

Northern Rockies (R1) Summary of Questions, Answers, Clarifications 2010 Engine, Support Tender, Heavy Equipment w/Water solicitations

Solicitation-Business

Q: How will performance evaluations from the previous 3 years be considered?

A: E.2, Evaluations discusses past performance as a basis for award; "Past performance is a measure of the degree to which the customer(s) has been satisfied in the past, and complied with Federal, State, and local laws and regulations and will be based on evaluations received for the quoter on incident and other related experience within the past 36 months."

Q: What is E-Verify? Do I have to comply with this requirement?

A: Employment Eligibility Verification, also known as E-Verify, is required by this solicitation. FAR 52.222-54 (b) Provides instruction on enrollment and verification requirements. Access E-verify information by: "googling" E-Verify, or go to the Department of Homeland Security site at www.dhs.gov

Q: Regarding the FAR clause 52.222-54 – Employment Eligibility Verification (E-Verify); when reading the clause it states that a contract is considered exempt if any one of the following apply; It is for fewer than 120 days, it is valued at less than \$100,000, or the work is done outside of the United States. The solicitation states "The dollar limitation for any individual order is \$100,000." does that mean the E-Verify clause does not apply?

A: The individual dollar amount stated in the solicitation is per invoice, not the cumulated dollar amount for the agreement period. These are three year awards, and it is a possibility that the cumulated dollar amount could go over the simplified acquisition threshold - \$100,000, so E-Verify does apply.

Q: The E-Verify booklet says we do not have to verify every employee in our company but only the employees who are new hires and who are working under this agreement, do we need to register the lowboy operated under this clause?

A: the 2010 solicitation allows for the possibility that the camp may keep the lowboy if attached and only transporting the equipment that it transported to camp. The VIPR award would be the payment tool in this case. So with that change your lowboy operator will no longer be considered general company administration, but be actually functioning under hire with this agreement – and would need to be registered in the Employment Eligibility Verification program.

Q: Will the HUBZone and Service Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business (SDVOSB) set-aside preference also be reflected in the dispatch priority list (DPL)?

A: Yes, the DPL, both geographic area and dispatch zone lists, will reflect the HUBZone and SDVOSB set-aside preference.

Q: The advantages used to establish dispatch priority for equipment was changed, why?

A: After review of the 2007 solicitation and awards, advantage points were reviewed nationally and adjusted to better reflect what the best value to the Government is. All equipment being placed on a DPL meets or exceeds minimal specifications. Attributes of equipment continue to be taken into consideration but no longer weigh as heavily in comparison to price.

Q: Our HUBZone application is being processed, but we may not be certified by the close of the solicitation on April 16, would we be able to update our status later?

A: The Code of Federal Regulations, specifically 13 CFR 126.601 requires "A firm must be a qualified HUBZone SBC at the time of its initial offer and at the time of award in order to be eligible for a HUBZone contract." Late offers will not be accepted; HUBZone certification must be complete at time of offer and offer received in VIPR prior to the close of the solicitation.

Q: What if I've submitted everything into VIPR but I find out I made a mistake on one of my forms, am I done for three years?

A: If the solicitation is still open, you can correct your form (be sure to "add" your correct form in your attachments and "delete" the incorrect form) and resubmit your FULL package. Do not resubmit a partial package, VIPR will replace everything currently held with your new submittal – so you must resubmit a full package. If the solicitation has closed, the contracting officer can allow corrections through a process called negotiations.

Solicitation – Specifications

Q: Do the required number of employees for each piece of equipment need to be verified before close of business on April 16, 2009?

A: No, D.16, Pre-Season Inspections states "Personnel verification required to provide minimal staffing must be submitted to the above mentioned address or FAX prior to accepting a dispatch."

Q: Is it acceptable to put a 1 inch reducer on a 1 ½ inch wye and use it as a 1 inch wye?

A: A contractor may do this as long as the contractor has the 1 ½ inch gated wye and reducers to 1 inch, above and beyond the other complement requirements. It is not acceptable for contractors to use a required part of the complement to meet two requirements. Eg, if it calls for two 1 ½ inch gated wyes and two 1 inch gated wyes and you want to use four 1 ½ gated wyes for the requirements, this is acceptable as long as you have the extra reducers to 1 inch for the two 1 ½ inch down to 1 inch.

Q: D.2.3 states in part "The contractor shall provide any accessories needed to keep the radio in an operational condition, including batteries, for the length of the incident." Will we no longer receive batteries for our radios at fire camp? D.7.1.2 does say the Government may provide them.

A: Radio communication is a critical safety issue; radios must be operational at all times. If a camp is not available, the vendor will be responsible to provide batteries sufficient to comply

with this requirement. If a camp is established the Government may provide certain incidental consumable goods such as replacement radio batteries at no cost.

Q: On the drop down menu for the type of suspension there is only airbag and a vocational duty selection. Our water tender is a walking beam suspension, so what would I choose?

A: Industry accepts the term "vocational duty" to mean heavy truck suspension, including; walking beam, spring, and trailing arm with 2 airbags per axle. Please see Exhibit A, Definitions, "suspension" for further clarification.

Q: According to D.2.1.2.2 Wildland Water Tenders, "All three-axle water tenders shall have a GVWR and GAWR capable of handling 2500 Gallons." Does this mean that a Type 3 water tender (1000 to 2499) cannot be configured with three axles?

A: The statement "All three axle water tenders shall have a GVWR and GAWR capable of handling 2500 gallons." does not preclude accepting a three axle truck whose legal capacity is less. There by default, and so long as all other specifications are met, award should not be withheld.

Q: In D.2.1.2 Equipment Requirements, the solicitation states that "All equipment inventory shall be permanently marked with vendor/company identification" Does that mark need to be specific to a particular engine or can it be for the company?

A: A Permanent mark, such as a punch mark or symbol engraved into the fitting so that the paint does not wear off through the summer does not need to be equipment specific, but may be applied to all company equipment. The intent is to try and return your companies own complements if possible.

Q: Double shifting is now available with this agreement, do I have to provide a full second crew?

A: If your company has the ability to provide a complete second crew then you may mark yes. If you are not able, or choose not to provide a second crew, mark your resource formatta form accordingly. are incapable, or do not want to provide a second crew then please mark no. No, you are not required to provide a full second crew for a double shift option. On your formatta form for your resources/equipment you can list whether or not you have the capability of providing a second full crew for a double shift, you may state "no" here.

Q: Please clarify how the pump pressure testing is accomplished.

A: A 1.5 inch Hose line Tee with a pressure gauge installed will be placed at one of the discharges closest to the pump. A 1.5 hose cap with a precision machined straight edged hole will be installed and will provide the most accurate pressure reading at required volume as any field testing.

The Type 4-6 Engines and Type 1 and 2 Skidgines will be tested with a .520 straight edged orifice.

Type 3 engines will be tested with a .716 straight edged orifice.

Type 3 and 4 Skidgines and all Pumper cats and Softracks will be tested with a .441 straight edged orifice.

The same 1.5 inch hose line tee with a pressure gauge will be used to test Water Tenders. Due to the dynamic pressure required to overcome the static pressure in the 1.5 inch barrel, a lower reading of PSI at the pressure gauge has a greater true pressure. Using a 1.140 square edged orifice, the pressure gauge will have a reading of 45 PSI when the discharge stream has an actual value of 50 PSI at 200 gallons a minute. This test will be performed on the Type 2 and 3 Tenders.

Using a 1.340 square edged orifice, the pressure gauge will have a reading of 30 PSI when the discharge stream has an actual value of 50 PSI at 300 gallons a minute. This test will be performed on the Type 1 Tenders.

Q: D.2.1.2 says all pumps must have a discharge pressure gauge; does this include the water tenders?

A: Yes

Q: What are the requirements for a spare tire?

A: D.2.2.1.1 states "All enginesshall have a full size spare tire with a minimum of 4/32 tread and wheel securely mounted to the vehicle. The spare tire shall be easily accessible."

Q: Did the capacity's change for the water tenders?

A: Yes; the Type 1 support water tender minimum capacity is 4000 gallons, no maximum. The Type 2 support water tender now has a minimum capacity of 2500 gallons and a maximum capacity of 3999 gallons. The Type 3 support water tender capacity has not changed.

Miscellaneous

Q: I have a water tender. If I worked 14 days I will be over on DOT consecutive work days and hours on my log book. Must I wait one day before I can drive home?

A: It is the vendor's responsibility to comply with applicable laws, rules, regulations. Questions regarding DOT regulations should be directed to the Department of Transportation for clarification. If you have been released from an assignment, but feel you may not legally drive, and if camp were still available, you may be allowed to R&R in camp. This is not compensable time.

Q: Water tender operators now only need RT130, Fire Safety Refresher training; if I'm directed to deliver water to the fire line, will I be supervised by qualified fire personnel?

A: Yes

Q: Will a contractor be able to sell their business?

A: A novation of the awarded agreement is legal; it must be in the Governments best interest, and business requirements must be met by the proposed company purchaser.

Q: Will we be able to self status in the dispatch program ROSS?

A: Each dispatch center has established protocols; please check with your dispatch center to determine if self status is available.

Q: Is it the responsibility of the inspection provider or the vendor to assure the inspection reports are submitted to the Contracting Officer on time?

A: Although the inspection provider may forward the information to the CO, it is ultimately the vendor's responsibility to ensure all paperwork is submitted timely.

Q: If a vendor is asked to leave equipment behind on a fire line, what is the procedure for replacing the equipment?

A: Section D.7.1.3 c. states, "If the resource is being demobilized, no government hose or complement is issued. The Contractor may present a signed AD-107 form and a receipt for their Contractor-owned hose and complements left during performance of the work to the Incident Procurement Unit Leader or Contracting Officer. The amount of reimbursement will be negotiated and may be paid as an adjustment to the invoice." Contractors may also file a claim with the incident host agency for compensation for equipment left on the incident, documentation must be included as part of the claim package.

Q: Do we need to pull into weigh stations en route to fires, specifically Type 6 engines?

A: All vehicles weighing in excess of 10,000 lbs must pull into weigh stations.

Q: Does the drug testing requirement apply to me if I own the truck and am the driver?

A: Yes, drug testing and medical certification requirements apply to all drivers requiring CDL's to operate the vehicle.