



Seeing Behind the Curtain

How DISA Makes Acquisition Decisions & Evaluates Proposals

Office of Small Business Programs

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How DISA Decides Where to Compete an Acquisition

- Acquisition Strategy decisions are always driven by market research
- Agency must first address the “Rule of Two” before identifying where to compete a requirement
 - Market research must address *if two or more small businesses anywhere* can meet the requirements.
 - If two or more SB interests can meet the requirements, *and at least two are contract holders under an existing multiple-award contract or the GSA MAS*, then the requirement may be solicited under the existing vehicle.



Competition in Contracting Act (CICA)

In accordance with CICA, It is the Contracting Officer’s duty to promote competition to the maximum extent practicable.



FAR 19.201(a)

It is the policy of the Government to provide maximum practicable opportunities in its acquisitions to small business concerns.



Take Away

If you believe that an acquisition is suitable for a small business set-aside, it is imperative that you demonstrate your capabilities via response to Market Research.



Considerations for Competition

The Government has asked us what we think!
What do they do next?

The Government's Perspective:

Value is Everywhere, but where can we get the most of it?

With every requirement, there are variables that determine an acquisition decision; to include:

- Tolliver Case Considerations
- Acquisition History
- Scope & Ceiling of Vehicles
- PoP of Vehicles
- Est. Number of Offerors
- Quality of Proposals



Happy Customers

The Government is always looking for the best value; for taxpayers, the warfighters, and all stakeholders - including yourselves!



Superior Value

While evaluation strategies differ for every requirement, the end-goal is always to get the best value for the interested parties above.



Response Prevalence

Your feedback on Sources Sought Notices or Draft RFPs are tantamount to our acquisition planning activities.



Innovation to Market

During our market research phases, we are looking for a wide variety of aspects that help to improve and innovate our future acquisition strategies.



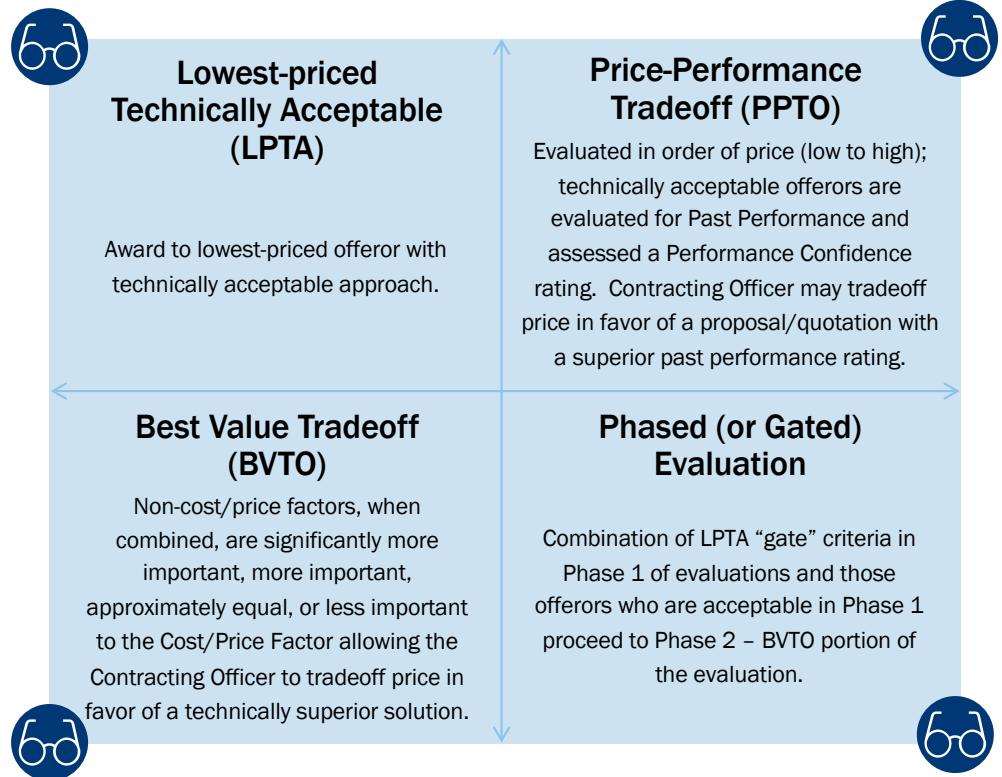
Understanding Evaluation Criteria

How Do We Know What is Evaluated?

The Government's Answer:

Evaluation criteria is identified in the solicitation, RFP, or RFQ:

Part 8.4 Federal Supply Schedules	✓ Body of RFQ Letter
Part 15 Formal Source Selections IAW FAR Part 15 Procedures	✓ Section M
Part 16.505 Fair Opportunity Procedures	✓ Body of RFP Letter





Aspects Influencing Evaluation Timeline

Broad Criteria

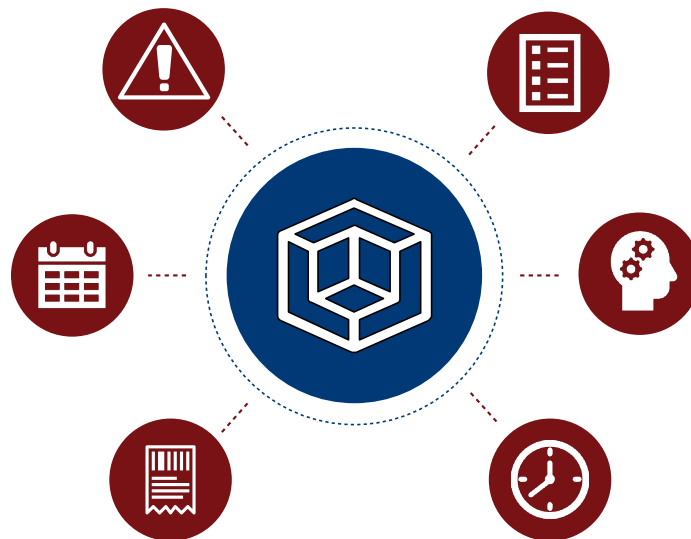
Evaluation criteria written too broadly – should focus on high-risk discriminators.

Typical Leadtime

DITCO's lead time for a service acquisition greater than \$10M under a GWAC/MAC is ~210 calendar days.

Internal Reviews

Internal reviews are conducted throughout the evaluation phase (initial, interim, & final) to ensure consistency, legal sufficiency, and compliance.



Numerous Evaluation Elements

Each element (sentence, bullet, etc.) of the stated evaluation criteria must be addressed in the evaluator's narratives.

PALT Assumptions

Procurement Acquisition Lead Times (PALTs) presume that no greater than 5 proposals are received; and that only 1 round of discussions will be necessary.

Average Evaluation / Proposal

BVTO evaluations take on average 5 days per proposal received to complete initial evaluations. Evaluation of 1st proposal always takes longer than average as evaluators synergize.



Proposal Evaluation Timeline

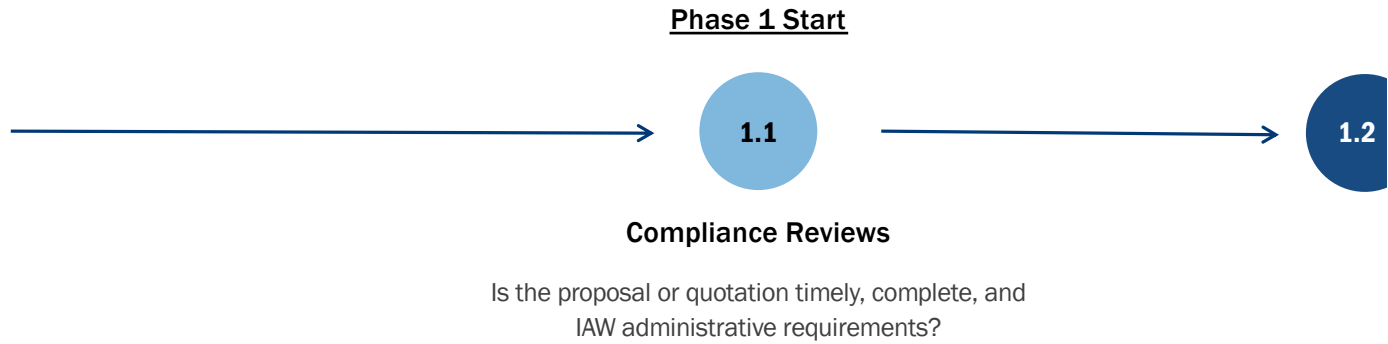
Why Does the Government Take So Long to Evaluate Proposals?

The Government's Perspective:

There are checks & balances built into every single phase of the evaluation process to ensure fair competition and opportunity.

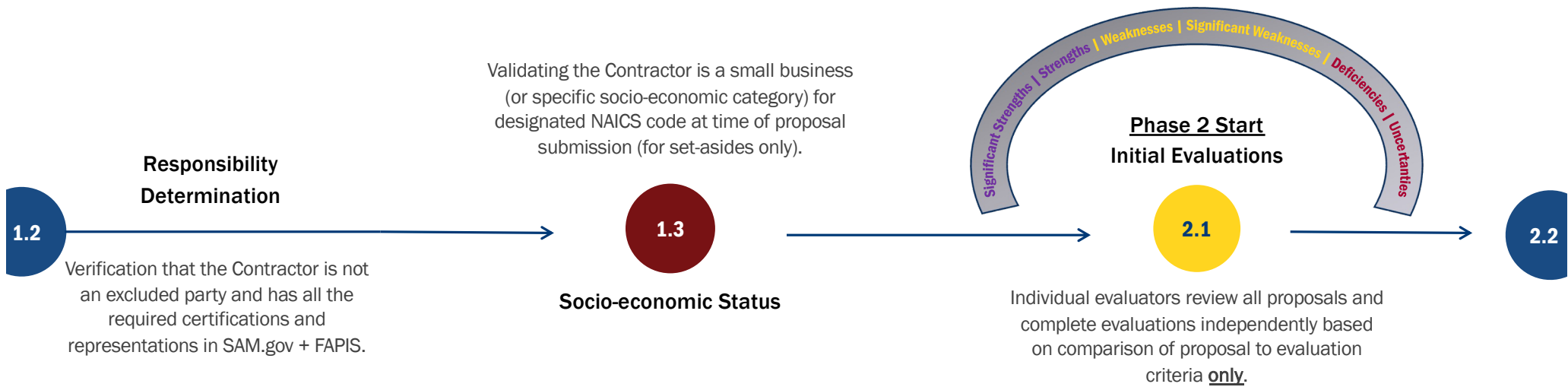
The Government holds a great deal of responsibility as stewards of taxpayer dollars and enablers of Warfighter effectiveness.

In pursuit of meeting that responsibility - and in an effort of true transparency - here are the typical evaluation process phases →



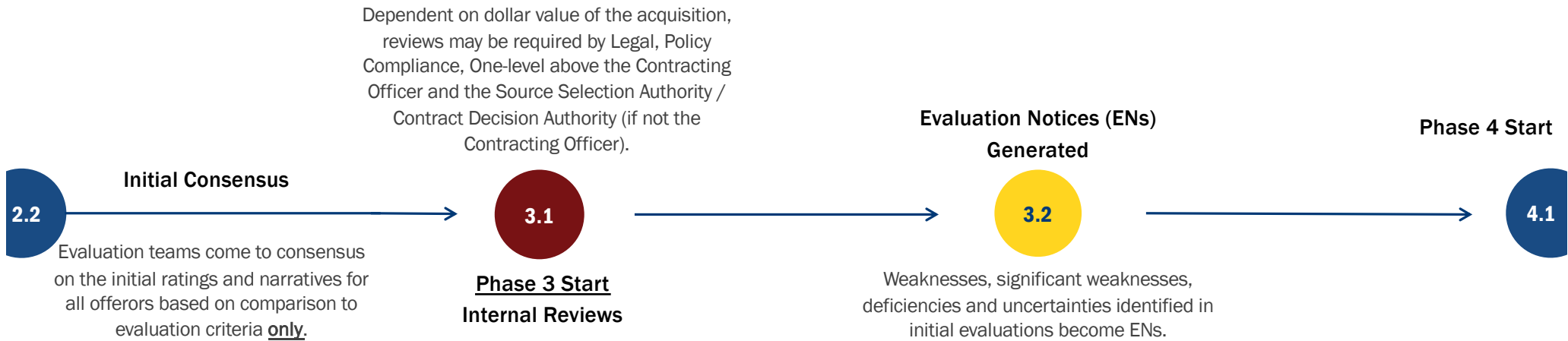


Proposal Evaluation Timeline





Proposal Evaluation Timeline





Proposal Evaluation Timeline

Phase 4 Start

Contracting Officer prepares a Competitive Range Determination documenting which contractors should remain in competition and included in discussions.

4.1

Competitive Range Determination

Discussions

4.2

ENs are issued to the contractors remaining in the Competitive Range.

Contractors prepare/submit EN responses.

4.3

Receipt of EN Responses

Phase 5 Start **Interim Evaluations**

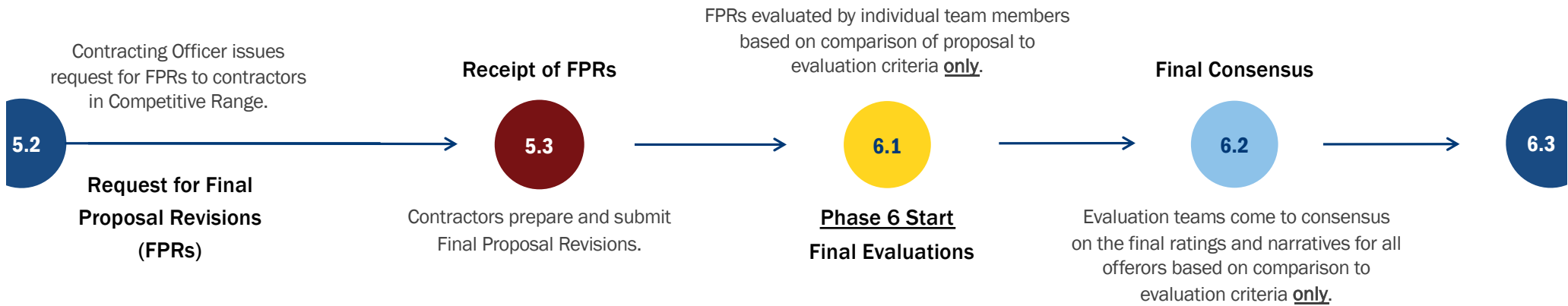
5.1

EN responses evaluated by individual evaluators followed by team consensus to determine if EN is resolved or unresolved; ratings and narratives updated accordingly in consensus documents.

5.2



Proposal Evaluation Timeline





Proposal Evaluation Timeline





Learn to Think Like an Evaluator

<p>Remember, the PMO just wants to solve a problem. Who solves that problem for us is the Source Selection Authority's decision.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Highlight the points that you believe serve as discriminators which make you unique. ✓ And then tie those points back to the evaluation criteria. ✓ Come full-circle by then linking those points to your past experience. 	<p>Ensure proposals or presentations are clear, concise, thorough, and Proofread!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ A technical proposal or presentation looks great to other subject matter experts in that mission area. ✓ But strengths can be overlooked by a SME in a different mission area just looking for value propositions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Government source selection teams are made up of personnel from a wide-variety of backgrounds, expertise, and experience. ➤ Your proposals and/or presentations should be created by capture teams with equally diverse skill-sets. 	<p>Write proposals or prepare for oral presentations, like you do not know the skillset of the person reading or listing to them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Just to foot stomp – while it may seem silly to have to say – you need to proofread your proposals. ➤ Lack of attention to detail in proposals and/or presentations indicates an overall lack of quality control. 	<p>Have your best technical capture teams provide the core content, but let the technical writers finalize the proposal or presentation.</p>



Let Your Strengths Be Your Strength

The Government tells us they want Value, but how can we make our Strengths stand out?

The Government's Perspective:

Value is showcased in proposals by highlighting the things that make your capabilities unique – Your Discriminators!

Tell us how you are different from others.

It is your job to articulate that what you can do is a value-add to the Customer, not for us to find it or to make presumptions about your proposed capability.

What you have done in the past is great and all, but how can you apply that skill or capability to Our requirements **and** in Our environment?



TIPS & TACTICS:

Support Your Claims

Be sure that your claimed discriminators can be supported by your past performance and experience.

Be Purposeful with Words

Choose your wording intentionally. Avoid generic buzz-words or phrases that are meant to check a box instead of providing substance.

Showcase Flexibility

Highlight how your discriminators – the aspects that make you special – have significant value to the Government because they can be applied in multiple future contexts.



Questions & Comments for Discussion



DISA: The premier IT and telecommunications provider for the US military

