

Federal Acquisition Regulation

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Small items may be returned by mail, postage prepaid.

(4) Samples that are to be retained for inspection purposes in connection with deliveries shall be transmitted to the inspecting activity concerned, with instructions to retain the sample until completion of the contract or until disposition instructions are furnished.

(5) Where samples are consumed or their usefulness is impaired by tests, they will be disposed of as scrap unless the bidder requests their return.

[48 FR 42171, Sept. 19, 1983, as amended at 50 FR 1738, Jan. 11, 1985; 50 FR 52429, Dec. 23, 1985; 67 FR 13055, Mar. 20, 2002]

14.202-5 Descriptive literature.

(a) *Policy.* Contracting officers must not require bidders to furnish descriptive literature unless it is needed before award to determine whether the products offered meet the specification and to establish exactly what the bidder proposes to furnish.

(b) *Justification.* The contracting officer must document in the contract file the reasons why product acceptability cannot be determined without the submission of descriptive literature, except when the contract specifications require submission.

(c) *Requirements of invitation for bids.*

(1) The invitation must clearly state—

(i) What descriptive literature the bidders must furnish;

(ii) The purpose for requiring the literature;

(iii) The extent of its consideration in the evaluation of bids; and

(iv) The rules that will apply if a bidder fails to furnish the literature before bid opening or if the literature provided does not comply with the requirements of the invitation.

(2) If bidders must furnish descriptive literature, see 14.201-6(p).

(d) *Waiver of requirement for descriptive literature.* (1) The contracting officer may waive the requirement for descriptive literature if—

(i) The bidder states in the bid that the product being offered is the same as a product previously or currently being furnished to the contracting activity; and

(ii) The contracting officer determines that the product offered by the bidder complies with the specification

requirements of the current invitation for bids. When the contracting officer waives the requirement, see 14.201-6(p)(2).

(2) When descriptive literature is not necessary and a waiver of literature requirements of a specification has been authorized, the contracting officer must include a statement in the invitation that, despite the requirements of the specifications, descriptive literature will not be required.

(3) If the solicitation provides for a waiver, a bidder may submit a bid on the basis of either the descriptive literature furnished with the bid or a previously furnished product. If the bid is submitted on one basis, the bidder may not have it considered on the other basis after bids are opened.

(e) *Unsolicited descriptive literature.* If descriptive literature is furnished when it is not required by the invitation for bids, the procedures set forth in 14.202-4(f) must be followed.

[67 FR 13055, Mar. 20, 2002]

14.202-6 Final review of invitations for bids.

Each invitation for bids shall be thoroughly reviewed before issuance to detect and correct discrepancies or ambiguities that could limit competition or result in the receipt of nonresponsive bids. Contracting officers are responsible for the reviews.

14.202-7 Facsimile bids.

(a) Unless prohibited or otherwise restricted by agency procedures, contracting officers may authorize facsimile bids (see 14.201-6(v)). In determining whether or not to authorize facsimile bids, the contracting officer shall consider factors such as—

(1) Anticipated bid size and volume;

(2) Urgency of the requirement;

(3) Frequency of price changes;

(4) Availability, reliability, speed, and capacity of the receiving facsimile equipment; and

(5) Adequacy of administrative procedures and controls for receiving, identifying, recording, and safeguarding facsimile bids, and ensuring their timely delivery to the bids opening location.

(b) If facsimile bids are authorized, contracting officers may, after the date

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set for bid opening, request the apparently successful offeror to provide the complete original signed bid.

[54 FR 48983, Nov. 28, 1989, as amended at 64 FR 51838, Sept. 24, 1999]

14.202-8 Electronic bids.

In accordance with subpart 4.5, contracting officers may authorize use of electronic commerce for submission of bids. If electronic bids are authorized, the solicitation shall specify the electronic commerce method(s) that bidders may use.

[60 FR 34737, July 3, 1995]

14.203 Methods of soliciting bids.

14.203-1 Transmittal to prospective bidders.

Invitations for bids or presolicitation notices must be provided in accordance with 5.102. When a contracting office is located in the United States, any solicitation sent to a prospective bidder located outside the United States shall be sent by electronic data interchange or air mail if security classification permits.

[68 FR 28081, May 22, 2003, as amended at 68 FR 43856, July 24, 2003]

14.203-2 Dissemination of information concerning invitations for bids.

(a) Procedures concerning display of invitations for bids in a public place, information releases to newspapers and trade journals, paid advertisements, and synopsis through the Governmentwide point of entry (GPE) are set forth in 5.101 and Subpart 5.2.

(b) For procedures that apply to publicizing notices through the GPE to determine whether commercial sources are available, as prescribed by OMB Circular A-76, see 5.205(e) and 7.303(b).

[66 FR 27413, May 16, 2001]

14.203-3 Master solicitation.

The master solicitation is provided to potential sources who are requested to retain it for continued and repetitive use. Individual solicitations must reference the date of the current master solicitation and identify any changes. The contracting officer must—

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(a) Make available copies of the master solicitation on request; and

(b) Provide the cognizant contract administration activity a current copy of the master solicitation.

[66 FR 2128, Jan. 10, 2001]

14.204 Records of invitations for bids and records of bids.

(a) Each contracting office shall retain a record of each invitation that it issues and each abstract or record of bids. Contracting officers shall review and utilize the information available in connection with subsequent acquisitions of the same or similar items.

(b) The file for each invitation shall show the distribution that was made and the date the invitation was issued. The names and addresses of prospective bidders who requested the invitation and were not included on the original solicitation list shall be added to the list and made a part of the record.

14.205 Presolicitation notices.

In lieu of initially forwarding complete bid sets, the contracting officer may send presolicitation notices to concerns. The notice shall—

(a) Specify the final date for receipt of requests for a complete bid set;

(b) Briefly describe the requirement and furnish other essential information to enable concerns to determine whether they have an interest in the invitation; and

(c) Normally not include drawings, plans, and specifications. The return date of the notice must be sufficiently in advance of the mailing date of the invitation for bids to permit an accurate estimate of the number of bid sets required. Bid sets shall be sent to concerns that request them in response to the notice.

[68 FR 43856, July 24, 2003]

14.206 [Reserved]

14.207 Pre-bid conference.

A pre-bid conference may be used, generally in a complex acquisition, as a means of briefing prospective bidders and explaining complicated specifications and requirements to them as early as possible after the invitation has been issued and before the bids are