

Third Time a Charm for Sheppard Mullin?

While lobbyists may be in a holding pattern 'til election day, **gov't contracts** attorneys face a busy season as agencies rush to spend budgets before the Sept. 30th end of their fiscal year (a phenomenon known in the vernacular as "the fiscal flush"). We met up with **Bruce Shirk, John Chierichella,** and "**Vic**" **Victorino** to learn more, but our key takeaway: These guys get much cooler deal toys (eg, **model fighter jets**) than corporate lawyers who just get those glass encased tombstones.



In the multi-discipline gov't contracts field these guys do everything from **IP rights** (Vic) to **healthcare** (Bruce). They also handle bid protests, and have a doozy on their hands right now. Back in '07, on behalf of helicopter-maker Sikorsky, they successfully challenged the **Air Force's** award of a **\$15 billion** (you read it right) contract to Boeing for "combat search and rescue helicopters." The GAO doesn't overturn such large defense contracts every day, John says. But when the Air Force issued a second RFP, Sikorsky challenged it as unfair and won a second protest. They're expecting the results of the third go-round shortly—and for the troops' sake, we hope the Air Force gets it right this time.

