

Directive 2009/81/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009 on the coordination of procedures for the award of certain works contracts, supply contracts and service contracts by contracting authorities or entities in the fields of defence and security, and amending Directives 2004/17/EC and 2004/18/EC (Text with EEA relevance)

TITLE II

RULES ON CONTRACTS

CHAPTER IV

Specific rules governing contract documentation

Article 18

Technical specifications

1 The technical specifications as defined in point 1 of Annex III shall be set out in the contract documentation (contract notices, contract documents, descriptive documents or supporting documents).

2 Technical specifications shall afford equal access for tenderers and shall not have the effect of creating unjustified obstacles to the opening up of procurement to competition.

3 Without prejudice to either compulsory national technical rules (including those related to product safety) or the technical requirements to be met by the Member State under international standardisation agreements in order to guarantee the interoperability required by those agreements, and provided they are compatible with Community law, technical specifications shall be drawn up:

- a either by reference to technical specifications defined in Annex III and, in order of preference, to:
 - national civil standards transposing European standards,
 - European technical approvals,
 - common civil technical specifications,
 - national civil standards transposing international standards,
 - other international civil standards,
 - other technical reference systems established by the European standardisation bodies, or, where these do not exist, other national civil standards, national technical approvals or national technical specifications relating to the design, calculation and execution of the works and use of the products,
 - civil technical specifications stemming from industry and widely recognised by it, or,
 - the national ‘defence standards’ defined in point 3 of Annex III and defence materiel specifications similar to those standards,

Every reference shall be followed by the expression ‘or equivalent’;

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- b or in terms of performance or functional requirements; the latter may include environmental characteristics.

However, such parameters must be sufficiently precise to allow tenderers to determine the subject-matter of the contract and to allow contracting authorities/entities to award the contract;

- c or in terms of performance or functional requirements as mentioned in point (b), with reference to the specifications mentioned in point (a) as a means of presuming conformity with such performance or functional requirements;
- d or by referring to the specifications mentioned in point (a) for certain characteristics, and by referring to the performance or functional requirements mentioned in point (b) for other characteristics.

4 Where a contracting authority/entity makes use of the option of referring to the specifications mentioned in paragraph 3(a), it can not reject a tender on the grounds that the products and services tendered for do not comply with the specifications to which it has referred, once the tenderer proves in its tender to the satisfaction of the contracting authority/entity, by whatever appropriate means, that the solutions which it proposes satisfy in an equivalent manner the requirements defined by the technical specifications.

An appropriate means might be constituted by a technical dossier from the manufacturer or a test report from a recognised body.

5 Where a contracting authority/entity uses the option laid down in paragraph 3 to prescribe performance-related or functional requirements, it may not reject a tender for works, products or services which comply with a national standard transposing a European standard, with a European technical approval, a common technical specification, an international standard or a technical reference system established by a European standardisation body, if these specifications address the performance or functional requirements which it has laid down.

In its tender, the tenderer must prove to the satisfaction of the contracting authority/entity and by any appropriate means that the work, product or service in compliance with the standard meets the performance or functional requirements of the contracting authority/entity.

An appropriate means might be constituted by a technical dossier from the manufacturer or a test report from a recognised body.

6 Where contracting authorities/entities lay down environmental characteristics in terms of performance or functional requirements as referred to in paragraph 3(b), they may use the detailed specifications, or, if necessary, parts thereof, as defined by European or (multi-) national eco-labels, or by any other eco-label, provided that:

- those specifications are appropriate as a means of defining the characteristics of the supplies or services that are the object of the contract,
- the requirements for the label are drawn up on the basis of scientific information,
- the eco-labels are adopted using a procedure in which all stakeholders, such as government bodies, consumers, manufacturers, distributors and environmental organisations, can participate, and,
- they are accessible to all interested parties,

Contracting authorities/entities may indicate that the products and services bearing the eco-label are presumed to comply with the technical specifications laid down in the contract documents; they must accept any other appropriate means of proof, such as a technical dossier from the manufacturer or a test report from a recognised body.

7 'Recognised bodies', within the meaning of this Article, are test and calibration laboratories, and certification and inspection bodies which comply with applicable European standards.

Contracting authorities/entities shall accept certificates from recognised bodies established in other Member States.

8 Unless justified by the subject-matter of the contract, technical specifications shall not refer to a specific make or source, or a particular process, or to trade marks, patents, types or a specific origin or production with the effect of favouring or eliminating certain undertakings or certain products. Such reference shall be permitted on an exceptional basis, where a sufficiently precise and intelligible description of the subject-matter of the contract pursuant to paragraphs 3 and 4 is not possible; such reference shall be accompanied by the words 'or equivalent'.