

(4) A potential offeror seeking qualification shall be promptly informed as to whether qualification is attained and, in the event it is not, promptly furnished specific reasons why qualification was not attained.

(b) When justified under the circumstances, the agency activity responsible for establishing a qualification requirement shall submit to the competition advocate for the procuring activity responsible for purchasing the item subject to the qualification requirement, a determination that it is unreasonable to specify the standards for qualification which a prospective offeror (or its product) must satisfy. After considering any comments of the competition advocate reviewing the determination, the head of the procuring activity may waive the requirements of 9.202(a)(1)(ii) through (4) above for up to 2 years with respect to the item subject to the qualification requirement. A copy of the waiver shall be furnished to the head of the agency or other official responsible for actions under 9.202(a)(1). The waiver authority provided in this paragraph does not apply with respect to qualification requirements contained in a QPL, QML, or QBL.

(c) If a potential offeror can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the contracting officer that the potential offeror (or its product) meets the standards established for qualification or can meet them before the date specified for award of the contract, a potential offeror may not be denied the opportunity to submit and have considered an offer for a contract solely because the potential offeror—

(1) Is not on a QPL, QML, or QBL maintained by the Department of Defense (DOD) or the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA); or

(2) Has not been identified as meeting a qualification requirement established after October 19, 1984, by DOD or NASA; or

(3) Has not been identified as meeting a qualification requirement established by a civilian agency (not including NASA).

(d) The procedures in subpart 19.6 for referring matters to the Small Business Administration are not manda-

tory on the contracting officer when the basis for a referral would involve a challenge by the offeror to either the validity of the qualification requirement or the offeror's compliance with such requirement.

(e) The contracting officer need not delay a proposed award in order to provide a potential offeror with an opportunity to demonstrate its ability to meet the standards specified for qualification. In addition, when approved by the head of an agency or designee, a procurement need not be delayed in order to comply with 9.202(a).

(f) Within 7 years following enforcement of a QPL, QML, or QBL by DOD or NASA, or within 7 years after any qualification requirement was originally established by a civilian agency other than NASA, the qualification requirement shall be examined and revalidated in accordance with the requirements of 9.202(a). For DOD and NASA, qualification requirements, other than QPL's, QML's, and QBL's, shall be examined and revalidated within 7 years after establishment of the requirement under 9.202(a). Any periods for which a waiver under 9.202(b) is in effect shall be excluded in computing the 7 years within which review and revalidation must occur.

[50 FR 35476, Aug. 30, 1985, as amended at 53 FR 34227, Sept. 2, 1988]

9.203 QPL's, QML's, and QBL's.

(a) Qualification and listing in a QPL, QML, or QBL is the process by which products are obtained from manufacturers or distributors, examined and tested for compliance with specification requirements, or manufacturers or potential offerors, are provided an opportunity to demonstrate their abilities to meet the standards specified for qualification. The names of successful products, manufacturers, or potential offerors are included on lists evidencing their status. Generally, qualification is performed in advance and independently of any specific acquisition action. After qualification, the products, manufacturers, or potential offerors are included in a Federal or Military QPL, QML, or QBL. (See 9.202(a)(2) with regard to any product, manufacturer, or potential offeror not yet included on an applicable list.)

(b) Specifications requiring a qualified product are included in the following publications:

(1) GSA Index of Federal Specifications, Standards and Commercial Item Descriptions.

(2) Department of Defense Acquisition Streamlining and Standardization Information System (ASSIST) at (<http://assist.daps.dla.mil>).

(c) Instructions concerning qualification procedures are included in the following publications:

(1) Federal Standardization Manual, FSPM-0001.

(2) Defense Standardization Manual 4120.24-M, Appendix 2, as amended by Military Standards 961 and 962.

(d) The publications listed in paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section are sold to the public. The publications in paragraphs (b)(1) and (c)(1) of this section may be obtained from the addressee in 11.201(d)(1). The publications in paragraphs (b)(2) and (c)(2) of this section may be obtained from the addressee in 11.201(d)(2).

[50 FR 35476, Aug. 30, 1985, as amended at 53 FR 17857, May 18, 1988; 63 FR 34062, June 22, 1998; 67 FR 6120, Feb. 8, 2002; 71 FR 227, Jan. 3, 2006]

9.204 Responsibilities for establishment of a qualification requirement.

The responsibilities of agency activities that establish qualification requirements include the following:

(a) Arranging publicity for the qualification requirements. If active competition on anticipated future qualification requirements is likely to be fewer than two manufacturers or the products of two manufacturers, the activity responsible for establishment of the qualification requirements must—

(1) Periodically furnish through the Governmentwide point of entry (GPE) a notice seeking additional sources or products for qualification unless the contracting officer determines that such publication would compromise the national security.

(2) Bear the cost of conducting the specified testing and evaluation (excluding the costs associated with producing the item or establishing the production, quality control, or other system to be tested and evaluated) for

a small business concern or a product manufactured by a small business concern which has met the standards specified for qualification and which could reasonably be expected to compete for a contract for that requirement. However, such costs may be borne only if it is determined in accordance with agency procedures that such additional qualified sources or products are likely to result in cost savings from increased competition for future requirements sufficient to amortize the costs incurred by the agency within a reasonable period of time, considering the duration and dollar value of anticipated future requirements. A prospective contractor requesting the United States to bear testing and evaluation costs must certify as to its status as a small business concern under section 3 of the Small Business Act in order to receive further consideration.

(b) Qualifying products that meet specification requirements.

(c) Listing manufacturers and suppliers whose products are qualified in accordance with agency procedures.

(d) Furnishing QPL's, OML's, or QBL's or the qualification requirements themselves to prospective offerors and the public upon request (see 9.202(a)(2)(i) above).

(e) Clarifying, as necessary, qualification requirements.

(f) In appropriate cases, when requested by the contracting officer, providing concurrence in a decision not to enforce a qualification requirement for a solicitation.

(g) Withdrawing or omitting qualification of a listed product, manufacturer or offeror, as necessary.

(h) Advising persons furnished any list of products, manufacturers or offerors meeting a qualification requirement and suppliers whose products are on any such list that—

(1) The list does not constitute endorsement of the product, manufacturer, or other source by the Government;

(2) The products or sources listed have been qualified under the latest applicable specification;

(3) The list may be amended without notice;