General Terms and Conditions of Purchase
Heinrich Georg GmbH Maschinenfabrik

Section 1 Scope

(1) These terms and conditions of purchase apply exclusively to all our orders and requests for quotation. They also apply – in the respective then current version – to all future business transactions with the Supplier, even if they are not explicitly agreed upon for each transaction. Any other terms and conditions will not become part of the contract, even if we do not reject them explicitly while being aware of them.

(2) If reference to Incoterms is made in contractual agreements, the Incoterms 2020 shall apply.

Section 2 Offers made by the Supplier

(1) Offers made by the Supplier shall be at no cost to ourselves and shall be binding on the Supplier. The Supplier’s offers shall be based on the exact quantities and condition of goods as specified in our requests for quotation and shall expressly point out any deviations therefrom otherwise.

(2) With his offer, the Supplier shall provide us with any essential data sheets, drawings and documents that are required to discuss the technical details of the products to be delivered. However, such discussion or other form of involvement in development work or testing on our part shall not release the Supplier from his sole responsibility for the product or from any ensuing warranty or other obligations. Without prejudice to the requirements and specifications stipulated by us, the Supplier shall additionally be obliged to include in his offer all the goods and services that are necessary in order for us to be able to use the product for the intended purpose.

Section 3 Orders

(1) No orders or agreements are binding unless we issue or confirm them in writing, via facsimile or e-mail. Should any orders or agreements be made orally or by telephone, we must confirm them in writing subsequently for them to be binding, as must any oral ancillary agreements or amendments to the contract. The same principle shall also apply to any deliveries or services that are additionally agreed. Our silence to suggestions, requests, etc. made by the Supplier shall by no means be interpreted as our consent to the Supplier’s suggestion.

(2) Any of our orders that the Supplier wishes to accept need to be confirmed in text form by the Supplier. If we do not receive the confirmation of order within two weeks after receipt of the order by the Supplier, we are no longer bound by the order. In case of informal initiation of business, our written order shall qualify as a commercial letter of confirmation.

(3) We do not recognise any order confirmations that vary from our order, even if we do not reject them in writing.

(4) We may demand that changes be made to the goods to be supplied and/or the delivery dates also after the conclusion of the contract where this is reasonable for the Supplier. If contracts shall be amended accordingly, the effects on both sides must be taken reasonably into account, particularly in terms of additional or reduced costs and with regard to the delivery dates.

(5) If the Supplier realises or should realise as an expert in his field that an order is incomplete, or that the purpose pursued by the order cannot be achieved by this delivery, he must inform us accordingly without undue delay and in detail in text form.

Section 4 Delivery periods

(1) The delivery periods and dates specified in our order are bindingly agreed unless the Supplier has explicitly rejected these in text form or we have agreed other dates with the Supplier in writing. If we did not specify delivery dates in our order, the delivery must be carried out immediately upon conclusion of the contract. Whether delivery dates or deadlines are met depends on when goods reach the place of use specified in our order and/or on the time of successful acceptance (Abnahme) where acceptance is required.

(2) The Supplier shall only have the right to make partial deliveries or provide partial performance if this has been agreed in advance in writing. We reserve the right to acknowledge partial deliveries or partial performance in individual cases and invoice the Supplier for any extra costs incurred as a result of such partial delivery or partial performance. The Supplier shall have the right to prove that we have not incurred any loss or, if a loss was incurred, that it was significantly smaller.

(3) Should the Supplier realise that he cannot meet the agreed delivery dates, he must notify us accordingly without undue delay in text form, stating the reasons and how long the delay is likely to last.

(4) If we accept supplies or services which are late, this does not amount to waiving any claims or rights.

(5) If the Supplier fails to adhere to the agreed dates, we may rescind the contract in accordance with the statutory provisions. This shall also apply if the Supplier is not responsible for the failure to adhere to the agreed dates. If the Supplier is repeatedly late with delivery and we issue a prior warning letter in writing to no avail, we may also revoke any or all orders not performed at that time with immediate effect.

(6) Should the Supplier be unable to meet agreed deadlines for reasons he is responsible for, we may, after expiration of a reasonable period of grace set by us, also demand damages instead of delivery or procure substitute goods from third parties at the Supplier’s expense. Any delivery before the agreed delivery date shall only be permitted if we have given our prior consent in writing. Weshall have the right to return any goods that have been delivered ahead of schedule at the expense of the Supplier or store such goods at the Supplier’s expense until the agreed delivery date.

(7) If the Supplier is unable to comply with the agreed deadline or delivery date due to force majeure (e.g. strike at the Supplier, civil unrest, war, fire, flooding), the delivery period shall be extended by the duration of the disruption. The Supplier may appeal to the aforementioned grounds only on the condition that he informed us immediately about the hindrance and its prospective duration. If the disruption is more than temporary in duration and acceptance of Supplier’s late performance is unreasonable for us due to the delay, we have the right to withdraw from the contract in respect of the part which has not yet been fulfilled. In case of a partial performance, we have the right to withdraw from the contract in its entirety if we have no interest in the partial performance.

(8) Unless the preceding regulations of this Section 4 provide otherwise, the statutory provisions shall apply as regards the Supplier’s liability for delays.

Section 5 Prices, dispatch, packaging, transfer of risk and title

(1) Prices are fixed once agreed, and include the costs of packaging, freight and transport to our specified delivery address and/or point of use. Where the contractual agreement requires us to bear the cost of transport, the least expensive manner of transport must be chosen.

(2) Dispatch is at the Supplier’s risk. The risk of all kinds of deterioration, including loss by accident, remains with the Supplier until delivery to our specified delivery address and/or place of use.

We are ‘S/V/RVS Waiver Customer’ (S/V/RVS-Verzichktkunde). If the Supplier nevertheless takes out transport insurance, any costs incurred through such insurance shall be borne by the Supplier.

(3) Title to goods supplied passes to us upon receipt of the goods at the latest. We do not accept any extended or prolonged retention of title on the Supplier’s part.

(4) The Supplier is obliged to avoid unnecessary packaging so as to minimise our disposal costs.

Section 6 Warranty and liability

(1) The Supplier’s warranty obligations and liability are governed by the statutory provisions unless otherwise stipulated in these terms and conditions or in any other written agreement between ourselves and the Supplier.

(2) The Supplier shall ensure that all supplies and services he provides are state-of-the-art, comply with relevant legal requirements and instructions and guidelines of the competent authorities, mutual indemnity associations and professional associations. This applies, amongst others, to compliance with the provisions of law regarding radiation protection and compliance with any radiation limits, insofar as they are relevant to the products that are to be supplied by the Supplier. The Supplier shall be obliged to supply all items free from any radioactive radiation that is not permitted in the European Union or the European Economic Area. The Supplier shall be obliged to carefully examine the above and also to ensure that any applicable limits are being complied with before delivering the products and, upon request, furnish us with proof that this examination was carried out and that the relevant limits have been complied with, i.e., furnish us in particular with the relevant test reports.
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All supplies and services have, furthermore, to comply with all the data and quality standards as stated in our orders, drawings and/or supply specifications. These define, together with the state of the art, the aforementioned provisions of law and the instructions and guidelines of the competent authorities, mutual indemnity associations and professional associations, the required quality of the goods or services to be provided by the Supplier. Should the Supplier have any concerns as to our desired manner of performance, he must inform us in text form without undue delay. Should the specifications that are contained in our order have to be varied in exceptional cases, the Supplier must obtain our prior consent to this in writing. This consent does not affect the Supplier’s warranty and guarantee obligations. Unless we agree with the Supplier on a different required quality of the goods to be provided by the Supplier, the Supplier’s product information (e.g. in catalogues) shall be deemed agreed upon as minimum specifications.

(3) Any obligation of ours to carry out an examination of products delivered and to lodge complaints about defects of the products shall be governed by the statutory regulations (§§ 377, 383 German Commercial Code (HGB)), with the following proviso: Regardless of any obligation to carry out an examination of products delivered shall be limited to defects that are apparent during our inspection of incoming goods, which is carried out in the form of an external inspection, also of the delivery documents [e.g. damage in transit, incorrect or short delivery], or which can be discovered during our quality check of reasonable random samples. Our obligation to lodge complaints about defects that are only discovered later shall remain unaffected thereby. If we have a duty under said regulations to complain of defects, the complaint is deemed to be on time if it is lodged with the Supplier within 3 working days after delivery of the goods, in the case of obvious defects, or within 14 days after a hidden defect has been discovered or could have been discovered by due inspection. If acceptance (Abnahme) has been agreed with the Supplier, such acceptance shall replace the obligation to carry out an examination of products delivered and lodge complaints about defects, in this case, we shall have no additional obligation to carry out an examination of products delivered and lodge complaints about defects.

(4) The Supplier shall remedy any defects in supplies or services notified to him by us during the warranty/ guarantee period, which includes failing to meet guaranteed data and the absence of warranted specifications and quantities, on our request without undue delay and free of charge by repair or replacement of defective components, which is at our sole choice. The Supplier must also bear all necessary expenses incurred in carrying out repairs or making replacement deliveries (in particular, transport, travel, labour and materials costs). If the defective item has been installed in, or affixed to, another item in accordance with its nature and purpose, the Supplier shall additionally be obliged, as part of the repair or replacement obligation, to reimburse any necessary expenses incurred in removing the defective items and installing or affixing the repaired items or the delivered new items that are free from defects. The provisions of §§ 439 para. 4, 445a, 445 German Civil Code (BGB) shall remain unaffected. This shall be without prejudice to any further or other claims in law, and, more particularly, the right to rescind, demand a reduction of the price and/or damages.

(5) Should the Supplier fail to meet his guarantee or warranty obligations within a reasonable respite set by us, due to fault on his part, we may have the measures necessary to remedy the defect be carried out by ourselves or by third parties, at the Supplier’s risk and expense, without prejudice to his warranty or guarantee obligations. In urgent cases, we may remedy defects ourselves, or engage a third party to do so at the Supplier’s expense, having consulted the Supplier. Wherever required to ensure that we can supply our own customers on time or if there is a risk of exceptionally high losses, we may remedy minor defects ourselves without consulting the Supplier beforehand and without prejudice to the Supplier’s warranty or guarantee obligations.

(6) The Supplier will indemnify us against any and all claims, on whatever grounds in law, which third parties may bring against us based on defects of the Supplier’s goods, unless the Supplier is not responsible for the defect. In addition, the Supplier will reimburse our necessary costs incurred in asserting our rights, including but not limited to costs of reasonable legal representation. The Supplier must further compensate us for any costs or damage incurred by us in carrying out a product recall, even if the recall campaign is only carried out as a precautionary measure, insofar as such campaign is in our customers’ interests or to protect third parties according to our due discretion. The Supplier has to reimburse us for the costs of such recall campaign(s) after expiry of the warranty period, if we have carried out the recall due to a respective directive issued by public authorities or in order to prevent risks to the life and health of product users or external third parties [“innocent bystanders”].

(7) The warranty period is 24 months unless explicitly agreed otherwise in writing with the Supplier, or a longer warranty period is stipulated by law for the product to be supplied by the Supplier. The warranty period begins no earlier than the date when the goods have been handed over to us or to the third party specified by us, at our designated delivery address or point of use. If acceptance procedures are required, the warranty period begins on the date of acceptance as stated in our written declaration of acceptance. The warranty periods shall be extended for supplied parts by the duration that the defective item cannot be used in the intended manner on account of the defect. In the event of subsequent fulfilment (Nachfüllungen), the original warranty period shall begin anew for the replacement or newly delivered parts.

(8) Acknowledgment of receipt or acceptance of supplied goods does not release the Supplier from his warranty obligations, even if we are aware of a defect.

(9) Approval of drawings submitted to us by the Supplier does not release the Supplier from his warranty obligations.

(10) Without our express written approval the Supplier may not alter the goods once contracts are signed or during the delivery period, even the most minor changes, and even if our specifications, dimensions, analyses, formulae, production methods etc. as prescribed and/or agreed with the Supplier in each case remain unchanged. No such variations may be made until we have given our consent in writing. Should the Supplier fail to meet these obligations through fault on his part, he will be liable for all our costs and those of third parties incurred in examinations, obtaining expert opinions, additional calculations, reproprocessing, replacement supplies etc.

(11) In view of all the risks that may arise from the supply of defective products, the Supplier will insure himself in the appropriate form (i.e. maintain in particular a product liability and product recall insurance policy with sufficient cover) and furnish proof of that insurance to us annually without waiting for a request.

Section 7 Third-party rights

(1) If royalties are payable for contractual use of the supplied goods, also in combination or interaction with other items, these royalties shall be borne by the Supplier. The Supplier warrants that all goods supplied – also in combination or interaction with other items – are free of intellectual property rights of third parties and, in particular, that neither the supplies or services and/or using the goods supplied infringe any patents or other third party intellectual property rights within the Federal Republic of Germany and the European Union.

(2) If third-party intellectual property is infringed by delivery or performance by the Supplier, the Supplier is obliged first and foremost to ensure that the infringement is remedied, either by procuring the rights or by modifying the supplied item or by supplying a modified item, providing this is reasonable and acceptable for us.

(3) Not affecting the provisions of Section 7 sub-section (2) above, the Supplier will indemnify us against claims by third parties for any breaches of intellectual property rights and will bear any and all costs we incur on this account. This aforesaid obligation does not apply if we conclude agreements with the third party in respect of such claims, in particular if we conclude a settlement agreement, without the Supplier’s consent.

(4) Sub-sections (1) – (3) above shall apply accordingly for such countries to which we export the goods delivered to the Supplier’s knowledge.

Section 8 Invoices and payments

(1) Invoices shall be issued no earlier than the date on which the product, including all contractually relevant documents, is delivered. Invoices must be sent separately by e-mail to rechnung@georg.com, they may not be enclosed with the goods.

(2) Invoices must correspond to our order in their wording and as regards the numbering of the goods. Any additional services and supplies must be separately itemised in the invoice with a reference to our respective prior written order.

(3) Unless otherwise agreed, payments shall be made at our option within 30 days net cash without deductions or within 14 days with deduction of a 3% discount, provided that we have no complaints about the delivery or service performed. All payments will be made subject to verification of the invoice. The applicable criterion for the term of payment is the date of our receipt of the proper invoice and all requisite documents.
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[e.g. material inspection certificate]. If the goods are delivered ahead of schedule, the time allowed for payment shall not commence before the agreed delivery date. Delays in payment due to the Supplier failing to issue invoices in accordance with this Section 8 are the responsibility of the Supplier. In the event of a defective delivery, we may retain payment until the delivery has been properly performed, without forfeiting any right to rebates, discounts or similar price reductions.

[4] Even if we were aware, at the time of paying the purchase price, that the supplied goods are defective, settlement of the invoices may not be construed to mean that we waive any claims arising from the goods being defective.

[5] We may set off amounts due to the Supplier against any amounts due to our affiliated companies. The Supplier may not set off his own claims unless his counterclaims are legally established, are undisputed or are acknowledged by us. He may not exercise any right of retention unless his counterclaim is based on the same contractual relationship.

[6] The Supplier may not, without our prior consent in writing (which we will not refuse unreasonably) assign his claims against us to any third parties or engage any third parties to collect them. If the Supplier for his own part is supplied subject to extended reservation of title (veräußerter Eigentumsvorbehalt), our consent for the purposes of the preceding clause is deemed to be given. Should the Supplier in violation of sentence 1 hereof, assign his claims to a third party without our consent, that assignment will be binding on us, although we may pay, in our own election, the Supplier or the third party with exonerating effect.

Section 9 Goods supplied by us

[1] The Supplier shall examine any goods supplied by us without undue delay upon delivery by us or by our supplier and, should there be a defect, notify us without undue delay. Should the defect become apparent at a later point in time, such notification shall be made without undue delay after the defect has been discovered. If the Supplier fails to perform these obligations, he must indemnify and hold us harmless from and against any damage or losses resulting from such failure (e.g. forfeiture of warranty claims against our own supplier). Furthermore, if the Supplier breaches the aforesaid examination and notification duties, he will be liable to us for any defects of the goods he supplies to us, even where such defects are due to defects of the goods supplied by us.

[2] The Supplier shall mark all goods supplied by us as our property and store these goods separately from other products so that the goods supplied by us can be identified as our property beyond any doubt for the entire duration of their storage and, where technically feasible and reasonable for the Supplier, also during their processing. The Supplier is liable to us should any goods we provide to him be lost or damaged. The Supplier shall insure the goods provided by us against fire, water, theft and similar causes of loss at his own expense at minimum at their market value. The Supplier shall inform us without undue delay should any of the goods supplied by us be impaired in law or fact.

[3] All processing of materials provided to the Supplier by us shall be performed for us. All such materials remain our property while being worked and processed. The parties agree that we shall acquire co-ownership in the products made using materials or components provided by us in proportion of the value of the goods supplied by us to the total value of the product. The same applies should we lose title by way of mixing or mingling.

[4] If we incur losses due to the Supplier acting in breach of his duties as stipulated in Section 9 sub-section (2) and Section 9 sub-section (3) above, the Supplier shall compensate us for such losses, unless the Supplier is not responsible for the breach of duty.

Section 10 Drawings/documents, intellectual property rights

[1] All documents, drawings, samples, etc. that we provide to the Supplier for a quote or for production of the delivery items shall remain our property; we reserve ownership and all other intellectual property rights in such items. The Supplier is not authorised to use any information, ideas or other knowhow contained therein for purposes other than the preparation of a quote for us or the performance of the contract – unless the information, ideas or other knowhow were known to the Supplier already before he received them from us or the Supplier lawfully obtained them otherwise at a later point in time. Such documents, drawings, samples etc. along with all copies thereof, shall be handed over to us without delay at our request, and of the Supplier’s own accord if no order ensues. The preceding provisions of this sub-section (1) shall apply accordingly for the drawings and other documents that are drafted by the Supplier in accordance with our special instructions.

[2] The Supplier shall treat the documents referred to in sub-section (1) above as well as all other received information relating to the order or to the execution of the order as business secrets and shall treat them accordingly as confidential. The Supplier shall make suitable contractual agreements with his employees and agents to ensure they are obliged to maintain confidentiality in the same manner. We shall treat any documents and information that we receive from the Supplier in connection with the order or execution of the order as business secrets if we are explicitly notified of the need to keep them secret. The duty to observe secrecy shall not apply if the content of the documents are facts in the public domain or which later enter the public domain without this being due to a breach of duty by the Party to maintain secrecy.

[3] We shall have the right to monitor, examine, reverse engineer and test any products of the Supplier that are lawfully in our possession in order to obtain information, and to use and disclose such information, regardless of whether or not these products have been made publicly available.

[4] The Supplier shall provide us, with his offer, with any essential drawings and documents that are required to discuss the technical details of the goods to be delivered. However, such discussion or other form of involvement in design work on our part shall not release the Supplier from his exclusive responsibility for the product or from any ensuing warranty or other obligations.

[5] The Supplier shall provide us with two copies, in the German language and in a digital form, of all drawings and documents that we or our customers require to install, operate, store, transport, service, maintain or repair the supplied item, in due time – at the latest on delivery of its own accord and free of charge.

[6] If we incur losses due to the Supplier acting in breach of his duties as stipulated in this section 10, the Supplier shall compensate us for such losses, unless the Supplier is not responsible for the breach of duty.

Section 11 Securing of Supply

[1] If the delivery items are goods especially developed for us, in particular if we have directly or indirectly contributed to the costs of development and/or the manufacturing materials, the Supplier warrants to supply us at all times with the delivery items according to our needs and to accept orders from us as long as we require the delivery items. We will provide the Supplier in good time with the anticipated supply volume deducted from the forecasts of customer requirements. Unless explicitly agreed otherwise, the Supplier shall not have the right to a specific quantity being bought by us.

[2] To secure the production of spare parts at us, the Supplier hereby undertakes to ensure the supply of the delivery items required in connection with said production for at least 12 years after we have placed our last order for the relevant product with the Supplier. If the Supplier realises within this period that it will no longer be possible to ensure this, the Supplier must inform us about the end of the supply possibility without undue delay and, if the Supplier is unable to offer us any other reasonable possibility of supply, to provide us with the opportunity of procuring an all-time requirement 12 months before the production is stopped.

[3] Insofar as the delivery items are goods especially developed for us, the provisions of Section 5 sub-section (10) above shall apply accordingly to all deliveries and orders that are covered by this Section 11 (and, therefore, also to any future deliveries which the Supplier must carry out in accordance with this Section 11).

Section 12 Quality assurance and control

[1] The Supplier must implement an appropriate state-of-the-art quality assurance system, and must provide us on request with proof of such implementation. In case we should deem this to be necessary, the Supplier shall conclude with us a quality assurance agreement to this effect.

[2] If the delivery item is primary material for the manufacture of our products, the
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Supplier shall take a representative sample of the delivery item before each delivery and examine it to determine whether the delivery item meets the agreed specifications. The Supplier shall enclose with each delivery a document confirming the conformity of the respective delivery item and, in addition, shall keep a sample to be retained of the sample taken. If the delivery item does not meet the agreed specifications, the Supplier shall notify us of this in writing. In this case, the Supplier may only carry out a delivery to us if we have given our prior consent in writing, by way of a special approval, following the according notification from the Supplier.

(3) If quality checks have to be performed as regards the delivery items, the personal costs of acceptance shall be borne by us and the material costs by the Supplier unless explicitly agreed otherwise. The date of completed production shall be stated in a binding manner no later than one week before acceptance procedures are conducted.

(4) If a second visit by the Quality Officer is necessary due to established defects, the personal costs for such checks shall be borne by the Supplier, too. The same principle shall apply if the supplied item is not presented to the Quality Officer on the date specified in sub-section (3) above.

Section 13 Export control and customs, proof of origin and proof for VRT purposes

(1) The Supplier undertakes to observe and comply with all relevant export control and customs regulations when carrying out the transaction. This applies also and in particular in the event that the Supplier procures the goods which are to be supplied to us from subcontractors or uses parts or raw materials for the manufacture of the goods which it procures from such subcontractors.

(2) The Supplier shall, at the latest on delivery, provide us at its own expense with all proof of origin and proof of preference documents that are required in the individual case (e.g. certificates of origin, supplier’s declarations, movement certificates, etc.), in signed form and with all the necessary information in this respect, as well as with any other documents and/or proof needed for customs clearance. The same shall apply accordingly to any proof for VRT purposes that may be required in individual cases for foreign and intra-community deliveries.

(3) The Supplier shall notify us without undue delay if any delivery, or part of any delivery, is subject to export restrictions under German or any other applicable law. Insofar as an export licence is required for the delivery, the Supplier shall be responsible for obtaining such licence.

Section 14 Social responsibility and environmental protection

(1) The Supplier undertakes to comply with the relevant rules and regulations regarding how to deal with employees, environmental protection and safety at work and to work towards reducing any lasting impact that his activities may have on humans and the environment. To this end, the Supplier shall make all possible efforts to implement and further develop an ISO 14001 management system. Furthermore, the Supplier shall observe the principles of the UN Global Compact Initiative. These mainly concern the protection of international human rights, the right to collective bargaining, the elimination of forced and compulsory labour and the abolition of child labour, the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation, responsibility for the environment and the prevention of corruption. Further information about the UN Global Compact Initiative is available at www.uniglobalcompact.org.

(2) The Supplier shall endeavour to trace back any semi-finished or finished products that are to be procured abroad for the delivery items through all stages of their supply-chains to determine whether there has been any violation of the obligations and the principles of the UN Global Compact Initiative mentioned in Section 14 sub-section (1) above.

Section 15 Correspondence

Our order number and the order date must always be stated in letters, dispatch notes, invoices and other correspondence. If several orders are made, each order must be treated separately in correspondence.

Section 16 General provisions

(1) If the Supplier is unable to meet his obligations on time due or stops payments or insolvency proceedings (including preliminary insolvency proceedings) are instituted against the Supplier’s assets, we shall have the right to rescind the contract with respect to such part as has not yet been performed by the Supplier. This rescission right must be exercised by us within one month after we obtain knowledge of any of the aforesaid circumstances.

(2) These terms and conditions and all legal relations between us and the Supplier are governed by the laws of the Federal Republic of Germany, under exclusion of the Vienna Convention on Contracts for the International Sale of Goods (UNICE).

(3) If the Supplier is a registered merchant or – without being registered – has full commercial capacity within the meaning of the German Commercial Code, the sole place of jurisdiction for all disputes arising directly or indirectly from this contractual relationship is Kreuztal, Germany. However, we also have the right to sue the Supplier at any other place of competent jurisdiction.

(4) The place of performance for all contractual obligations is Kreuztal, Germany.

(5) Should any provision of these terms and conditions, or any provision in other related agreements be or become invalid or unfeasible, this shall have no impact on the validity of all other provisions or agreements. The invalid or unfeasible provision shall be replaced by one that comes closest to the business intentions the Parties had when concluding the affected agreement. The same principle shall apply in the case of a contractual loophole.