm.usda.gov/procurement/policy/advisories.htm>.

EXPIRATION DATE: This Advisory will not expire until canceled.

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