

**§ 661.13 Grantee responsibility.**

(a) The grantee shall adhere to the Buy America clause set forth in its grant contract with FTA.

(b) The grantee shall include in its bid or request for proposal (RFP) specification for procurement within the scope of this part an appropriate notice of the Buy America provision. Such specifications shall require, as a condition of responsiveness, that the bidder or offeror submit with the bid or offer a completed Buy America certificate in accordance with §§ 661.6 or 661.12 of this part, as appropriate.

(1) A bidder or offeror who has submitted an incomplete Buy America certificate or an incorrect certificate of noncompliance through inadvertent or clerical error (but not including failure to sign the certificate, submission of certificates of both compliance and non-compliance, or failure to submit any certification), may submit to the FTA Chief Counsel within ten (10) days of bid opening or submission of a final offer, a written explanation of the circumstances surrounding the submission of the incomplete or incorrect certification in accordance with 28 U.S.C. 1746, sworn under penalty of perjury, stating that the submission resulted from inadvertent or clerical error. The bidder or offeror will also submit evidence of intent, such as information about the origin of the product, invoices, or other working documents. The bidder or offeror will simultaneously send a copy of this information to the FTA grantee.

(i) The FTA Chief Counsel may request additional information from the bidder or offeror, if necessary. The grantee may not make a contract award until the FTA Chief Counsel issues his/her determination, except as provided in § 661.15(m).

(ii) [Reserved]

(2) For negotiated procurements, compliance with the Buy America requirements shall be determined on the basis of the certification submitted with the final offer or final revised proposal. However, where a grantee awards on the basis of initial proposals without discussion, the certification submitted with the initial proposal shall control.

(3) Certification based on ignorance of the proper application of the Buy America requirements is not an inadvertent or clerical error.

(c) Whether or not a bidder or offeror certifies that it will comply with the applicable requirement, such bidder or offeror is bound by its original certification (in the case of a sealed bidding procurement) or its certification submitted with its final offer (in the case of a negotiated procurement) and is not permitted to change its certification after bid opening or submission of a final offer. Where a bidder or offeror certifies that it will comply with the applicable Buy America requirements, the bidder, offeror, or grantee is not eligible for a waiver of those requirements.

[56 FR 932, Jan. 9, 1991, as amended at 68 FR 9799, Feb. 28, 2003; 71 FR 14117, Mar. 21, 2006]

**§ 661.15 Investigation procedures.**

(a) It is presumed that a bidder or offeror who has submitted the required Buy America certificate is complying with the Buy America provision. A false certification is a criminal act in violation of 18 U.S.C. 1001.

(b) Any party may petition FTA to investigate the compliance of a successful bidder or offeror with the bidder's or offeror's certification. That party ("the petitioner") must include in the petition a statement of the grounds of the petition and any supporting documentation. If FTA determines that the information presented in the petition indicates that the presumption in paragraph (a) of this section has been overcome, FTA will initiate an investigation.

(c) In appropriate circumstances, FTA may determine on its own to initiate an investigation without receiving a petition from a third party.

(d) When FTA determines under paragraph (b) or (c) of this section to conduct an investigation, it requests that the grantee require the successful bidder or offeror to document its compliance with its Buy America certificate. The successful bidder or offeror has the burden of proof to establish that it is in compliance. Documentation of compliance is based on the specific circumstances of each investigation, and

FTA will specify the documentation required in each case.

(e) The grantee shall reply to the request under paragraph (d) of this section within 15 working days of the request. The investigated party may correspond directly with FTA during the course of investigation, if it informs the grantee that it intends to do so, and if the grantee agrees to such action in writing. The grantee must inform FTA, in writing, that the investigated party will respond directly to FTA. An investigated party may provide confidential or proprietary information (see paragraph (l) of this section) directly to FTA while providing other information required to be submitted as part of the investigation through the grantee.

(f) Any additional information requested or required by FTA must be submitted within 5 working days after the receipt of such request unless specifically exempted by FTA.

(g) The grantee's reply (or that of the bidder or offeror) will be transmitted to the petitioner. The petitioner may submit comments on the reply to FTA within 10 working days after receipt of the reply. The grantee and the low bidder or offeror will be furnished with a copy of the petitioner's comments, and their comments must be received by FTA within 5 working days after receipt of the petitioner's comments.

(h) The failure of a party to comply with the time limits stated in this section may result in resolution of the investigation without consideration of untimely filed comments.

(i) During the course of an investigation, with appropriate notification to affected parties, FTA may conduct site visits of manufacturing facilities and final assembly locations as it considers appropriate.

(j) FTA will, upon request, make available to any interested party information bearing on the substance of the investigation which has been submitted by the petitioner, interested parties or grantees, except to the extent that withholding of information is permitted or required by law or regulation.

(k) If a party submitting information considers that the information submitted contains proprietary material

which should be withheld, a statement advising FTA of this fact may be included, and the alleged proprietary information must be identified wherever it appears. Any comments on the information provided shall be submitted within a maximum of ten days.

(l) For purposes of paragraph (j) of this section, confidential or proprietary material is any material or data whose disclosure could reasonably be expected to cause substantial competitive harm to the party claiming that the material is confidential or proprietary.

(m) When a petition for investigation has been filed before award, the grantee will not make an award before the resolution of the investigation, unless the grantee determines that:

(1) The items to be procured are urgently required;

(2) Delivery of performance will be unduly delayed by failure to make the award promptly; or

(3) Failure to make prompt award will otherwise cause undue harm to the grantee or the Federal Government.

(n) In the event that the grantee determines that the award is to be made during the pendency of an investigation, the grantee will notify FTA before making such award. FTA reserves the right not to participate in the funding of any contract awarded during the pendency of an investigation.

(o) Initial decisions by FTA will be in written form. Reconsideration of an initial decision of FTA may be requested by any party involved in an investigation. FTA will only reconsider a decision only if the party requesting reconsideration submits new matters of fact or points of law that were not known or available to the party during the investigation. A request for reconsideration of a decision of FTA shall be filed not later than ten (10) working days after the initial written decision. A request for reconsideration will be subject to the procedures in this section consistent with the need for prompt resolution of the matter.

[56 FR 932, Jan. 9, 1991, as amended at 71 FR 14118, Mar. 21, 2006]