

AFG Purchasing Guidelines for 2009 Awards

The following email was sent to the FEMA office in Washington DC for the purpose of clarifying apparent differences in the requirements applicable to the expenditure of funds awarded under the 2009 Assistance to Firefighters Grant program.

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Subject: *Purchasing guidelines*

At a recent AFG workshop, I thought I understood the representative to say that all purchases using AFG money had to go to bid and that a minimum of two responses were required.

I conveyed this information to a 2009 award recipient who then called a Region IV representative for confirmation. The recipient states that he was told that purchasing from an approved Alabama State Contract vendor (at State Contract prices) was all that was necessary.

Would you please verify the correct answer?

The answer from Ms. Cannon (paraphrased) is as follows:

BOTH answers can be correct. The following excerpt from the 2009 AFG Guidance is the basis for this conclusion.

The grantee must follow its established procurement processes when purchasing vehicles, equipment, and services with AFG funds. If the grantee has no established procedures, it should obtain at least two quotes/bids for the items being procured and document the process used in the grant files.

If the grantees normal procedure is to use a Federal, State, or Regional contract for purchasing, that IS *its established procurement process*. If the grantee's normal procedure is to purchase through competitive bidding, that IS *its established procurement process*. This requires preparation of bid specifications, solicitation to qualified vendors, and at least two bid responses received and recorded are required to comply with the 2009 Guidelines.

The 2009 AFG Guidance at www.firegrantsupport.com/docs/2009AFGguidance.pdf is available for reference. The specific section mentioned above is for Section (5) on page 58. Additional information verifying the aforementioned can be found in 44 CFR Part 13, as well applicable State codes relating to procurement.

The Code of Alabama specifically provides an exception for competitive bidding in Section 41-16-21.1 by allowing joint purchasing agreements which covers the use of the Alabama State Contract as a non-bid source for communications equipment (See Section T300).

Falcon Direct is an approved Alabama State Contract vendor for BK/Relm, ICOM, and Midland as well as offering State Contract prices on many Motorola models. Additional information is available at <http://falconinfo.blogspot.com/2008/10/alabama-state-contract-news.html>. If you have any further questions, or if we may be of service in any way, please call us at 205.854.2611.