

If a Canadian company receives a solicitation document from an agency other than the Canadian Commercial Corporation, and does not receive, within three days, instructions from CCC which include the closing date in Ottawa for the submission and the identity of the officer handling the enquiry, a telegraphic request for that information should be addressed to the U.S. Division, Export Supply Centre CCC, or telephone: (819) 997-3314

2.1.5 Sources of Contract Opportunities

Many sources of information are available to Canadian firms to keep informed of and explore contract opportunities offered by the U.S. Procurement Agencies. Some of the sources are identified in the following paragraphs.

2.1.5.1 U.S. Bidders Mailing Lists

A Bidders Mailing List is usually maintained by the U.S. Acquisition Agencies for each commodity. Canadian firms wishing to be listed for the appropriate commodities must apply to the Canadian Commercial Corporation which will ask for detailed information on the company's engineering, manufacturing and financial capabilities before endorsing a company's request for listing.

By regulation, no U.S. military acquisition agency may list a Canadian supplier unless CCC certifies and forwards the application for listing. Listed sources receive copies of relevant solicitations directly from the acquisition agency.

However Canadian companies can request bid packages direct from a command even though they were not drawn from automated bid list. A review of the Commerce Business Daily (CBD) referred to below, will identify opportunities.

Retention of names on Bidders Mailing Lists at U.S. military acquisition agencies is dependent upon a response to each IFB, RFP and RFQ, by a bid, proposal, or quotation or a brief note giving the reason for not otherwise responding. This notice should be sent directly to the U.S. agency concerned if the document is received directly from the agency, with a copy of the notice to CCC. When the IFB, RFP or RFQ is received from CCC, the Failure to Quote Notice enclosed with the solicitation should be completed and returned to CCC. The agency will then be advised by the Corporation on behalf of the Canadian company. U.S. military acquisition agencies have made a practice of removing company names from Bidders Mailing Lists after two failures by a prospective bidder either to submit a bid, proposal or quotation or to otherwise respond.

2.1.5.2 Commerce Business Daily

The Commerce Business Daily, published five times a week by the U.S. Department of Commerce, provides valuable information to companies interested in bidding into the U.S. defence market. Information on contract awards, current requirements, Pre-Invitation Notices and Advance Planning Procurement Information (APPI) is published regularly. Interested Canadian companies should subscribe to the Commerce Business Daily by forwarding an application to:

Superintendent of Documents
Government Printing Office
Washington, D.C. 20402
Telephone: (202) 783-3238

The annual subscription is U.S. \$175 (First class mailing) and a six-month trial subscription is U.S. \$90. Remittance should be sent to the U.S. Government Printing Office by cheque payable to Superintendent of Documents. It will take at least six weeks for delivery of first issue. It is strongly recommended that Canadian firms subscribe via airmail because requirements advertised on the CBD frequently close only a few days after the advertisement and the time left to prepare bids is often critically short. Companies are reminded to include their full mailing address when they forward their application and remittance.

2.1.5.3 Sales Representatives

Canadian firms producing technically sophisticated items cannot rely on listing with CCC to guarantee opportunities to bid on U.S. defence requirements. U.S. military acquisition agencies generally invite proposals only from companies whose technical abilities are known to them. Therefore such companies find it essential to have knowledgeable representatives call on the cognizant officials in the acquisition agencies and convince them of their companies' competence. To be effective, such visits must take place well before a solicitation document is issued.

A company decision may be required whether to employ its own personnel in such activities or to retain a locally appointed sales organization to make the necessary contact. There are various factors to consider and these are rather different from those influencing the selection of an agent to seek straight-forward subcontract work.

When contemplating appointment of a sales organization, the manufacturer has to satisfy himself that the representative is well acquainted with cognizant technical and buying offices of the U.S. military agencies, and has demonstrated an up-to-date knowledge of potential requirements. If the Canadian product is to be offered for a classified U.S. defence program, the security clearance situation of a U.S. citizen working for a Canadian company needs to be clarified. See Chapter 4.5 for additional information on this matter.