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**United States Government Accountability Office
Washington, DC 20548**

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Decision

Matter of: URS Federal Technical Services, Inc.

File: B-405922.2; B-405922.3

Date: May 9, 2012

Terry L. Elling, Esq., and Oliya S. Zamaray, Esq., Holland & Knight LLP, for the protester.

Gary L. Rigney, Esq., for Systems Studies and Simulation, Inc., the intervenor.
Erin Hufstetler, Esq., and Lee W. Crook, III, Esq., General Services Administration, for the agency.

Pedro E. Briones, Esq., and Guy R. Pietrovito, Esq., Office of the General Counsel, GAO, participated in the preparation of the decision.

DIGEST

Protest of agency's past experience and technical approach evaluations and source selection decision is denied where the record shows that the agency reasonably evaluated quotations consistent with the solicitation's evaluation criteria.

DECISION

URS Federal Technical Services, Inc., (URS) of Germantown, Maryland, protests the issuance of a task order to System Studies and Simulation, Inc., (S3) of Huntsville, Alabama, under request for quotations (RFQ) No. PN2111AV01, issued by the General Services Administration (GSA) for flight training services for the Department of the Army's 21st Cavalry Brigade at Ford Hood, Texas.¹

We deny the protest.

¹ The 21st Cavalry Brigade (21st CAV) is the Army's combat aviation training brigade and provides advanced aerial combat training to deploying units, U.S. allies, and foreign militaries.

BACKGROUND

The RFQ, which was provided to interested vendors holding Federal Supply Schedule (FSS) contracts under schedule No. 874, mission oriented business integrated services (MOBIS), provided for the issuance of a time-and-materials task order for a base and 4 option years. See RFQ at A19, A24; Contracting Officer's (CO) Statement at 2.

A detailed performance work statement (PWS) was provided that described the required services. Among other things, the vendor would be required to develop and conduct an advanced helicopter training program, as well as provide unit sustainment and/or rotational readiness training at Fort Hood and other locations within and outside the United States, including Germany, Korea, and the Netherlands. See PWS at A2-4, A20. In particular, the vendor must provide training services and materials, consistent with unit policies, guidance, and training objectives, to support aerial gunnery training, combined training exercises, command field exercises, combat training center rotations, deployment operations, manned-unmanned teaming exercises, and full spectrum combat aviation brigade training (FSCAB), among other things. See id. at A10-11. In that regard, the vendor is required to provide fully trained and experienced key personnel (a chief pilot, a chief planner, and a senior pilot) meeting specified qualifications, such as minimum numbers of flight and instructor hours on various advanced aircrafts. Id. at A4, A14-15. As pertinent here, the chief planner was required to have, among other things, an "extensive background in aviation helicopter operations."² Id. at A16. The vendor was also required to assign an on-site task leader responsible for providing periodic training plans, schedules, records, reports, and other deliverables.³ Id.

² The PWS also states that combat experience in Operation Iraqi Freedom and/or Operation Enduring Freedom was a desired individual quality for positions directly involved in training units and soldiers and planning/scenario development. See PWS at A17.

³ The RFQ identified estimated levels of effort for a number of labor categories, including the key personnel described above, as well as the following positions: senior program manager; off-site analyst, part-time clerical; senior engineer, senior analyst, senior specialist, military analyst, and on-site analyst. PWS at A16-17. Vendors were advised that all employees would spend 100 percent of their time on-site (i.e., at Fort Hood or other government site), with the exception of the program manager and clerical positions, who will spend 10 percent and 5 percent of the time on-site, respectively. Id. at A22; RFQ, Questions & Answers, Aug. 12, 2011, at 4. In response to vendors' questions, the agency explained that only the chief pilot, chief planner, and senior pilot positions were considered key personnel because they were technical in nature, requiring certain qualifications, and were

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at A11-12, A30; see RFQ, Questions & Answers, Aug. 12, 2011, at 6-7; Questions & Answers, Aug. 22, 2011, at 1-2.

The RFQ informed vendors that the task order would be issued on a best value basis considering the following factors, listed in descending order of importance: past experience, technical approach, and price. RFQ at A37-38. The non-price factors, when combined, were significantly more important than price. Id. at A38. Vendors were advised that failure to comply with all of the terms of the PWS may result in elimination of the vendor's quotation from further consideration for award. See id. at A36.

With regard to the past experience factor, the RFQ stated that, based on the uniqueness of the requirement, the vendor was required to demonstrate prior experience and specific training in the following seven areas: mobile assistance training (MAT); high altitude environmental training (HAMET); extended range, multi-purpose unmanned aerial vehicles; foreign military training (FMT); Unit Fielding and Training Program (UFTP); Task Force Observe, Detect, Identify, and Neutralize; and FSCAB training. PWS at A14. In this respect the RFQ instructed vendors to provide references and past experience information for four past or current contracts/task orders executed within no less than the past 3 years and no more than the past 7 years for comparable (same or similar scope) requirements to the solicited task.⁴ RFQ at A38.

Vendors were informed that their past experience would be evaluated based on the offeror's relevant experience compared to the PWS's requirements and as a measure of the government's confidence in the offeror's ability to successfully complete a project with comparable scope to the solicited task. Id. at A38-39. Vendors were also advised that, in rating vendor past experience, the government would evaluate the firm's comparable experience in the seven critical areas, listed above, but would not evaluate personnel experience as part of the vendor's organizational experience. See id. at A39.

With regard to the technical approach factor, the RFQ instructed vendors to submit a narrative description of their knowledge and understanding of the PWS requirements, and as well as their proposed methodologies and techniques, including task management, to fulfill the requirements. See id. at A39. Vendors were also instructed to provide a staffing plan, quality control plan, and key

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pilots. See RFQ, Questions & Answers, Aug. 12, 2011, at 7; see also Questions & Answers, Aug. 22, 2011, at 1-2.

⁴ Scope was defined as the range of work/skills that is similar in nature to the requirements identified in the PWS. RFQ at A38.

personnel resumes, as well as describe their transition plan, risk management approach and process for personnel background investigations. See id. at A40-41. Moreover, vendors were required to identify specific skill categories and describe the specific duties that each will perform. See id. at A40.

Vendors were informed that their technical approach would be evaluated based on their demonstrated understanding of the requirements, the adequacy of their solution approach, the quality and completeness of their technical solutions to the objectives, and the overall qualifications and skill mix of their proposed workforce. See id. at A39. Technical approach would also be evaluated for feasibility, practicability, and appropriateness to accomplishing the PWS requirements.⁵ Id. at A37. Moreover, the agency would compare the experience and qualifications of proposed key personnel to the desired qualifications specified in the solicitation. See id. at A40 The RFQ advised vendors that, if they proposed an alternative to the agency’s estimated labor mix, the offeror was required to provide a rationale for deviating from the estimate. PWS at A17. Vendors were advised in this regard that the agency reserved the right to select a proposal containing an alternative solution based on a best value award analysis. Id.

The agency received quotations from three offerors, including URS and S3 (the incumbent), which were evaluated by the agency’s proposal evaluation team (PET) as follows:

	Past Experience	Technical Approach
S3	Meets the Standard (Moderate Risk)	Meets the Standard (Moderate Risk)
URS	Falls Short of the Standard (High Risk)	Falls Short of the Standard (High Risk)
Vendor	Falls Short of the Standard (High Risk)	Falls Short of the Standard (High Risk)

CO’s Statement at 2; Agency Report (AR), Tab 13, Consensus Technical Review, at 11.⁶

⁵ Feasibility was defined as successful accomplishment of the task with the identified resources; practicability was defined as a logical approach that does not introduce a high level of risk in order to successfully complete the requirements; and appropriateness was defined as a suitable approach that is within the scope of the task and satisfies all requirements. See RFQ at A38.

⁶ As relevant here, under the agency’s evaluation plan and rating scheme (which was not provided to vendors or included in the RFQ), past experience that “falls short of the standard” reflects past experience where a majority of citations were not generally relevant to the PWS’s requirements and/or scope; strengths, weaknesses, and/or deficiencies in one or more of the citations, but the weaknesses and/or
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URS's ratings reflected the PET's overall judgment that the majority of URS's past experience was not generally relevant to the requirements and that the practicality and appropriateness of URS's technical approach was greatly diminished by its proposed staffing resources and dated understanding of the 21st CAV's mission. See AR, Tab 13, Consensus Technical Review, at 6-8. With respect to the past experience factor, although URS's quotation was found to have one strength, it was also found to have a deficiency and three weaknesses.⁷ Id. at 6-7. URS's quotation was found deficient because it failed to show experience in one of the required past experience areas, specifically, HAMET experience. Id. at 7. The PET also assessed the following three weaknesses with respect to URS's past experience: URS showed no experience in collective/multiple aircraft operations training, including through the battalion level; URS's references did not address unit level training and transformation beyond the staff level; and URS's references reflected only entry-level, primary instructor flight training experience. See id. at 6. With respect to the technical approach factor, the PET evaluated URS's quotation as containing no strengths or deficiencies, but the following three significant weaknesses: only [DELETED] percent of URS aviators on staff had combat experience; URS proposed [DELETED] as a site-lead, which would hinder performance of [DELETED]; and URS's proposed chief planner had only 1 year of experience in aviation helicopter operations. Id. at 7. The PET also assessed as weaknesses that URS did not address the current FMT, FSCAB, and MAT models and that URS's resumes contained errors. Id. The PET concluded that URS's quotation was technically unacceptable because it fell short of the standards set forth in the PWS and the weaknesses and deficiencies identified would place the agency at a high risk in meeting task order requirements. See AR, Tab 14, Award Document, at 22.

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deficiencies outweigh the strengths; doubt that the offeror will perform successfully; and high risk. AR, Tab 3, Evaluation Standards and Rating Sheet, at 4. With regard to the technical approach factor, a rating of "falls short of the standard" reflects a technical approach that was not feasible, practical, and/or appropriate or capable of meeting requirements and major objectives; strengths that were outweighed by weaknesses and/or deficiencies which may pose an evident risk that the offeror might fail to perform without significant government oversight; and a high level of risk. Id. A deficiency was defined as a failure of a proposal to meet a requirement or a combination of weaknesses that increases the risk of unsuccessful performance to an unacceptable level. See id. at 9.

⁷ The agency found URS's extensive knowledge of unmanned aircraft system fielding and implementation at the individual and higher staff levels to be beneficial to the agency's new equipment training and a strength in the firm's past experience. AR, Tab 13, Consensus Technical Review, at 6.

S3's ratings reflected the PET's overall judgment that S3's past experience and technical approach satisfied the RFQ's requirements.⁸ See AR, Tab 13, Consensus Technical Review, at 2-5. With respect to the past experience factor, the PET assessed one strength and one weakness in S3's quotation, and no deficiencies. Specifically, the agency assessed as a strength S3's experience with a newer model aircraft for which there are a limited of number qualified pilots and few qualified instructor pilots, and as a weakness S3's misrepresentation that it had provided maintenance pilot (MP) training at the 21st CAV. Id. at 3-4. With respect the technical approach factor, S3's quotation was found to have no strengths or deficiencies and the following three weaknesses: S3's quality control plan did not specify which command level would complete customer satisfaction surveys or how surveys would be processed and reviewed; two of S3's key personnel resumes contained errors or inconsistencies; and S3 did not provide pilots qualified for four types of aircraft.⁹ See id.

The CO reviewed the vendors' quotations and evaluation results and agreed with the PET's ratings. AR, Tab 14, Award Document, at 12, 22; see CO's Statement at 9. The CO found that only S3's quotation was technically acceptable; URS's quotation was determined to be technically unacceptable because it fell short of the standards set forth in the PWS. AR, Tab 14, Award Document, at 22. Accordingly, the CO determined that only S3's price quotation would be evaluated.¹⁰ Id. at 22-25. The CO compared S3's discounted price and labor rates to the agency's independent government estimate and level of effort, and found S3's price of \$66,865,234 to be fair and reasonable. Id. at 23-25.

The task order was issued to S3 and this protest followed.

⁸ Although the award document states that S3's past experience citations indicate that the firm satisfied the majority of the required past experience areas, see AR, Tab 14, Award Document, at 14, as discussed below, the agency actually found that S3 satisfied all of the required past experience areas.

⁹ With respect to the failure to provide pilots for four types of aircraft, the PET concluded that this was not a deficiency or significant weakness because qualified personnel for those aircraft were more easily obtainable than qualified personnel under the PWS's seven required training areas. AR, Tab 13, Consensus Technical Review, at 4.

¹⁰ Although the agency only evaluated S3's price quotation, the agency requested additional discounts from all three vendors and each submitted a revised quotation. See AR, Tab 14, Award Document, at 23. URS quoted a revised price of \$51,183,448. Protest at 15.

DISCUSSION

URS raises numerous objections to the evaluation of its and S3's quotations under the past experience and technical approach factors and to the agency's selection decision. We have considered all of URS's arguments and find, as explained below, no basis to question the reasonableness of the agency's evaluation and award decision.¹¹

Past Experience

URS protests the agency's evaluation of its and S3's past experience, disputing the deficiencies, weaknesses, and/or strengths assessed in that regard. In this respect, URS cites various passages from its quotation that the protester deems relevant to the requirement but which it argues the agency ignored. Protest at 13; Comments & Supp. Protest at 7. For example, URS disputes that it lacks HAMET experience, pointing out that its proposed [DELETED] has been HAMET-qualified since 1986, and argues that even if URS did not address HAMET capabilities, it should have received a higher past experience rating because URS otherwise met the majority of the PWS requirements. Id. at 12-13. Similarly, the protester disagrees that it had not shown past experience in collective training and multiple aircraft operations, arguing that two training programs cited in URS's past experience references (as well as references for URS's proposed team partner) "have inherent collective/multiple aircraft training requirements."¹² Id. at 7-9. Moreover, URS complains that its "unique and very strong past experience with respect to initial entry military aviation training" should have been assessed as a strength and not as a weakness. Id. at 11-12.

URS also complains that GSA evaluated its and S3's past experience disparately. Specifically, URS argues that S3 failed to address the seven required past experience areas and that neither the consensus evaluation report nor the award document reflect some individual evaluators' concerns or assessments of deficiencies or weaknesses in that regard. See id. at 20-22. The protester also contends that the agency should have assessed a deficiency for S3's misrepresentation of MP training experience. See Supp. Comments at 17.

¹¹ URS initially protested the agency's price evaluations, Protest at 15-16, however, in its comments, URS did not address the agency's responses to the protester's price challenge. Consequently, we consider this protest ground to be abandoned. Washington-Harris Group, B-401794, B-401794.2, Nov. 16, 2009, 2009 CPD ¶ 230 at 5, n.3; Strategic Res., Inc., B-287398, B-287398.2, June 18, 2001, 2001 CPD ¶ 131 at 10-11.

¹² URS also cites passages from its quotation's 1-page executive summary that mentions collective training. Comments & Supp. Protest at 7-8.

The agency responds that it properly evaluated the firms' past experience. See AR at 7-10, 13-15. Specifically, GSA disagrees that URS demonstrated that it had the required HAMET experience and counters that, to the extent the protester asserts that [DELETED] is HAMET-qualified, the PWS clearly stated that the agency would not consider personnel experience as part of the agency's evaluation of organizational experience.¹³ See Supp. AR at 9, citing PWS at A39. The agency also disputes the protester's assertion that S3 did not address the seven required past experience areas and identifies passages from S3's quotation that demonstrate S3's experience under each area. Supp. CO's Statement at 9-10. The agency also states that S3's misrepresentation with respect to its MP experience was not found to be a deficiency or significant weakness because it did not relate to a specific PWS requirement and did not impact the mission of the 21st CAV. Id.

Where, as here, an agency conducts a competition under Federal Acquisition Regulation subpart 8.4, we will review the record to ensure that the agency's evaluation is reasonable and consistent with the terms of the solicitation. CMI Mgmt., Inc., B-404645, Mar. 2, 2011, 2011 CPD ¶ 66 at 4; GC Servs. Ltd. P'ship, B-298102, B-298102.3, June 14, 2006, 2006 CPD ¶ 96 at 6. The evaluation of an offeror's experience and past performance is a matter within the discretion of the contracting agency since the agency is responsible for defining its needs and the best method for accommodating them, and we will not substitute our judgment for reasonably based past performance ratings. See MFM Lamey Group, LLC, B-402377, Mar. 25, 2010, 2010 CPD ¶ 81 at 10.

As discussed above, vendors were required to show prior experience and specific training in seven distinct areas and were advised that the agency would evaluate the firm's comparable experience in that regard. See PWS at A14, A39. The agency's contemporaneous record--which includes individual evaluator rating sheets and notes, the PET's consensus evaluation report, and the CO's selection decision--documents that the agency fairly evaluated each vendors' past experience under the seven required areas of experience. See AR, Tab 11, Individual Tech. Evaluations, S3; Tab 12, Individual Tech. Evaluations, URS; Tab 13, Consensus Technical Review, at 1-12; Tab 14, Award Document, at 11-22, 25. With respect to the deficiency assessed in URS's past experience, the record also shows that URS's quotation failed to show HAMET experience for itself. Although URS contends that [DELETED] has HAMET experience, the RFQ explicitly advised offerors that the agency would not evaluate personnel experience as part of the vendor's organizational experience. RFQ at A39. To the extent that the protester argues that the agency ignored URS's past experience that inherently encompasses or mentions the PWS's requirements, agencies are not required to infer information from an

¹³ The agency also argues that the [DELETED] HAMET qualification is 25 years old and not relevant to the aircraft currently used by the 21st CAV. See Supp. AR at 9.

inadequately detailed proposal or information that the protester elected not to provide.¹⁴ See, e.g., Leach Mgmt. Consulting Corp., B-292493.2, Oct. 03, 2003, 2003 CPD ¶ 175 at 5 (protester's argument that its experience should have been apparent and that it related to other activities identified in its proposal denied); James Constr., B-402429, Apr. 21, 2010, 2010 CPD ¶ 98 at 5 (agency not required to piece together general statements and disparate parts of protester's proposal to determine the protester's intent).

We find no merit to the protester's argument that S3's quotation failed to address all seven required past experience areas. The CO identifies where in S3's quotation the firm showed past experience in each of the required seven areas, and the protester points to nothing in S3's quotation that suggests otherwise or that shows that the agency's judgment in that regard was unreasonable.¹⁵ See CO's Supp. Statement at 10; AR, Tab 5, S3's Quotation, Past Experience, at PE 2-4 (awardee's description of its experience as the incumbent, including discussion of all seven areas required by PWS). Although URS continues to complain that the PET's consensus evaluation report does not demonstrate how various individual evaluator comments were reconciled, a consensus rating need not be the same as the rating initially assigned by the individual evaluators. M. Erdal Kamisli, Ltd., B-291522, Dec. 23, 2002, 2003 CPD ¶ 19 at 5. Although we recognize that the individual evaluators' notes here may reflect initial, differing views of the vendors' quotations, a final evaluation rating may reasonably be determined after discussions among the evaluators, as was done here.¹⁶ See id.

¹⁴ It is an offeror's responsibility to submit a well-written proposal, with adequately detailed information which clearly demonstrates compliance with the solicitation requirements and allows a meaningful review by the procuring agency. See, e.g., International Med. Corps, B-403688, Dec. 6, 2010, 2010 CPD ¶ 292 at 7.

¹⁵ URS's argument that S3's past experience is not similar in scope to the requirement because of the shorter performance durations and smaller dollar values of S3's past experience citations as compared to this requirement, Comments & Supp. Protest at 19-20; Supp. Comments at 17-18, also lacks merit. As the agency points out, the RFQ did not define scope to include past experience of a similar dollar value or duration. See RFQ; Supp. AR at 17.

¹⁶ The three PET evaluators individually evaluated each quotation and then met to discuss their ratings and determine consensus ratings. CO's Statement at 9; see AR, Tab 13, Consensus Technical Review, at 12; Tab 14, Award Decision Document, at 11-12, 21; see also Tab 3, Evaluation Standards and Rating Sheet, at 1. In their individual comments on S3's past experience reference from the 21st CAV (that is, S3's experience as the incumbent), two evaluators noted that S3 identified experience in all seven required areas, however the third evaluator noted that "HAMET is mentioned in [S3's past experience reference as the incumbent], but no reference to" the required seven areas. AR, Tab 11a at 1; Tab 11c at 1, Tab 11b
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In short, the record here supports the agency's evaluation of the firms' past experience, and we find that URS's protest in this regard amounts to mere disagreement with the agency's judgment, which does not establish that the evaluation was unreasonable.¹⁷

Technical Approach

URS also protests the agency's evaluation of its and S3's quotations under the technical approach factor. URS specifically disputes each of the significant weaknesses assessed in its quotation under this factor. First, the protester complains that there is nothing in the PWS or the record that supports the agency's finding of a significant weakness in URS's quotation for proposing [DELETED] as site-lead. See Comments & Supp. Protest at 15; Supp. Comments at 13. URS also objects to the agency's assessment of a significant weakness because URS's chief planner had only 1 year of experience in aviation helicopter operation; URS contends that the RFQ did not define "extensive background" in aviation helicopter operations to mean more than a year of experience. Comments & Supp. Protest at 16. URS also complains that the significant weakness assessed because only 40 percent of its proposed aviation staff have combat experience is unreasonable, because the RFQ did not require vendors to propose a certain percentage of pilots with combat experience. Id. at 16-17. URS also disputes the agency's assessment that the protester's technical approach showed a dated understanding of the requirements. Id. at 14-15. With regard to the agency's evaluation of S3's quotation, the protester contends that S3's three assessed weaknesses, as well as the firm's lack of any strengths, should have resulted in S3's quotation receiving a lower evaluation rating. Id. at 22-26.

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at 3. None of the evaluators noted any deficiencies specific to S3's experience as the incumbent. See id.

¹⁷ We also find no merit to URS's contention that the agency used unstated evaluation criteria because it did not disclose its adjectival rating scheme to vendors and that GSA failed to inform vendors that a quotation could be found technically unacceptable for failing to meet the solicitation's requirements. See Comments & Supp. Protest at 3-4. In accordance with FAR § 8.405-2(c), the agency provided an RFQ to vendors that identified the factors under which quotations would be evaluated. There is no requirement that the agency disclose its adjectival rating scheme to vendors. We also disagree that the RFQ was required to specifically inform vendors that a failure to meet mandatory requirements may render the quotation technically unacceptable. Rather, a finding that a quotation was acceptable or not reflects the agency's judgment as to whether a vendor's quotation satisfied the identified requirements.

The agency responds that it fairly evaluated the firms' quotations to determine whether their proposed technical approaches were feasible, practical, or appropriate and whether they demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the requirements. Supp. AR at 12. In this regard, the agency contends that it was not obligated to inform vendors as to which position to propose as a site-lead. See id. The agency also argues that, regardless of whether the RFQ explicitly required combat experience, such experience was logically encompassed in a requirement for combat aviation training services, and, in this respect, the agency cites numerous RFQ provisions that specifically mention combat aviation, including that combat experience in Iraq and/or Afghanistan was a desired individual quality for training pilots. See id. at 13-14.

In reviewing a protest challenging an agency's technical evaluation, our Office will not reevaluate the quotations; rather, we will examine the record to determine whether the agency's evaluation conclusions were reasonable and consistent with the terms of the solicitation and applicable procurement laws and regulations. Maybank Indus., LLC, B-403327, B-403327.2, Oct. 21, 2010, 2010 CPD ¶ 249 at 5; OPTIMUS Corp., B-400777, Jan. 26, 2009, 2009 CPD ¶ 33 at 4.

We find that the protester has not shown that the agency's evaluations of URS's and S3's technical approaches were unreasonable or inconsistent with the RFQ's stated evaluation criteria. For example, URS has not shown that it was unreasonable, given the nature of the requirement, for the agency to consider the percentage of URS pilots with combat experience, particularly where URS emphasized that percentage in its quotation. Nor has the protester shown that it was unreasonable for the agency to evaluate the feasibility, practicability, or appropriateness of URS's plan to have [DELETED] serve as its site-lead. In this respect, the contemporaneous record, described above, demonstrates that the PET and CO considered all of the information submitted by URS and S3 and issued a well-reasoned and rational evaluation report and award decision that fairly highlighted key discriminators between URS's and S3's technical approaches and reflects a qualitative analysis of their quotations. See, e.g., QinetiQ North America, Inc., B-405163.2, et al., Jan. 25, 2012, 2012 CPD ¶ 53 at 15 (protest of agency's technical evaluations denied where record shows that agency reasonably evaluated proposals consistent with evaluation criteria, extensively documenting qualitative differences between the protester's and awardee's proposals).¹⁸

¹⁸ To the extent that URS believes that the RFQ should have defined "extensive background" in aviation helicopter operations, this is an apparent solicitation impropriety or ambiguity that should have been protested prior to the closing date for receipt of quotations. 4 C.F.R. § 21.2(a)(1) (2011).

Best Value Determination

Finally, URS objects to the agency's award decision, asserting that the CO's determination was flawed because it was based on evaluations that, according to the Protester's arguments described above, were unreasonable. See Protest at 16. The protester also complains that the agency unreasonably failed to consider its price where the RFQ did not inform vendors that a rating of "falls short of the standard" would result in a finding of technical unacceptability and exclusion from award consideration. Comments & Supp. Protest at 17-18, 26; Supp. Comments at 21-22.

As discussed above, there is no merit to URS's objections to the agency's evaluation of past experience and technical approach quotations. In this respect, the RFQ explicitly advised vendors that failure to comply with all of the terms of the PWS may result in elimination of the vendor's quotation from further consideration for award. RFQ at A36. Moreover, as the agency correctly points out, it is well established that a technically unacceptable proposal cannot be considered for award. Supp. AR at 23-24, citing Analytic Servs., Inc., B-405737, Dec. 28, 2011, 2012 CPD ¶ 16 at 13. Because we see no basis to question the agency's determination that URS's proposal was technically unacceptable, we find that the agency was not required to consider the firm's quotation in its best value determination.

The protest is denied.

Lynn H. Gibson
General Counsel