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"SMALL FIRMS, BIG RESULTS"

Excerpted from the Daily Business Review, August 21, 2006

Author: John Pacenti

"Unlike bigger firms, many litigation shops offer a variety of payment options for clients – flat fee, contingency, or a mix that may include some billable hours. The billing approach depends on the type of litigation, and litigation shops focusing on commercial defense different from personal injury firms.

The litigation shops stress that they offer clients the specific expertise needed to win cases.

"I don't think there is a big firm in the country that has the aviation expertise that we have at this firm," said Ricardo M. Martínez-Cid, a lawyer at 11-lawyer Podhurst Orseck in Miami. "You have a few different subsets to work in aviation law. You have to work the technical side, the pilot side, the mechanical side and the environmental side."

Podhurst Orseck concentrates on trial and appellate litigation, emphasizing aviation, automobile, product liability and medical malpractice.

In March, Podhurst Orseck won a jury verdict of \$25 million in Broward County Circuit Court for the family of a Boca Raton man killed in the 2003 crash of a Cessna 182 he was piloting. Steve Ross was flying home from a religious mission trip in the Bahamas. His plane collided over Deerfield Beach with another Cessna carrying a family of three. No one survived.

At trial, Martinez-Cid and Steven C. Marks also of Podhurst Orseck, showed that the tower at Boca Raton Airport was short one air traffic controller and that the tower at

Pompano Beach's airport was not monitoring air traffic because its staff was preparing to close for the day.

Up until the end of trial, Marks and Martinez-Cid had offered to settle the case for just more than \$2 million. The defendant, New Haven, Conn.-based Robinson Aviation, which was contracted by the Federal Aviation Administration to run the two towers, rejected the offer. The jury came back with a plaintiff verdict in 90 minutes."

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