

Ex-Navy GC's Boutique Adds Army Gov't Contracts Pro

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A new Washington, D.C.-area national security law firm founded by the [U.S. Navy's](#) former general counsel will continue growing with the hire of another longtime in-house military attorney, the firm said Monday.

The Sander Group PLLC said it's bringing on as its newest addition Thomas Modeszto, who spent eight years as an associate general counsel with the Department of Defense's [Defense Logistics Agency](#), where he specialized in procurement matters for the military until his retirement earlier this year.

Modeszto will bring that experience to the Sander Group by focusing his practice on government contracts and compliance, along with attorney disbarment and discipline matters, the firm said.

The firm's founder Robert Sander — who served as the Navy's general counsel from 2020 to 2021 — said in a statement, "There's not too many people who know government contract law, especially as it pertains to the Defense Department, better than Tom."

A graduate of the University of Illinois College of Law, Modeszto's civilian tenure with the Defense Logistics Agency saw him work with both the agency's acquisitions branch, where he was an acting senior associate counsel, and with the procurement fraud branch, the Sander Group said. In the latter realm, his work included serving as a hearing officer in disciplinary proceedings.

Before joining the DLA, Modeszto served as a uniformed military member with the Army Judge Advocate General's Corps, also with a focus on acquisitions. His final position, according to the firm, was as division chief of the Army's contract and fiscal law division, now known as the contract litigation and intellectual property division.

"Tom's extensive procurement experience with the [U.S. Army](#) and the Department of Defense provides insight to businesses searching for solutions on procurement matters ranging from acquisition strategy, formation, and administration of government contracts," the firm said.

Modeszto is the third hire to be announced thus far by the Sander Group, which was officially launched last month after Sander departed from a brief tenure at [Ward & Berry LLP](#). Prior to his

service as the Navy's general counsel, he was the Army's acting general counsel, having been the only person in U.S. history to have served as the chief legal officer of both the Army and the Navy.

Earlier this month, Sander said he had made his first two hires in a pair of national security veterans. One of them, Mary Anne Zivnuska, worked with Sander in the Navy's general counsel office, where she spent 14 years as an attorney.

The other, Cecelia Franceski, is a former deputy legal adviser to the White House's [National Security Council](#) staff and a former legal counsel with the [Office of the Director of National Intelligence](#)'s Office of General Counsel.

"Tom and I have known each other for years and worked together through our various Army and DLA roles both in and out of uniform and civilian attire," Sander added. "The Sander Group and our clients are fortunate to have Tom come on board as this latest addition to the firm."

--Editing by Alyssa Miller.