8.602 Policy.

- (a) In accordance with $\underline{10~U.S.C.~3905}$ and Section 637 of Division H of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2005 (Pub. L. 108-447) ($\underline{18~U.S.C.~4124}$ note), and except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section, agencies \underline{shall} -
- (1) Before purchasing an item of supply listed in the FPI Schedule, conduct market research to determine whether the FPI item is comparable to supplies available from the private sector that best meet the Government's needs in terms of price, quality, and time of delivery. This is a unilateral determination made at the discretion of the contracting officer. The arbitration provisions of $\underline{18}$ $\underline{U.S.C.}$ $\underline{4124(b)}$ do not apply.
- (2) Prepare a written determination that includes supporting rationale explaining the assessment of price, quality, and time of delivery, based on the results of *market research* comparing the FPI item to *supplies* available from the private sector.
- (3) If the FPI item is comparable, purchase the item from FPI following the ordering procedures at http://www.unicor.gov, unless a waiver is obtained in accordance with 8.604; and
- (4) If the FPI item is not comparable in one or more of the areas of price, quality, and time of delivery-
- (i) Acquire the item using-
- (A) Competitive procedures (e.g., the procedures in $\underline{6.102}$, the set-aside procedures in $\underline{\text{subpart } 19.5}$, or competition conducted in accordance with $\underline{\text{part } 13}$); or
- (B) The fair opportunity procedures in $\underline{16.505}$, if placing an order under a multiple award delivery-order contract;
- (ii) Include FPI in the *solicitation* process and consider a timely *offer* from FPI for award in accordance with the item description or specifications, and evaluation factors in the *solicitation*-
- (A) If the *solicitation* is available through the *Governmentwide point of entry* (Contract Opportunities at $\underline{SAM.gov}$), it is not necessary to provide a separate copy of the *solicitation* to FPI;
- (B) If the solicitation is not available through Contract Opportunities at $\underline{SAM.gov}$, provide a copy of the solicitation to FPI:
- (iii) When using a multiple award schedule issued under the procedures in <u>subpart 8.4</u> or when using the fair opportunity procedures in <u>16.505</u>-
- (A) Establish and communicate to FPI the item description or specifications, and evaluation factors that will be used as the basis for selecting a source, so that an *offer* from FPI can be evaluated on the same basis as the contract or schedule holder; and
- (B) Consider a timely *offer* from FPI;
- (iv) Award to the source offering the item determined by the agency to provide the *best value* to the Government; and

- (v) When the FPI item is determined to provide the *best value* to the Government as a result of FPI's response to a competitive *solicitation*, follow the ordering procedures at http://www.unicor.gov.
- (b) The procedures in paragraph (a) of this section do not apply if an exception in 8.605(b) through (g) applies.
- (c) In some cases where FPI and an AbilityOne participating nonprofit agency produce identical items (see 8.603), FPI grants a waiver to permit the Government to purchase a portion of its requirement from the AbilityOne participating nonprofit agency. When this occurs, the portion of the requirement for which FPI has granted a waiver-
- (1) *Shall* be purchased from the AbilityOne participating nonprofit agency using the procedures in subpart 8.7; and
- (2) Shall not be subject to the procedures in paragraph (a) of this section.
- (d) Disputes regarding price, quality, character, or suitability of *supplies* produced by FPI, except for determinations under paragraph (a)(1) of this section, are subject to arbitration as specified in $\underline{18}$ $\underline{\text{U.S.C. 4124}}$. The statute provides that the arbitration *shall* be conducted by a board consisting of the Comptroller General of the *United States*, the Administrator of General Services, and the President, or their representatives. The decisions of the board are final and binding on all parties.

Parent topic: Subpart 8.6 - Acquisition from Federal Prison Industries, Inc.