



Department of Budget and Management
GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT POLICY BOARD
TECHNICAL SUPPORT OFFICE

NPM No. 80-2013

24 September 2013

MR. MIGUELITO ALBERTO F. ACHURRA

President

AQA GLOBAL CONSTRUCTION INC.

AQA Bldg. 302 V. Cruz St., Little Baguio,
San Juan City

Re: Bill of Quantities; Zero and/or Dash

Dear Mr. Achurra:

This is in response to your letter dated 7 September 2013, seeking clarification whether the bid would be considered responsive if there are no prices indicated in the columns for "Material" and "Labor" although "0" (zero) is indicated in the "Total" column in the Bill of Quantities.

At the outset, please be advised that the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) is vested with the responsibility of evaluating the bids, which utilizes a non-discretionary criterion in considering, among others, the completeness of the bids submitted. Accordingly, the Government Procurement Policy Board (GPPB) does not dictate upon, nor interfere with the functions of the BAC since these fall within the latter's authority as sanctioned by law for as long the BAC observes its concomitant responsibility to perform functions with judiciousness, adhering to the principles of transparency, accountability, equity, efficiency, and economy in the procurement process that it carries out for the procuring entity¹. Thus, the GPPB has no authority to act for and decide in behalf of the BAC or the Head of the Procuring Entity concerned².

Nevertheless, for your guidance, Section 32.2.1 of the revised Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act (RA) No. 9184 provides that unless the Instructions to Bidders allow partial bids, bids that do not address or provide all the required items or where no price was indicated in the Bidding Documents, including bill of quantities, shall be considered non-responsive, and thus, automatically disqualified. However, specifying a "0" for an item would mean that it is being offered for free to the Government.

As discussed in a previous opinion³, the Generic Procurement Manual (GPM) for Consulting Services expressly provides that specifying a "0" (zero) or a "-" (dash) for the required item means that the same is being offered free of charge. While the GPM for both

¹ NPM No. 065-2009 dated 17 December 2009.

² NPM No. 05-2008 dated 30 April 2008.

³ NPM No. 80-2012 dated 4 July 2012.

Goods and Infrastructure Projects only indicates “0” in the evaluation of bids, it can be gleaned that the intention of the rules is to provide a standard procedure for the procurement of government projects. Such interpretation is consistent with the rationale behind the rule on ensuring the integrity of the bids. This is because leaving blank spaces in the bidding documents would open the door for possible unauthorized insertions and entries, thereby rendering inutile the principles of transparency and competition governing public procurement.

Based on the foregoing, a bid that does not provide all the required items or where no price was indicated in the “Material” and “Labor” columns in the Bill of Quantities shall be considered non-responsive, and the bidder is automatically disqualified. While indicating a “0” (zero) or a “-” (dash) in the “Total” column in the Bill of Quantities means that the total items are being offered for free to the government. However, leaving the “Per Unit” column for either “Material” or “Labor” columns blank still makes the bid non-responsive, which will automatically disqualify the bidder.

We hope that this opinion issued by the GPPB-TSO provided sufficient guidance on the matter. Please note that this opinion is being rendered on the basis of the facts and particular situation presented, and may not be applicable given a different set of facts and circumstances. Should you have additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Very truly yours,


DENNIS S. SANTIAGO
Executive Director