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Decision

Matter of: I. M. Systems Group, Inc.; I. M. Systems Group

File: B-422727.2; B-422727.3

Date: December 27, 2024

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Hannah G. Barnes, Esq., April Y. Shields, Esq., and Christina Sklarew, Esq., Office of the General Counsel, GAO, participated in the preparation of the decision.

DIGEST

1. Protest challenging the agency's evaluation of the awardee's price proposal is denied where the record shows that the evaluation was reasonable and consistent with the terms of the solicitation.
 2. Protest challenging the agency's evaluation of proposals under two technical factor elements is denied where the evaluation was reasonable and consistent with the terms of the solicitation.
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DECISION

I. M. Systems Group, Inc. (IMSG), a small business of Rockville, Maryland, protests the issuance of a task order to Science and Technology Corporation (STC), a small business of Hampton, Virginia, under task order request for proposals (TORFP) No. 1332KP24R005, issued by the Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), for scientific and technical services. The protester challenges the agency's price evaluation and various aspects of the agency's technical evaluation.

We deny the protest.

BACKGROUND

The agency issued the TORFP as a small business set-aside on April 5, 2024, pursuant to Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) section 16.505 procedures, to holders of the ProTech 2.0 Satellite Domain multiple-award, indefinite-delivery, indefinite-quantity (IDIQ) contract vehicle. Agency Report (AR), Tab 1, TORFP at 2, 14.¹ The TORFP, titled the Atmospheric Science and Technology Applications (ASTA 2.0) task order, advised that ASTA 2.0 will support scientific and technical research and development for NOAA's satellite-based atmospheric and land surface-related mission goals, including monitoring and understanding Earth's atmosphere and land surface using satellite observations. *Id.* at 82. The solicitation sought research and development services in support of the following task areas: atmospheric properties, surface characteristics, science support for satellite programs, radiation budget, atmospheric winds, and precipitation.² *Id.* The TORFP contemplated the issuance of a "hybrid firm-fixed-price and time-and-materials" task order to be performed for a base period from June 25, 2024, through March 20, 2025, with five option periods.³ *Id.* at 37, 71.

The TORFP provided for the issuance of the task order on a best-value tradeoff basis, considering two factors: technical approach and price. *Id.* at 79-80. The technical factor included three elements, listed in descending order of importance: technical capability and experience, staffing, and key personnel. *Id.* at 74-75, 80. The solicitation specified that the technical factor "is significantly more important than evaluated price" and advised that "as the non-price factor becomes more comparably equal amongst offerors[,] their total evaluated price becomes more important and influential in determining the best value." *Id.* at 80.

For the technical factor and its elements, proposals would be assigned confidence ratings.⁴ *Id.* The TORFP advised that evaluators would assess various aspects of the proposals--including technical capability, experience, staffing, transition plan, and key

¹ The TORFP was amended three times. While the initial TORFP cites a different issuance date, the first amendment clarifies that the TORFP posting date was April 5, 2024. AR, Tab 2, TORFP amend. 0001 at 2. All citations are to the Adobe PDF page numbers of the documents referenced in this decision, unless otherwise paginated.

² The solicitation advised more specifically that these services would support certain mission focus areas, including providing timely access to global environmental data from satellites, providing data on space weather and Earth system monitoring, preserving data, and developing and disseminating information products and tools derived from observed data. TORFP at 17.

³ The TORFP provided for the first option period to be divided into option periods 1A and 1B, with option period 1A extending from March 21, 2025, to September 20, 2025, and option period 1B extending from September 21, 2025, to March 20, 2026. TORFP at 37-38. The remaining three option periods would each be one-year periods. *Id.*

⁴ The agency used the following ratings: low confidence, confident, and high confidence. AR, Tab 10, Technical Evaluation Team (TET) Consensus Report at 8.

personnel experience--to determine the agency's confidence in the offeror's understanding of and ability to effectively meet the Performance Work Statement (PWS) requirements. *Id.* As relevant here, under the staffing element, the TORFP required offerors to explain how they planned to "retain employees and create an environment that encourages long-term commitments to the Government's mission -- e.g., the [percentage] of [] employees hired to perform under a project who remained on the project each year and also at project completion." *Id.* at 74. Under the key personnel factor, the solicitation instructed offerors to provide information about the key personnel they intended to propose, which for the effort at issue consisted of four personnel: a project manager and three subject matter experts (SME). *Id.* at 44, 75.

Under the price factor, the solicitation provided for an analysis to "determine if the proposed pricing is complete, fair, and reasonable, aligning with PWS requirements and ProTech 2.0 contract terms," and advised that the government "may use various price analysis techniques [in accordance with] FAR 15.404-1." *Id.* at 80. The TORFP advised that "prices must align with the offeror's technical proposal." *Id.*

On or before the solicitation's April 26, 2024 closing date, the agency received five proposals, including from IMMSG (the incumbent contractor) and STC. Contracting Officer's Statement (COS) at 6; AR, Tab 10, TET Consensus Report at 8. The agency evaluated the proposals and selected STC for award, and IMMSG filed its first protest with our Office, challenging various aspects of the agency's evaluation and award decision. The agency proposed to take corrective action by reevaluating technical proposals and conducting a new tradeoff decision, and we dismissed that protest as academic. *I. M. Sys. Grp., Inc.*, B-422727, July 31, 2024 (unpublished decision).

Pursuant to that corrective action, evaluators reevaluated technical proposals and provided a consensus report to the contracting officer on September 13, 2024. AR, Tab 10, TET Consensus Report. The agency evaluated IMMSG's and STC's proposals as follows:

	Technical Capability and Experience	Staffing	Key Personnel	Overall Consensus	Price
IMMSG	High Confidence	Confident	High Confidence	High Confidence	\$54,522,668
STC	High Confidence	Confident	Confident	Confident	\$35,574,367

Id. at 8; COS at 8.

Under the staffing element, evaluators identified one aspect that decreased confidence in IMMSG's proposal: IMMSG's "relatively low retention rate." AR, Tab 10, TET Consensus Report at 16. In contrast, the agency noted that STC's "high retention rate helps to mitigate the risk of unsuccessful technical performance." *Id.* at 19. For

evaluation purposes, evaluators calculated a cumulative retention rate for a hypothetical five-year period of performance based on the information submitted by each offeror. See *id.* Because IMSG submitted individual year average rates, evaluators used those rates to calculate the cumulative effect of attrition over the 5-year length of the protester's contract and arrived at a cumulative retention rate of 62%. The agency used the same calculation for other offerors and also considered average annual retention rates. COS at 11; AR, Tab 10a, Retention Rate Analysis Explanation at 3-6. Evaluators used STC's representation in its proposal that it had "several ProTech task orders where we retained 100% of employees throughout the entire period of performance" to determine that STC had a cumulative retention rate of 100%, but noted that the "lack of specific supporting data [justifying the rate] weakens the argument." *Id.* at 13, 17 (quoting AR, Tab 12, Business Clearance Memorandum at 26).

Also relevant here, under the key personnel element, the agency documented its conclusion that IMSG's proposed key personnel "have direct, relevant experience," while two of STC's four proposed key personnel "have scientific experience and expertise, but do not demonstrate the requisite project management type experience outlined in PWS [task area] 2.3."⁵ COS at 18 (quoting AR, Tab 12, Business Clearance Memorandum at 27). Finally, the agency found that the prices each offeror proposed were "complete, fair, and reasonable" and "consistent with [their] technical proposals." COS at 14 (quoting AR, Tab 11, Price Analysis Team Report at 10).

Overall, evaluators concluded that STC's proposal represented the best value to the agency, reasoning that IMSG's technical advantages were not worth its associated price premium, despite STC's "slight technical inferiority." AR, Tab 12, Business Clearance Memorandum at 27-28. Specifically, the agency noted that the descending order of importance of the three technical elements "allowed for a comparably equal assessment" between STC and IMSG under the technical capability and experience element and the staffing element, while the "better value" offered by IMSG for "the least important" element, key personnel, was "not worth [the] approximate[ly] 40% price premium proposed by IMSG." *Id.* at 28. The agency again selected STC for award.

⁵ According to the agency, these two proposed SMEs had scientific experience and expertise, but lacked the desired project management experience in areas such as communication, coordination, and budget/schedule support. COS at 18-19. PWS task area 2.3 sought support for program managers through "[c]ommunication/coordination among science, algorithm integration, and management teams"; through support "of external satellite program requirements such as budget and schedule; and [through support] for maintaining and updating science teams' websites and overarching monitoring and quality assurance activities." TORFP at 21.

On September 18, the agency notified IMSG that it had selected STC for award. AR, Tab 18, Post-Award Communications with IMSG at 6-12. After providing IMSG with a written debriefing on September 18, this protest followed.⁶

DISCUSSION

First, the protester alleges that the agency unreasonably evaluated the awardee's proposal under the price factor. Next, IMSG argues that the agency treated the two proposals disparately under the staffing element by unreasonably evaluating STC's cumulative retention rate. Finally, the protester challenges the agency's evaluation of the awardee's proposal under the key personnel element, contending that STC should have received a low confidence rating. We have reviewed all of IMSG's assertions and find no basis to sustain its protest.⁷

Price Evaluation

The protester argues that the agency unreasonably evaluated STC's price. Specifically, IMSG asserts that the awardee's prices are "too low to align" with the PWS requirements and the ProTech 2.0 master IDIQ contract terms, as required by the TORFP.⁸ Protest at 10. The protester points to solicitation language stating that the

⁶ As the value of the task order exceeds \$10 million and is to be issued under an IDIQ contract vehicle by a civilian agency (NOAA), the protest is within our Office's jurisdiction. See 41 U.S.C. § 4106(f); *Analytic Strategies LLC; Gemini Indus., Inc.*, B-413758.2, B-413758.3, Nov. 28, 2016, 2016 CPD ¶ 340 at 4-5.

⁷ In its various protest submissions, IMSG has raised arguments that are in addition to, or variations of, those specifically discussed below. While we do not address all the protester's arguments, we have considered all of them and find that they afford no basis on which to sustain the protest. The protester also initially made various arguments, but subsequently failed to respond to or rebut the agency's response to these arguments. For example, the protester challenges the agency's finding that IMSG failed to adequately address risk mitigation strategies in its transition plan, contending that the solicitation "did not require the incumbent contractor to address transition risks in its transition plan." Protest at 20. IMSG failed to respond to NOAA's rebuttal in its comments on the agency report. See Memorandum of Law (MOL) at 17-18; Comments and Supp. Protest. We consider this argument abandoned and therefore will not consider it further. *UDC USA, Inc.*, B-419671, June 21, 2021, 2021 CPD ¶ 242 at 3-4 n.1.

⁸ To the extent the protester's argument amounts to a price realism challenge, the solicitation did not provide for a price realism analysis; consequently, it did not permit a price realism analysis. As we have explained, a price realism evaluation assesses whether an offeror's low fixed-price reflects a lack of understanding of contract requirements or risk inherent in its approach. See *Emergint Techs., Inc.*, B-407006, Oct. 18, 2012, 2012 CPD ¶ 295 at 5. When awarding a fixed-price contract, offerors

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agency will determine whether the proposed pricing “align[s] with PWS requirements and ProTech2.0 contract terms” and cautioning that proposed prices “must align with the offeror’s technical proposal.” TORFP at 80.

In its supplemental protest, IMSG questions the sufficiency of the agency’s price evaluation documentation and asserts that the agency failed to consider that STC’s technical approach depends on “retaining 100% of the incumbent IMSG workforce.” Comments and Supp. Protest at 3, 7. The protester points to language throughout the awardee’s proposal stating that: “Team STC commits to retaining 100% of qualified incumbent personnel”; “Team STC’s staffing approach focuses on hiring 100% of the qualified incumbent personnel”; and STC’s “staffing plan at contract award is to hire all qualified incumbent staff.” *Id.* at 4-5 (quoting AR, Tab 6, STC Proposal at 26, 49, 52). The protester contends that STC’s low labor rates will prevent the awardee from matching incumbent salaries, preventing STC from carrying out its proposed technical approach. Comments and Supp. Protest at 3-7. Ultimately, IMSG argues that the awardee’s proposed price is too low to align with its technical proposal, which represents STC’s ability to successfully perform the work laid out in the solicitation.

The agency responds that its price evaluation was consistent with the solicitation’s evaluation criteria. NOAA asserts that STC’s price proposal aligns with the TORFP’s “historical support and pricing schedule,” demonstrating its consistency with the PWS requirements. MOL at 10. For example, the agency noted that the TORFP identified historical support, including a pricing schedule attachment, for task areas, and asserted that STC’s price proposal identified the same level of support as indicated in those documents. *Id.* Further, the agency explains that it determined STC’s price proposal aligned with its technical proposal based on the awardee’s acknowledgement of the solicitation’s labor categories and associated levels of effort--identified, as previously mentioned, using historical ProTech task order data--as well as STC’s stated commitment to maintaining this staffing profile in the effort at issue. *Id.* at 10; see AR, Tab 6, STC Proposal at 56, 82. This analysis led the agency to conclude that both STC’s and the other offerors’ proposed pricing was “consistent with offerors’ technical proposals.” AR, Tab 11, Price Analysis Team Report at 10.

With respect to IMSG’s supplemental argument concerning incumbent capture, NOAA responds that STC’s proposal does not rely solely upon this approach. Supp. MOL at 16. Rather, the agency argues that the awardee’s staffing approach will rely upon multiple factors; for example, STC’s proposal states that it has “proactively recruited highly qualified staff . . . as a contingency for any vacancies of qualified incumbent

must be advised that the agency will conduct a price realism analysis, and absent a solicitation provision providing for such an evaluation, agencies are not permitted to conduct one. *GlobalOpal, LLC*, B-408414.7, B-408414.8, Mar. 19, 2014, 2014 CPD ¶ 140 at 4. Because the solicitation did not provide for a price realism evaluation, our discussion of the agency’s price evaluation here centers on whether the agency’s price analysis was consistent with the solicitation’s terms regarding prices aligning with the PWS requirements and technical proposals. See TORFP at 80.

personnel” and has “a combined pool of over 350 SMEs” with the skills and qualifications necessary to support the effort at issue. *Id.* (quoting AR, Tab 6, STC Proposal at 52, 83). In sum, the agency contends that it reasonably determined that STC’s price proposal aligned with its technical proposal and the PWS requirements.

In reviewing protests challenging the evaluation of proposals in a task order competition, we do not conduct a new evaluation or substitute our judgment for that of the agency but examine the record to determine whether the agency’s judgment was reasonable and in accord with the evaluation criteria. *Res. Mgmt. Concepts, Inc.*, B-421320, Mar. 20, 2023, 2023 CPD ¶ 37 at 5. A protester’s disagreement with an agency’s judgment is not sufficient to establish that an agency acted unreasonably. *American Electronics, Inc.*, B-419659, B-419659.2, May 25, 2021, 2021 CPD ¶ 101 at 4. Further, the manner and depth of an agency’s price analysis is a matter committed to the discretion of the agency, which we will not disturb provided that it is reasonable and consistent with the solicitation’s evaluation criteria and applicable procurement statutes and regulations. *MANDEX, Inc.*, B-421664 *et al.*, Aug. 16, 2023, 2023 CPD ¶ 201 at 15.

Here, we find that the agency reasonably evaluated the awardee’s price. The solicitation advised that the agency “may use various price analysis techniques,” and that proposal prices must align with offerors’ technical proposals and the PWS requirements. TORFP at 80. As described above, the agency considered, for example, whether STC’s price proposal aligned with the labor mix and level of effort indicated in the solicitation to determine whether STC’s pricing aligned with PWS requirements; the agency also found that STC’s proposed labor mix in the staffing portion of its technical proposal aligned with its price proposal. MOL at 10; AR, Tab 11, Price Analysis Team Report at 6. In sum, the record shows that the agency’s evaluation was consistent with the terms of the solicitation by determining that its proposed prices aligned with its technical proposal and with the PWS requirements. To the extent IMMSG argues the agency’s evaluation was insufficient, we do not agree that the agency needed to provide the level of extensive detail the protester suggests, particularly given the discretion accorded to agencies conducting a price analysis. See *MANDEX, Inc.*, B-421664 *et al.*, *supra*.

With respect to IMMSG’s incumbent capture argument, we note and agree with the agency’s assertion that the protester mischaracterizes the awardee’s staffing approach. The record shows that STC did not claim it would hire all incumbent staff; rather, it planned to hire all *qualified* incumbent staff. AR, Tab 6, STC Proposal at 26, 49. Further, STC’s proposal demonstrates that its staffing approach does not solely rely upon incumbent capture. The awardee’s proposal states that it has hundreds of qualified SMEs and has “proactively recruited highly qualified staff.” *Id.* at 52, 83. In conclusion, there is no basis for our Office to object to the nature and extent of the agency’s price evaluation. This protest ground is denied.⁹

⁹ As stated above with respect to the price evaluation, here, too, to the extent the protester is alleging the agency should have conducted a price realism analysis, we
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Staffing Element

Next, the protester argues that the agency unreasonably and disparately evaluated IMSG's and STC's proposals under the staffing element, for which the offerors both received ratings of confident. Specifically, the protester asserts that NOAA "unfairly credited STC for 5 years' worth of retention that it did not demonstrate." Comments and Supp. Protest at 11. IMSG complains that it submitted five individual years of annual retention rates, which the agency used to unreasonably calculate a cumulative retention rate at 62%, while STC provided less concrete information to claim a 100% retention rate over the entire performance of several ProTech task orders, resulting in a "fundamentally unfair" result. *Id.* at 12-13. The protester contends that the TORFP's lack of specificity enabled offerors to provide differing retention information, resulting in "highly disparate treatment" that credited the awardee with greater retention than it deserved and "normaliz[ing] STC's one-year retention rates." *Id.*; Supp. Comments at 23.

The agency responds that while the TORFP required offerors to submit retention information, it did not specify a common or mandatory period of performance for projects submitted to show retention rates. Supp. MOL at 9. First, NOAA argues that its calculation of a cumulative retention rate for IMSG, where the firm did not submit one in its proposal, was reasonable because the agency used the retention data the protester submitted. COS at 11. Further, NOAA asserts that, contrary to IMSG's claim that STC provided only a single year's retention rate, STC identified several task orders where it retained 100 percent of employees "throughout the entire period of performance." Supp. MOL at 9 (quoting AR, Tab 6, STC Proposal at 53). The agency also notes that ProTech task orders generally last longer than the single year that the protester alleged. Supp. MOL at 9. Finally, NOAA points to evaluators' contemporaneous documentation showing that the evaluators recognized STC's high retention rate was weakened by the "lack of specific supporting data." *Id.* at 9 (quoting AR, Tab 12, Business Clearance Memorandum at 26).

As previously stated, in reviewing protests, we examine the record to determine whether the agency's judgment was reasonable and in accord with the evaluation criteria. *Res. Mgmt. Concepts*, B-421320, *supra*. Further, when a protester alleges disparate treatment in a technical evaluation, to prevail, it must show that the agency unreasonably evaluated its proposal in a different manner than another proposal that was substantively indistinguishable or nearly identical. *Battelle Mem'l Inst.*, B-418047.5, B-418047.6, Nov. 18, 2020, 2020 CPD ¶ 369 at 5-6.

dismiss this aspect of the protest. The TORFP did not require or permit a price realism analysis, and in light of the fixed-price nature of the task order being awarded, the agency properly could make award to an offeror proposing low, or even below-cost prices. *Lowe Campbell Ewald*, B-411614, B-411614.2, Sept. 11, 2015, 2015 CPD ¶ 296 at 6.

Here, the solicitation required offerors to explain how they planned to “retain employees and create an environment that encourages long-term commitments to the Government’s mission--e.g., the [percentage] of [] employees hired to perform under a project who remained on the project each year and also at project completion.” TORFP at 74. In other words, the agency notes, and we agree, that the TORFP required offerors to submit information on retention but did not specify a mandatory period of performance for projects submitted to show retention rates. In response to this broad language in the TORFP, STC and IMSG submitted two different sets of data points--the protester provided 5 years of annual retention rates performing one contract, and the awardee identified several ProTech task orders it performed with a 100% retention rate. See Supp. MOL at 9. Both of these data points satisfied the solicitation’s requirement to submit retention data. To the extent the protester believes the TORFP should have required more specific levels of information, it should have timely challenged that solicitation term prior to the due date for the receipt of proposals. See 4 C.F.R. § 21.2(a)(1).

Further, we do not find the protester’s allegation of disparate treatment persuasive. Regarding retention, the protester and awardee did not have substantively indistinguishable or nearly identical proposals--IMSG’s entire argument is based on the fact that the two offerors submitted different types of retention information. Moreover, to the extent the protester complains about the evaluation of its proposal, IMSG has not demonstrated that the evaluators treated the offerors unequally where they used the information submitted by IMSG to calculate a cumulative retention rate for evaluation purposes--indeed, as noted above, the TORFP required offerors to explain retention “on the project each year and also at project completion.” TORFP at 74. In sum, the solicitation did not require offerors to submit a specific number of years of retention rates, the protester chose to submit 5 years of retention rates, and the agency reasonably evaluated the offerors’ different retention data points in accordance with the terms of the solicitation. Accordingly, this protest ground is denied.

Key Personnel Element

Finally, the protester argues that the agency should have assigned STC a low confidence rating under the key personnel element because two of its proposed key personnel had “no experience” in the areas of communication, coordination, and budget/schedule-related support, as outlined in PWS 2.3. Comments and Supp. Protest at 18. As noted above, for the key personnel element, the agency assigned a rating of high confidence to IMSG and a rating of confident to STC, and recognized IMSG’s technical superiority. IMSG argues that STC’s rating should have been lower, pointing to the evaluators’ reasoning for identifying an aspect of STC’s proposal that decreased confidence, where the evaluators concluded that two of the proposed SMEs had scientific and software development experience but did not have significant program

manager support experience.¹⁰ *Id.* As an example, the protester cites a reference in one of the proposed key person's resumes, arguing that the agency "can do no better than show that [the proposed employee] had some experience collaborating within a team." Supp. Comments at 14.

The agency responds that it reasonably evaluated STC's key personnel. The record shows that the agency documented its conclusion that STC's proposed personnel "have scientific experience and expertise, but do not demonstrate the requisite project management type experience," and in this context, they recognized IMSG's technical superiority under this element, which was the least important per the TORFP. AR, Tab 12, Business Clearance Memorandum at 27; TORFP at 74-75, 80. NOAA points to PWS 2.3, which, while it includes the supplemental program management support on which the protester focuses, also includes scientific and technical expertise.¹¹ Supp. MOL at 12 (citing TORFP at 20-21). The agency argues that, contrary to the protester's assertion that two of STC's proposed key personnel had no communication, coordination, or budget/schedule related experience, evaluators identified some experience in these areas, resulting in a reduction in its confidence assessment and an overall rating of "confident" under the key personnel element. Supp. MOL at 13. For example, one of the resumes of the key personnel at issue showed experience as a lead scientist, leading various teams and working with users of algorithms to improve those products--in other words, experience managing, communicating, and collaborating. *Id.* (citing AR, Tab 6, STC Proposal at 61-62). NOAA also argues that the significant experience of the remaining two key personnel sufficiently offset the agency's concerns. *Id.* at 14.

As previously stated, our Office will examine the record to determine whether the agency's judgment was reasonable and in accord with the evaluation criteria; and a protester's disagreement, without more, is not sufficient to establish that an agency acted unreasonably. See *Res. Mgmt. Concepts, supra*; *American Electronics, Inc., supra*.

We note that the TORFP, in defining the rating of confident, states that "there may be proposal content that decreased the government's confidence of successful contract performance." AR, Tab 10, TET Consensus Report at 5. In comparison, in defining a rating of low confidence, the solicitation refers to "significant proposal content that decreased the government's confidence." *Id.* On this record, we find that the agency reasonably evaluated STC's proposal under the key personnel element. The solicitation

¹⁰ Specifically, the TET found that two of STC's four proposed key personnel "are highly qualified for their proposed roles," while the resumes of the other two key personnel "provided no indication of significant experience in the [program manager] support outlined in PWS [task area] 2.3." AR, Tab 10, TET Consensus Report at 20.

¹¹ For example, section 2.3 requires the contractor to "support the full range of related requirements for observing system activities, to include satellite missions, and managing the space and Earth environmental data that results from those missions."

required key personnel to have communication, coordination, and budget/scheduling related skills--also referred to by NOAA as program management support experience--and also required scientific, technical expertise; in this context, we note that the protester focuses on the PWS program management support requirements to the exclusion of the technical expertise requirements. TORFP at 20-21. The record shows that the agency evaluated STC's four proposed key personnel; found that two of the four proposed SMEs primarily had technical expertise and did not have significant program management support experience, which reduced the agency's confidence; and found that the remaining two key personnel were "highly qualified for their proposed roles." AR, Tab 10, TET Consensus Report at 20. In other words, the protester has not shown that the agency's judgment in assigning a "confident" rating to STC's proposal under the key personnel element is unreasonable. We also do not find reasonable the protester's assertion that the two proposed key personnel at issue had no experience with communication, collaboration, and budget/scheduling. See, e.g., AR, Tab 6, STC Proposal at 61-62. Taking the agency's evaluation of STC's key personnel as a whole, we have no basis to question the reasonableness of the agency's evaluation of the awardee's proposal under this technical element.

The protest is denied.

Edda Emmanuelli Perez
General Counsel