

§ 635.113 Bid opening and bid tabulations.

(a) All bids received in accordance with the terms of the advertisement shall be publicly opened and announced either item by item or by total amount. If any bid received is not read aloud, the name of the bidder and the reason for not reading the bid aloud shall be publicly announced at the letting. Negotiation with contractors, during the period following the opening of bids and before the award of the contract shall not be permitted.

(b) The SHA shall prepare and forward tabulations of bids to the Division Administrator. These tabulations shall be certified by a responsible SHA official and shall show:

(1) Bid item details for at least the low three acceptable bids and

(2) The total amounts of all other acceptable bids.

§ 635.114 Award of contract and concurrence in award.

(a) Federal-aid contracts shall be awarded only on the basis of the lowest responsive bid submitted by a bidder meeting the criteria of responsibility as may have been established by the SHA in accordance with § 635.110. Award shall be within the time established by the SHA and subject to the prior concurrence of the Division Administrator.

(b) The SHA shall formally request concurrence by the Division Administrator in the award of all Federal-aid contracts. Concurrence in award by the Division Administrator is a prerequisite to Federal participation in construction costs and is considered as authority to proceed with construction, unless specifically stated otherwise. Concurrence in award shall be formally approved and shall only be given after receipt and review of the tabulation of bids.

(c) Following the opening of bids, the SHA shall examine the unit bid prices of the apparent low bid for reasonable conformance with the engineer's estimated prices. A bid with extreme variations from the engineer's estimate, or where obvious unbalancing of unit prices has occurred, shall be thoroughly evaluated.

(d) Where obvious unbalanced bid items exist, the SHA's decision to award or reject a bid shall be supported by written justification. A bid found to be mathematically unbalanced, but not found to be materially unbalanced, may be awarded.

(e) When a low bid is determined to be both mathematically and materially unbalanced, the Division Administrator will take appropriate steps to protect the Federal interest. This action may be concurrence in a SHA decision not to award the contract. If, however, the SHA decides to proceed with the award and requests FHWA concurrence, the Division Administrator's action may range from nonconcurrence to concurrence with contingency conditions limiting Federal participation.

(f) If the SHA determines that the lowest bid is not responsive or the bidder is not responsible, it shall so notify and obtain the Division Administrator's concurrence before making an award to the next lowest bidder.

(g) If the SHA rejects or declines to read or consider a low bid on the grounds that it is not responsive because of noncompliance with a requirement which was not clearly identified in the bidding documents, it shall submit justification for its action. If such justification is not considered by the Division Administrator to be sufficient, concurrence will not be given to award to another bidder on the contract at the same letting.

(h) Any proposal by the SHA to reject all bids received for a Federal-aid contract shall be submitted to the Division Administrator for concurrence, accompanied by adequate justification.

(i) In the event the low bidder selected by the SHA for contract award forfeits the bid guarantee, the SHA may dispose of the amounts of such forfeited guarantees in accordance with its normal practices.

(j) A copy of the executed contract between the SHA and the construction contractor should be furnished to the Division Administrator as soon as practicable after execution.

§ 635.115 Agreement estimate.

(a) Following the award of contract, an agreement estimate based on the contract unit prices and estimated

quantities shall be prepared by the SHA and submitted to the Division Administrator as soon as practicable for use in the preparation of the project agreement. The agreement estimate shall also include the actual or best estimated costs of any other items to be included in the project agreement.

(b) An agreement estimate shall be submitted by the SHA for each force account project (see 23 CFR part 635, subpart B) when the plans and specifications are submitted to the Division Administrator for approval. It shall normally be based on the estimated quantities and the unit prices agreed upon in advance between the SHA and the Division Administrator, whether the work is to be done by the SHA or by a local public agency. Such agreed unit prices shall constitute a commitment as the basis for Federal participation in the cost of the project. The unit prices shall be based upon the estimated actual cost of performing the work but shall in no case exceed unit prices currently being obtained by competitive bidding on comparable highway construction work in the same general locality. In special cases involving unusual circumstances, the estimate may be based upon the estimated costs for labor, materials, equipment rentals, and supervision to complete the work rather than upon agreed unit prices. This paragraph shall not be applicable to agreement estimates for railroad and utility force account work.

§ 635.116 Subcontracting and contractor responsibilities.

(a) Contracts for projects shall specify the minimum percentage of work that a contractor must perform with its own organization. This percentage shall be not less than 30 percent of the total original contract price excluding any identified specialty items. Specialty items may be performed by subcontract and the amount of any such specialty items so performed may be deducted from the total original contract before computing the amount of work required to be performed by the contractor's own organization. The contract amount upon which the above requirement is computed includes the cost of materials and manufactured

products which are to be purchased or produced by the contractor under the contract provisions.

(b) The SHA shall not permit any of the contract work to be performed under a subcontract, unless such arrangement has been authorized by the SHA in writing. Prior to authorizing a subcontract, the SHA shall assure that each subcontract is evidenced in writing and that it contains all pertinent provisions and requirements of the prime contract. The Division Administrator may permit the SHA to satisfy the subcontract assurance requirements by concurrence in a SHA process which requires the contractor to certify that each subcontract arrangement will be in the form of a written agreement containing all the requirements and pertinent provisions of the prime contract. Prior to the Division Administrator's concurrence, the SHA must demonstrate that it has an acceptable plan for monitoring such certifications.

(c) To assure that all work (including subcontract work) is performed in accordance with the contract requirements, the contractor shall be required to furnish:

(1) A competent superintendent or supervisor who is employed by the firm, has full authority to direct performance of the work in accordance with the contract requirements, and is in charge of all construction operations (regardless of who performs the work), and;

(2) Such other of its own organizational resources (supervision, management, and engineering services) as the SHA contracting officer determines are necessary to assure the performance of the contract.

§ 635.117 Labor and employment.

(a) No construction work shall be performed by convict labor at the work site or within the limits of any Federal-aid highway construction project from the time of award of the contract or the start of work on force account until final acceptance of the work by the SHA unless it is labor performed by convicts who are on parole, supervised release, or probation.

(b) No procedures or requirement shall be imposed by any State which